
**Fox Valley United Way
Board of Directors Meeting Minutes
8:30 am –10:00 am
Thursday, January 9, 2025 – Via Zoom**

1. Call Meeting to Order

In an effort to keep accurate records, we will begin all meetings with a verbal roll call. Deborah asked that the Board Secretary read out everyone's name and that called-on attendees respond with a verbal "Here." This will ensure we record all attendance at Board Meetings and confirm we have a quorum (50% of all members) to proceed with business.

2. Roll Call – for the record

- Diana McClarien
- Joe Donar
- Joe Espinosa – excused
- Karen Yaggie
- Kelly McDonough
- Laura Koski
- Mansa Latham
- Maria Manzo
- Marisa Richards
- Mark Mooney
- Michele Clark – excused

3. AI Companion Meeting Summary Use

To assist with recording the Board Minutes, Deborah proposed that the Board agree to use Zoom's AI Companion tool to summarize the Board meetings. Diana has had an AI notetaker at some of our meetings and has provided Deborah with a very accurate after-meeting summary.

Deborah requested that a motion be presented to approve the use of AI companion at all board of directors meetings; the motion was approved.

4. Approve Minutes

October 2024 & November 2024 - motion presented to approve minutes, motion approved.

5. Chairman of the Board's Report – nothing to report.

6. Chief Executive Officer Report

Deborah reported that Joe Espinosa has resigned from the Board. He indicated that his new business commitments are taking up more time than he expected, and he can no longer significantly contribute to the board. He assured Deborah that he would continue to be involved and that his monthly financial contribution would continue. He looks forward to continuing to support Holiday Assistance. The board expressed their appreciation for Joe's contributions and wished him well. Deborah discussed the need to replace Joe's position, particularly in representing the Northern Territory.

Deborah reported that she is currently revisiting the updated Bylaws, a task previously started with Stacey Reis under her legal guidance. She will be working on finalizing an update since the Bylaws have not been updated since 2007.

Holiday Assistance - Deborah praised JD for his exceptional coordination of the holiday assistance program, which significantly improved previous efforts. The Spark team was also commended for facilitating interviews and intakes. Deborah highlighted SPARKS's success in connecting with local families and providing resources and referrals through the holiday assistance program. A special shout-out was given to Michelle Clark, a board member and City of Aurora staff member, for her contributions to building a stronger partnership with the city. The city of Aurora was recognized for its support, with many departments participating in sponsorships and the Mayor and his executive team lending a hand in distribution. The mayor's chief of staff, Maria Lindsey, shared her family's history of being helped by United Way's holiday assistance program, emphasizing the importance of such programs for new immigrants settling in the area.

Deborah reports that the grant portal for mid-year reporting is now available. JD will work with her to communicate with allocated agencies for their reports.

The auditors are still working on our audit. They have some accounting questions regarding grant balances, and Deborah is working with accounting to answer them.

7. Committee Reports

Finance

Review Financial Statements October 2024 & November 2024

Board Treasurer Kelly presented the financials. A motion was submitted to approve the financials; the motion was approved. The review of the financials noted a decrease in income and an increase in expenses, particularly in program supplies for the Dolly Parton Imagination Library. The Finance team agreed to separate out the Dolly Parton Imagination Library program supplies in future financial statements. Kelly and Mark discussed the need to adjust the allowance for uncollectibles and the consultant expenses. Deborah expressed optimism about the upcoming December income and the year-end appeal's success.

8. SPARK

Board Report

Deborah shared the Spark Activity report for December, highlighting the team's involvement in the holiday assistance program and their efforts to saturate the far east end of Aurora. Deborah also mentioned that Spark secured \$8,000 worth of gift card donations from the Fox Valley Mall and that they still have \$2,000 worth of gift cards for future events and support to new immigrant families. Deborah also mentioned that Spark has a new intern starting in January and is interviewing other potential interns and volunteers. Lastly, Deborah mentioned that Spark is applying for a significant amount of money to the Dunham Foundation and will request a meeting with them for guidance.

9. Development

Board Report presented by JD Ostergaard

J.D. reported on the success of the holiday assistance program, which sponsored 431 children and received significant donations from various sources, including the Fox Valley Building and Trades and the Aurora Retired Teachers Association. The program also managed to sponsor all children on the wait list from the donations received from Fox Valley Mall. J.D. mentioned that they might lose the city of Aurora space next year, so they might need to find alternative locations for accepting and organizing donations.

Deborah praised J.D.'s organization of the program, particularly the segregation of general

public donations from Hesed House donations. J.D. also mentioned that they had a successful Giving Tuesday event, raising \$2,565 and distributing ornaments to participants.

J.D. discussed plans for a fundraiser and social event in December, which included a game and raffle baskets. The event, sponsored by various organizations, aimed to support Dolly Parton's Imagination Library. J.D. encouraged everyone to invite friends and colleagues to the event, which would feature appetizers, drinks, and a specialty cocktail. Lisa added that attendees should brush up on Dolly Parton's music for a game with prizes.

10. Engagement

Board Report presented by Lisa Foydel

Lisa announced a significant donation from Follet, a company that specializes in educational materials, to the Dolly Parton Imagination Library. This donation, worth \$100,000, will enable the library to expand its services to all of Aurora and the Fox Valley United Way service area. The library plans to use the funds for marketing and outreach, including sign-up events at libraries, farmers markets, and preschools. Lisa also mentioned a volunteer who will assist with the administration of the program and a young woman named Luisa de Leon who will intern to help with events. The team expressed excitement and anticipation for the expansion of the library's services

11. Next Meeting Date – Thursday, February 13, 2024

11. Adjournment – Motion to Adjourn, motion approved.