Notes from June 21, 2019 AEU Assembly Business Meeting #1
9:15 AM
Tampa, Florida

Opening words by Hugh Taft-Morales and Joy McConnell
Group song, led by Bart Worden
Welcome by President John McCormick
Bart Worden’s State of the Union Address

Business meeting:

Current Board Officers and Trustees are: President, John McCormick, Vice President, Tom Castelnuovo, Secretary, Jill Aul, Treasurer, Ken Novak; Trustees: Sharon Stanley, Liz Singer, Bob Gordon, Martina Brunner (not present) and Sonja Kueppers

Incoming slate of officers for the coming year are:
Sonja Kueppers-President
Ken Novak-Vice President
Sharon Stanley-Secretary
Tom Castelnuovo-Treasurer

Introduction of incoming Board candidates, aiming to replace outgoing Trustees: Martina Brunner and Jill Aul (out-going), Casey Giordono-Foat and Liz Collier (incoming)

Sonja Kueppers led a discussion about future Assembly plans:

Everyone believes it’s important for all of us to meet in person regularly with people from other Societies. The purpose of the proposal is to attract new/different people to get together in some way, along with those who are usually participating. The Assembly is the business meeting. Our by-laws require that we meet at least every 2 years to conduct our business. New York laws state that we must meet every year. Those business meetings must occur in person, according to NY law.

We currently send delegates to the Assembly to vote, but we ARE permitted to send proxies to do that. We could change the number required to make a quorum. We could have virtual meetings in advance, to share information to our delegates. So we do have some flexibility. On Sunday, we will vote on these 3 items, using weighted votes:

1. Should we hold the Assembly in its current form?
2. In 2020, should we do something else?
3. Should we have a 2020 Assembly, while planning to do something else in 2021?

Options:

1. Encouraging AEU members to attend the Humanists International congress in Miami in August 2020 in place of the traditional AEU Assembly

2. More of a retreat type of get-together, including family programming that includes children
3. Move to an every-other year Assembly, with smaller regional meetings on the alternating years

AEU leaders James Croft and Anne Klaeysen both spoke about their experiences attending the World Humanist Congress in Oxford, England, years ago. They both feel that it is an extraordinary experience to be able to attend a WH Congress, when it will occur in our country next summer. (In Miami, August 6-9, 2020)

Bart Worden spoke about the history of AEU Assemblies. We currently draw a core group of about 60 people, along with 30-40 new folks each year. We also have ethical education gatherings, and YES and FES gatherings. In past years, we also ran Lay Leadership Summer School programs for adults. Perhaps we can create a new, sustainable, successful way to incorporate some of these ideas going forward.

Q and A followed, for about 15 minutes.

Sonja Kueppers discussed the by-laws amendments that have been proposed. These include:

1. The current delegation is required to be headed by a board member or an officer of a Society. (We have not been following that requirement in every case.) The proposed change would bring our by-laws into compliance with our actual practice, which would allow any member at large to serve as a delegate.

2. Our member Societies should allow our delegates to be members of another Society. That way, a Society that is unable to send a delegate could ask a member of another Society to represent them at the business meeting and vote as they have requested.

More discussion will take place this afternoon at 5 PM in the King Palm room.

The proposed Resolution, recommended by the Susquehanna Valley Society, was next discussed. It is titled “Defending the Right to Vote” and includes listing current issues that suppress voting across the US, and how we might address them. Information is included in the Delegate web site online.

Q and A followed. There will be an informational session to work on this further tomorrow (Saturday) at 5 PM.

We will vote on Sunday.

Ken Novak led a discussion about the Budget.

We are in a strong asset position.
Ken explained our assets, including $106k current addition to our bank account and $578k in stocks and bonds. After accounting for expected income from apportionment payments, etc, we have $612k in net assets.
We are budgeting $451k in expenses for the upcoming year. The basic expenses we face include personnel, administrative general expenses which includes auditing, Visiting Leaders Bureau, the Society Development Team, Board travel, Communications, Ethical Action and Humanists International dues. YES (Youth of Ethical Societies) and FES (Future of Ethical Societies) are self-sustaining.

The Momentum Public Relations firm hasn’t been included in the Budget at this point, however time will be taken throughout this summer to see if funding can be secured somehow. Our contract with Momentum ends this September. Momentum currently charges us $5,800.00 per month.

More information can be obtained at the budget workshop meetings scheduled throughout this weekend. The budget will be voted upon Sunday.

Respectfully submitted,

Jill Aul, Secretary