

Athens Rotary Club Board Meeting Minutes

October 14, 2020 11:00 AM

Call to Order:

Board Members Present: Abe Alassaf, Susan Barga, Dave Diggle, Tara Gilts, Sheila Mark, Mike Noel, Ed Peterson

President's Announcements/Comments: Sheila Mark

Introduction of Steven Heiser, DG.

Steven Heiser's remarks were focused on encouraging our club to focus on three areas during the Covid response.

- Continue to engage members in club functions.
- Reach out to members that have not been attending zoom meetings to invite them back, and contact members who do not/can not attend zoom meetings once a month to ask if they need anything and to tell them we care about them.
- Focus on service projects to engage membership participation.

Steve Heiser reported that our club's end of year District membership was estimated to be 3,855 down from 3,405. The largest losses are occurring in the first three years of membership. He has set a goal of 90% retention up from the current 75%. Steve identifies a "lack of engagement" as the most significant cause for the loss of members.

Following Steven Heiser's comments the following club actions were discussed.

*Sheila Mark and Susan Barga would meet to develop a list of members that have not been attending meetings. (Mary Diles and John Costanza were both mentioned as having missed meetings recently.)

* Contact lists would be distributed to the board members so that individual invitations could be made and reasons for not attending assessed.

Susan Barga was announced as the new President Elect to replace Shane Jarrett.

Sheila Mark introduced a letter from an OU International student thanking the club for our help with providing food assistance during the lock down.

Secretary's Report: Ed Peterson

Minutes of the September 9, 2020 Board Meeting were accepted. Dave Diggle made the motion which was seconded by Tara Gilts and unanimously approved by voice vote.

Treasurer's Report: Dave Diggle

Dave Diggle reported that only minor changes had occurred since the August

report. He did send \$100 to the Marietta Club to support their H2O project as directed by the Board. Dave Diggle had been holding off sending out the 2nd Quarter invoices pending board approval of his \$1/Qtr. increase in dues. After discussion it was decided to not increase the dues for this quarter. An increase of \$5/Qtr. for next quarter was suggested by Sheila Mark as being acceptable to most members if it eliminated the need to have special funding requests and additional “passing of the envelopes” to fund club activities. Dave said he would immediately send out the club’s invoices.

The Financial Summary is attached.

Vocational Service Report: Ann Paulins

Ann Paulins reported separately to Sheila Mark that she was contacting 3rd grade teachers to assess the number who wish to provide dictionaries for their students. Not all Board members agree that dictionaries are a value to the students due to the availability of on line dictionaries and should be replaced by other books. It was suggested that a hold be put on requesting the Athens Rotary Foundation purchasing the dictionaries at this time. Tara Gilts stated that the Hospital’s Pediatric Reading Program had purchased books from the Little Professor book store and was pleased with the service and variety of books they were able to provide. Tara pointed out that this would provide support for a local business. Ann was asked, in an email, to ask teachers if they would prefer books or dictionaries for their students.

Club Service Report: Tara Gilts

Tara Gilts will proceed with planning another zoom “happy hour” this time with a local brewery. She also has left over wine for non beer drinkers.

Sheila Mark, Dave Diggle- Report on Committee for Meeting in-Person & Dues Restructuring is attached to the meeting minutes.

Mike Noel discussed his concept of a Zoom Membership in which a member would be required to attend and pay the meal cost for one meeting per month, regardless of actual attendance. The remaining meetings could be attended via Zoom. This would reduce the member’s costs by 3 or 4 meals per month. The club dues would remain the same (i.e. \$45/Qtr.). Mike stated that he has discussed this cost structure with 5 companies in his building and they have stated that the cost would not be prohibitive and he will pursue getting them to join. However, DG Steve Heiser noted that Rotary is not allowed to require any in-person meetings during the pandemic.

Betsy Barringer reported that the OU Inn can set up 6 tables with 4 to 5 per table for in person meetings. This would allow the membership to choose in person or zoom attendance. The cost of the meal would vary based on the

items selected from a menu. Pre-orders would be paid for regardless of attendance. It was reported by Dave Diggle that the hotel has previously had a minimum cost of \$840 to set up the banquet including 48 meals. If the meals were buffet style (hot lunch) a server would be required at additional cost. A plated lunch could also be provided, but would need to be served cold or room temperature because of the difficulty serving a hot entrée fresh and at the correct temperature. In order to be able to have a pre-order system an online ordering system similar to what the Sunrise Club uses would be useful. Susan Barga agreed to contact Jenny Stotts to discuss how their club has done it.

Abe Alassaf offered to check with the Hocking and Logan Clubs to determine how they are handling in-person meetings. It was stated that hybrid meetings would probably not start until at least January 2021.

Community Service Report: Ann Paulins (No Report)

International Service Report: Abe Alassaf (No Report)

New Generations Report: Tom Gibbs – (NO Report)

Motion to close the meeting made by Dave Diggle and seconded by Tara Gilts with unanimous approval.

Board Meeting Schedule

Meeting Dates:	November 11	March 10
	December 9	April 14
	January 13	May 12
	February 10	June 9

ROTARY CLUB OF ATHENS FINANCIAL SUMMARY FOR SEPTEMBER 2020
 BOARD MEETING -- OCTOBER 14, 2020

	<u>AUGUST</u>	<u>SEPTEMBER</u>
CLUB EQUITY	\$23,762.89	\$23,503.38
OUTSTANDING MEMBER ACCOUNTS	\$1,703.00	\$433.50
CHECKING ACCOUNT BALANCE	\$27,810.08	\$28,840.07
DESIGNATED CLUB FUNDS (In Club Checking Account)	\$13,162.72	\$13,062.72
Miscellaneous carryover funds	\$0.00	\$0.00
Accumulated Happy Bucks	\$4,002.27	\$3,952.27
International Conference (FY 2018/19)	\$2,500.00	\$2,500.00
Accumulated Kroger Dollars	\$6,660.45	\$6,610.45
DESIGNATED NON-CLUB FUNDS (In Club checking Account)	\$5,750.19	\$5,770.19
Athens Rotary Foundation	\$235.00	\$255.00
The Rotary Foundation (TRF)	\$1,050.00	\$1,050.00
Yard Sale Equity (TRF Designated)	\$2,948.25	\$2,948.25
Friends-of-India Advertising Income	\$0.00	\$0.00
Accumulated Split-the-Pot Dollars	\$1,516.94	\$1,516.94
OPERATING BALANCE (CHECKING LESS NON-CLUB FUNDS PLUS OUTSTANDING MEMBER ACCOUNTS LESS \$15K RESERVE)	\$8,762.89	\$8,503.38

Restructuring the Athens Rotary
Club in Response to COVID 19
October 9, 2020

by Sheila Mark after consultation and meeting with
Dan Smith, Dave Diggle, Betsy Baringer

In a meeting on September 15, 2020, this committee referred to an April 2019 proposal by Dan Smith in which it was presumed that the prepaid cost of lunches deterred new members from joining, especially younger ones. A pay-as-you-go format was proposed. At that time the Board tabled a decision on that proposal, as it was not yet clear what the impact would be on attendance or membership.

In the past our Club has explored changing venues in order to lower meal costs, but has never found anywhere offering close parking, adequate space, audiovisual aides and the exceptional service we receive at the OU Inn.

Before the Pandemic, the existing structure (prepaying for 12 meals per quarter) built up funds from missed meals to subsidize the group at special events and provided funds for the Athens Rotary Foundation. If we changed to a pay-as-you-go system for meals, we would have to charge the actual cost of special events, ask for more donations, and hold more fundraisers. On the positive side, a donation to the Athens Foundation would be eligible for a tax deduction where the hidden donation in missed meals is probably not. I should be noted that the number of "exempt" members is increasing steadily (those over 65 & members for more than 5 years who pay only for meals they attend.)

Since the club began meeting on the Zoom platform, members are charged only for dues, which are \$30 per quarter for International dues and \$15 for the local dues. **This is not enough income to sustain the Club. This committee recommends increasing local dues to \$20 beginning next quarter.**

While some members are currently anxious to resume in-person meetings, others are still isolating. This committee looked at ways to accommodate both. The Upper Arlington Club holds hybrid meetings with members having the choice of meeting in-person or on the Zoom format. The Sunrise Club meets on Zoom with some members at home and some in person with one iPhone or iPad on each table.

Considering the current regulations for restaurants, Betsy said the OU Inn can accommodate 4-5 people at a table and 6 tables in the Ballroom .

Self-serve is not allowed, so we would have to pay for a buffet server or order plated food. It was a bit confusing, even for Betsy, but we tried to estimate what a plated meal would cost. We discussed some options, and a warm dish such as a burger and fries is not recommended because of the difficulty in serving it fresh and at the correct temperature. A better choice would be a chicken salad or some dish that could be served cold or at room temperature. Members would probably require some choices. Would members be required to make reservations?

Before COVID our club had a contract with the Inn for 48 buffet meals per week. With a pay-as-you-go system, we would still need a minimum number of meals per week so the chef can plan. Before COVID, the Inn charged \$17.82 for each buffet meal which included drinks and a dessert, as well as tax & gratuity; and the Club charged members \$15.50 for each of 12 of the buffet meals per quarter. Exempt members are charged \$xx.xx for each meal they attend.

We discussed possibly reducing the number of in-person meetings per month in order to reduce costs, but this seems unnecessary if members have a choice of in-person or virtual meetings.

The critical information needed to decide how the Club will operate is:

1. Amount of dues: What is the minimum income the Club needs to function without the income of missed meals.
2. Do members want to change to a system in which we pay the actual cost of social events, ask for donations to the Athens Rotary Foundation, and hold more fundraisers in lieu of paying ahead for a specific number of meals at a discounted price.
3. How many members want to meet in-person, and what kind of meal will they expect (buffet? plated? how many choices? drinks included? dessert?) and how much are they willing to pay for it.
4. What must the OU Inn charge for a buffet meal with a server and for a plated meal.
eg. 24 plated meals per week vs. buffet for 24 person

Athens Rotary Club
Menu for October 2020 Meetings
OU Inn & Conference Center

Member's Name:

Week 1

Choice of:
Ham sandwich
or
 Cobb Salad

Water
 Coffee
 Iced Tea

Choice of:
Cookie
or
 Fruit cup

Week 2

Choice of:
#1
or
 #2

Water
 Coffee
 Iced Tea

Choice of:
Lemon Bar
or
 Fruit cup

The OU Inn would do a menu for the following month. This reservation form would be emailed to all members. The member would make their choices and call or email their choices to a reservation chair by Monday at 6:00 PM for the following week. The chair would call in the orders to the Inn by 9:00 AM on Tuesday. If a member fails to make a reservation, they must meet virtually. If a member makes a reservation, but does not attend, they will be billed for the meal.

This is a tentative plan for making reservations.

Member Survey (Draft)

Dear Rotarian:

Some of our members are happy with Zoom meetings, while others are very anxious to return to in-person meetings. The Board is considering holding hybrid meetings in which some members meet in-person while videoconferencing with others in the Zoom meeting. In order to make plans with the OU Inn, we need to know which option you would choose - In-person or Zoom. At the present time, the Inn can seat 4-5 people at a table, with 6 tables in the Ballroom. Masks are requested until the food is served.

The virtual meetings make Rotary membership more affordable, as no meal costs are involved, but the club will need to ask for more donations and have more fundraisers in order to continue to support the Athens Rotary Foundation, which pays for local projects. Members could make a choice of virtual or in-person meeting each week.

1. Do you anticipate attending Rotary meetings:
 Virtually. In-Person meetings at the OU Inn following Public Health Guidelines
2. If you choose to meet in-person, would you prefer
 A buffet. We would need to pay a server, but they can serve warm food such as we've had in the past
 A plated meal, which would be less expensive, but we would have 2 choices of a lunch served cold or at room temperature.
3. Would you like dessert included? For example, choice of a sweet dessert or a fruit cup. yes. no
3. How much would you like to pay for a lunch at the Inn? I know, as little as possible, but are you willing to pay more for a buffet, or would you like a simpler lunch for less money?
 \$15 \$17.50 \$20
Remember, this includes drinks, tax, gratuity, parking, audiovisual equipment.

Please return your answers to President Sheila Mark along with any suggestions or comments about our meeting format, dues, or anything you feel the Board should know.

Please be aware that we must have a small dues increase. Our current dues are \$30/qtr for International dues and \$15/qtr for local dues. In the past, the club income was further subsidized by missed meal income. As more and more members are becoming exempt, we are not realizing as much of this type of income as we used to. And since the pandemic, we have had no food income at all.

Update 10/19/2020:

Add question #5.

Would you like our dues structure to be:

relatively higher in order to finance the Club's social events and projects and The Athens Rotary Foundation.

relatively lower, requiring requests for donations and Fundraisers

#6 Current dues are \$30/qtr for International dues and \$15/qtr for local dues, equaling a total of \$45 per quarter. **Without missed meal income, the Club is not sustainable at this level.** Would you agree to a quarterly increase in local (Club) dues of:

\$1 \$5 \$10