

# INTER-RELIGIOUS COUNCIL OF LINN COUNTY

## MINUTES BOARD OF DIRECTORS MEETING

February 20, 2014

**Members present (12):** Rodney Bluml, Tom Capo, Brian Daugherty, Alan Fletcher, Allen Fisher, Susan Liddell, Cedric Lofdahl, Bill Mulcahey, Hassan Selim, Todd Thalblum, Joan Thaler, & Jen Yuki

**Guest (1):** John-Paul Chaisson-Cardenas

### **OPENING & INSPIRATION**

President Todd Thalblum called the meeting to order at 6:30 pm.

Rodney Bluml led the inspiration, asking us to breathe deeply and sit silently to quiet the pace of our minds from our activities during the day. He handed out copies of “Earth Prayer” by Wendell Berry and “Be a Gardener” by Julian of Norwich. These selections reflect on our activity/service in and with the earth. Julian of Norwich calls this our “true worship.” Wendell Berry highlights the interdependence of life...of our individual action with the action of the earth (in light, rain, and air). We read these aloud in unison. After that, Rodney asked us to share with the people near us about what we experienced, thought, or felt during the exercise.

### **CEDAR RAPIDS CIVIL RIGHTS COMMISSION – Presentation** [www.cedar-rapids.org/civilrights](http://www.cedar-rapids.org/civilrights)

John-Paul Chaisson-Cardenas, executive director of CRCRC, visited us to share some of the research being done regarding the disparities in our community? This research provides an opportunity to see community needs and discern how our faith communities can work toward real solutions. We need to ask: Who is being left out? John-Paul shared statistics in education, business, economic status, and other areas. He talked about the desire to create “solution-focused” ways to decrease the gaps. “Disproportionality” occurs both in under-representation and over-representation. Many so-called plans for solving disparity are often “band-aids”. Another observation about helping programs was made strongly by John-Paul through a short fable: “The house of a lion is not adequate for an elephant.” How can we give support without causing unintentional harm?

### **Housing Summit: Building Inclusive Communities, One Neighborhood at a Time**

#### **Wednesday, April 23 (8:30 am to 4:30 pm) – Cedar Rapids Convention Complex, Double Tree**

[Information and registration details at [www.cedar-rapids.org/civilrights](http://www.cedar-rapids.org/civilrights)]

IRC is being invited to join in support of CRCRC’s efforts to make Cedar Rapids an “inclusive community with access to good schools, available jobs, accessible health care, safe neighborhoods, and affordable housing.” We will vote on this at our March meeting.

### **OFFICERS’ REPORTS**

Minutes of January 16, 2014: Motion by Allen Fisher to approve as submitted  
– Second by Brian Daugherty – Carried.

Treasurer Alan Fletcher provided these written financial reports:

- Financial Report for 2013 – Cash Receipts and Disbursements
- Receipts and Disbursements – January 1, 2014 thru February 20, 2014

Alan explained that the \$209.20 disbursement for postage included the \$200 annual permit fee.

Cedric Lofdahl asked about the interest earnings check usually received from the Greater CR Community Foundation. As of today, there is no record that this was received.

Cash balance as of 2/20/14: \$16,621.22 [Checking = \$1,845.41 / Money Market = \$14, 775.81]

## COMMITTEE Involvement by IRC Council Members

A chart was passed around and those present signed up to serve on one of our committees for 2014. Todd Thalblum reported that Brian Daugherty has agreed to continue as chair of Community Relations. Charles Crawley and Allen Fisher will co-chair the Program committee.

2014 IRC Committees		
<b>Community Relations</b>	<b>Program</b>	<b>Communications</b> (no chair yet)
Brian Daugherty (chair)	Charles Crawley (co-chair)	*Rodney Bluml (?-or Program)
Cedric Lofdahl	Allen Fisher (co-chair)	Tom Capo
Martha Rogers	*Rodney Bluml [?-or Comm.]	Ashok Chawla
Hassan Mahmoud Selim	Susan Liddell	Alan Fletcher
Taha Tawil	Jim Siegling	Brenda Mitchell
	Todd Thalblum	Bill Mulcahey
	Joan Thaler	Jen Yukl

*[Addendum: Those who had not chosen a committee on 2/20 or before, were contacted and their responses are listed in this chart. All eighteen directors are now signed up for one of these three committees. \*Note that Rodney Bluml is listed under both Program and Communications. He is willing to serve where most needed – not both. Maybe this can be clarified at the March meeting.]*

## COMMITTEE REPORTS

### Community Relations Committee

- Children of Abraham:** On Tuesday, February 18, a planning meeting was held. Brian Daugherty shared the following program decisions made in that meeting:
  - May 4 – *How Each Religion Sees the Other* – at Temple Judah
  - August 24 – *Schools of Thought: Differences Within Each Tradition* – at the Mother Mosque
  - November 2 – *Concepts of God* – at St. George Eastern Orthodox Church

*Speakers at these events: Fred Shaheen, Taha Tawil, and Todd Thalblum*
- Ethical Perspectives on the News / Sundays, 11 am on KCRG, Channel 9:** Cedric Lofdahl provided copies of the current program schedule and reported that finding panel members for the GMO topic was proving difficult.  
Program schedule: *Control of the Internet* (2/23); *GMO's: Good or Bad, Health Risk or Not?* (3/2); *Politics and Unions* (3/9); *Privilege as a Defense* (3/16); *The Politics of Pregnancy and Death* (3/23); *Unionizing College Football Players* (3/30); and *Stand Your Ground* (4/6).
- University of Religion:** Tom Capo noted that the downtown library is a potential meeting place for the next course (not yet been planned for 2014). He will check into this.

### Program Committee

- Thanksgiving Service – Monday, Nov. 24 (7pm):** Allen Fisher stated the need to begin looking for a possible location. He asked that ideas for host sites be submitted.
- Holocaust Memorial (Yom Hashoah) – “Lest We Forget” – Monday, April 7 (7pm):** Todd Thalblum reported that the location will be **St. Mark's Lutheran, 8300 C Ave. NE in Marion**. [Event details at <http://holocausteducate.org/event/88/>] Todd invited participation from other churches and temples. Please let him know by our next meeting on March 20, if you are interested in assisting.

This Yom Hashoah service will feature Holocaust survivor **Cesare Frustaci**. Information about his story can be found at these links:

- <http://www.holocaustmuseumsfl.org/wp-content/uploads/2013/09/CesareFrustaci.pdf>
- <https://www.cape-coral-daily-breeze.com/page/content.detail/id/529412/Holocaust-survivor-shares-story-at-St--Andrew.html?nav=5006>
- <http://tomchang.wordpress.com/2013/05/03/holocaust-survivor-were-still-fighting/>

## Communications Committee

1. **Membership Letter:** Jen Yukl reported that this was mailed out on February 10 and thanked Joan Thaler for her assistance with the final preparations. The pre-printed envelopes discussed at January's meeting were ordered from Adcraft and used for this mailing.
2. **Website status:** Jen Yukl spoke with Stuart Williams this week regarding the need to update material before launching the website. Jen and Tom Capo will meet with Stuart before our next meeting to look at what has been completed and ascertain our next steps.

## Follow-up Information about our Committees

Todd Thalblum gave a synopsis of the standing committees (except *Executive*) listed in our bylaws:

1. Nominations – duty to secure nominees for all officers and for any other vacancies.
2. Community Relations – duty of this committee to (1) promote dialogue and cooperative programming with other organizations of the religious community, and (2) provide programs on matters of public interest and concern to the community in general.
3. Program – to plan and provide appropriate programming for the Annual Meeting, Thanksgiving Service, and other meetings of the Council.
4. Publicity and Promotion / aka Communications – duty to (1) publish a newsletter periodically, (2) publicize, by various and appropriate means, the programs and meetings of the Council, and (3) promote membership in the Council, provide new members with welcome packets, and maintain membership rolls.
5. Finance – duty to regulate finances and maintain the financial integrity of the IRC. (A detailed list of these responsibilities can be seen in our bylaws, page 4.)

**Proposal to amend bylaws:** Todd Thalblum proposed that we change the title of the "Program Committee" to the "Event Committee" and the title of the "Publicity and Promotion Committee" to the "Communication Committee." He will send a written notice, by email, as notification of a Bylaws vote at our next IRCLC Board meeting, March 20th, at 7:00 pm.

## ANNOUNCEMENTS

1. **Intersections – next civil dialogue and luncheon – Friday, March 7 (11:45am–1pm):** See <http://interfaithallianceiowa.org/events/intersections/> for details about registering for lunch.
2. **Prairiewoods annual event – “Rooted in Compassion: Cosmology, Eco-Justice, and Empathic Wisdom” – March 28 (7 – 9 pm) and March 29 (9 am – 3:30 pm):** at Double Tree Register at [www.Prairiewoods.org](http://www.Prairiewoods.org) / Speakers: Marc Ian Barasch and Drew Dellinger
3. **Jesus Seminar – “Reframing Christian Scriptures” – April 4 & 5:** People's Church, 4980 Gordon Ave. NW / Register at <http://www.westarinstitute.org/events/cedar-rapids/>
4. **Experience the Word Come to Life – a Presentation of The Saint John's Bible – May 2 through June 8:** at Prairiewoods / Details and hours at [www.Prairiewoods.org](http://www.Prairiewoods.org)
5. **Healthy Congregations Facilitator Training – Thurs., May 29 & Fri., May 30 (9am–5pm):** Unity of Cedar Rapids, 3791 Blairs Ferry Rd NE / Register by May 15 at [www.MarthaCreek.com](http://www.MarthaCreek.com)
6. **Extraordinary Leadership in Healthy Congregations – Saturday, May 31 (10:30am–4:30pm):** Unity of Cedar Rapids, 3791 Blairs Ferry Rd NE / Love offering basis; no registration required / More info at [www.MarthaCreek.com](http://www.MarthaCreek.com)
7. **“The Work” of Byron Katie, Living in Joy – Loving What Is – Sunday, June 1 (Noon to 3pm):** Unity of Cedar Rapids, 3791 Blairs Ferry Rd NE / No registration required; donations accepted / More info at [www.MarthaCreek.com](http://www.MarthaCreek.com)
8. **Spring Eco-Programs at Prairiewoods – four events remaining in March & April:** See [www.Prairiewoods.org](http://www.Prairiewoods.org) for program information, dates, and times.

## Next Board Meeting: Thursday, March 20 (7:00 pm) at the Ecumenical Community Center

Meeting adjourned at 8:10 pm: Motion to adjourn by Joan Thaler – Second by Bill Mulcahey – Carried

Respectfully submitted by Jennifer Yukl, Secretary