

Inter-Religious Council of Linn County Board Meeting
Minutes of Annual Meeting Dec 11, 2017

The Annual Meeting of the IRCLC was called to order at 6:55 pm by President Charles Crawley. The meeting was held at Prairiewoods Spirituality Center, following a supper catered by the center.

Those in attendance were: Hamza Akbar, Lois Buntz, Bob Buntz, Charles Crawley, Brian Daugherty, Alan Diehl, Evelyn Diehl, Hudson Diehl, Aaron Doolin, Afnan Elsheikh, Al Fisher, Al Fletcher, MaryLee Folkedahl-Meehleder, Jan Griffith, Dave Higdon, Dorothy Higdon, Susan Liddell, Cedric Lofdahl, Marcia Lofdahl, Eugenia Kendall, Steve Knudson, Brenda Mitchell, Meredith Mitchell, Daniel Reed, Nancy Rhodes, Hassan Selim, Libby Slappey, Sharon Stewart, Fred Stieglitz, Mawadee Tawil, Sara Tawil, Taha Tawil, Joan Thaler, Todd Thalblum, John Williams, Ritva Williams, Leif Zalewski.

Angie Pierce Jennings, hospitality coordinator of Prairiewoods, welcomed the group to the center. It is located on 70 acres and is a ministry of the Franciscan Sisters of Perpetual Adoration of LaCrosse, WI. All faiths are welcome.

INSPIRATION

Charles Crawley gave the inspiration and stated that we are on the eve of the 25th anniversary of the IRCLC. During the evening we would be honoring the founders, Reverend Cedric Lofdahl, Imam Taha Tawil, and the late Rabbi Edward Chesman. A photo of Rabbi Chesman was on display.

Eugenia Kendall will bring the inspiration at the January meeting.

OLD BUSINESS

The Thanksgiving Service, which was held at Mt. Zion Missionary Baptist Church, was well attended. \$1,227.53 and three bags of groceries were donated to the Linn Community Food Bank.

Religious Literacy program at the Cedar Rapids Library will be held Jan 8, Feb 12, March 12 from 6:30 pm to 7:45 pm. Charles will be the moderator of the panel. Leif Zalewski, Nancy Rhodes, Eugenia Kendall, Krishna Iyer, and Alan Diehl, a subgroup of the council, are formulating questions for discussion. Jan 8, Leif will represent Baha'i, Eugenia will represent Buddhism, and Steve Knudson will represent Christianity. Feb 12, Krishna Iyer will represent Hinduism, Alan Diehl will represent Humanism, and Hassan Selim will represent Islam. March 12, Todd Thalblum will represent Judaism, Nancy Rhodes will represent Native American religions, and Rebecca Hinds will represent Unitarian-Universalism.

Revision of statements: At our January meeting, discussion is planned regarding revising our mission and vision statements. They have served well for 25 years, but they may need to be updated.

Secretary: The secretary position has not been filled. If no one volunteers to take on the responsibility, it may be necessary for people to take turns.

NEW BUSINESS

Thanks were given to Erin Broich, Brenda Mitchell, and Joan Thaler, who will be leaving the board at the end of the year. Thanks were also extended to Brian Daugherty, Krishna Iyer, and Steve Knudson who have accepted further three-year terms on the board.

MINUTES

Todd Thalblum moved and Leif Zalewski seconded approval of both the December 13, 2016 annual meeting minutes and the November 2, 2017 minutes. Carried.

COMMITTEE REPORTS

Finance committee report was given by Steve Knudson. In November, \$1,278.45 was received and \$101.70 was disbursed. December 1 through December 6, a further \$1,347.53 was disbursed.

Total balances as of December 6 are:

Checking account: \$55.12

Money Market account: \$14,039.07.

We need to be mindful that expenses for 2017 have been greater than income. This was caused by a half-page ad placed in the Gazette in response to hate messages against the Jewish faith. The cost of the advertising was \$2,630.80.

The 2018 budget was presented. Steve noted that we are no longer renting office space in the Ecumenical Center; we are renting the conference room for our meetings. Therefore, the amount for rent has decreased significantly. Also, Rockwell Collins did not contribute towards the closed captioning of EPON this year.

Nancy Rhodes moved and Hassan Selim seconded acceptance of the financial report and the 2018 budget. Carried.

Community Relations

Brian Daugherty reported that the name of the Children of Abraham group has been changed to *Inter-Religious Dialogue*, with four faith traditions being represented at the programs—Baha'i, Christianity, Islam and Judaism. Three programs are planned for 2018. All will be held in the Flaherty Community Room at Mount Mercy University.

In January and February, Hassan Selim taught a *University of Religion* course on the Life and Example of Prophet Muhammed. Nancy Rhodes will be presenting a course on Native American Traditions in the spring of 2018.

For more details on Brian's report, please read the attached report.

Alan Diehl shared information regarding *Ethical Perspectives on the News*. The program is an asset to the community and gives the opportunity for local people to discuss important issues. We would like to advertise more extensively using Facebook, You Tube and other social media. EPON Facebook has over 500 friends. We will ask KCRG to post information on its Facebook page.

Event Committee

Todd Thalblum stated that the event committee plans and coordinates three events a year: *Holocaust Remembrance*, which was held at First Presbyterian Church in 2017; *Interfaith Thanksgiving Service*, which was held at Mt. Zion Missionary Baptist Church; the *Annual Meeting*, which was held at Prairiewoods.

In 2018, the *Holocaust Remembrance Service* will be held at the Chapel of Mercy at Mt. Mercy University on April 16, and Michael Bernstein will be the guest speaker.

Communications Committee

Eugenia Kendall stated that this committee is responsible for the newsletter, website and Facebook page. She thanked all of the people who work on these responsibilities and stated that the committee will miss Nathan Williams' support.

Please see attached report for more details.

Nomination Committee

Charles has a meeting scheduled with members of the Bhutanese community in Linn County. We may consider having this community represented on the board.

PRESIDENT'S REPORT

Please see attached report for details of Charles' report.

RECOGNITION CEREMONY

We were fortunate to have two of the three founders of IRCLC present at the annual meeting. Taha Tawil and Cedric Lofdahl talked about their memories of the founding and early years of the council. Both men honored the influence of Rabbi Chesman in their lives and in the founding of the organization. They were presented with plaques recognizing their service and checks for \$100 to be given to the charity of their choice.

ANNOUNCEMENTS

Jan 8, Feb 12, March 12: Religious Literacy at the Cedar Rapids Public Library from 6:30 pm to 7:45 pm.

Feb 1-7: Interfaith Harmony Week; Hassan Selim will be participating.

April 16, 2018: Holocaust Remembrance Service at Mount Mercy University beginning at 7 pm.

Nov 1-7: Parliament of World's Religions: Toronto, Canada.

The next meeting will be held Jan. 4, 2018. Those who are interested will meet at Via Sofia's at 6 pm for supper, prior to the meeting at 7 pm.

Eugenia Kendall will be in charge of the inspiration at the January meeting.

Meeting adjourned at 8:15 pm.

Respectfully submitted,
Brenda Mitchell, secretary.