

Rio Grande Center for Spiritual Living Board Meeting

June 19, 2022

Meeting called to order by Mark Ayers at 5:39 PM

Board members present: Rev. Karen Linsley, Mark Ayers, Carol Helms, Doug Bowe, Thomas Himes, Tamara Williams, Hana Dawson

Invocation – Greg Gardner, Practitioner

Vision/Mission/Motivational Statements – All

- Vision: Transforming Our World with the Power of Love in Action.
- Mission: Loving All Creation Through Spiritual Growth and Service; Always Staying True to Our Highest Self
 - To create a world class, leading edge, replicable, cultural model to spread Science of Mind on a foundation of love, freedom and truth that stands the span of time.

Acknowledgement of Guests – Greg Gardener, Carmella Herrera

Approval of Minutes from May 15 and Special Board Meetings – Thomas motioned to approve the minutes which was seconded. Board gives clarity, consensus and commitment.

Discussion Items

1. People & Events Coordinator Report (Carmella Herrera) – Approval

Carmella shared the report with Rev. Gil earlier today. She is working on a list of people who will attend the new members orientation. The new name tags have arrived and are being dispersed to their owners. She and Tamara are working on getting people on a list for “My Share” and currently have two congregations willing to share. The 6 weekly bulletins printed for today went fast and definitely are being used by congregants who may not have access to the online bulletin. We had 48 people in the center today for service, which was amazing.

2. Interim Minister’s Report – Rev. Karen Linsley

Mark shared that Rev. Gil was the one who had the idea to do a communal signing with the letter of call, and Mark feels this is a small sample of what he’s going to bring to the center as our new Senior Minister. Carmella’s position will more than likely be extended through the end of August to make sure the transition for Rev. Gil taking on her responsibilities is flawless.

Rev. Karen shared that when it came time for the signing, she realized she was smiling the entire time seeing the signing even from her position watching on Facebook live. Rev. Karen agrees with Mark that Rev. Gil is just so enthusiastic and brings so much energy into the center. Even though he is not even officially our Senior Minister, he is already putting himself into the center and bringing so much energy to RGCSL. Rev. Karen has been working with NanDei on the Policies and Procedures

manual for RGCSL, which are currently all handwritten. Rev. Karen is going to work on getting all of these typed up so they can be dispersed. The Policies and Procedures manual is going to be for anyone who is in any position (paid or not) at the Center to be able to know what the proper way is to handle any type of job at the center. Once the manual is ready to go, we will need a few Board members willing to review and finalize it. Then we will have a physical copy and a digital copy available at the Center.

Rev. Karen has been speaking with Tamara regarding the website, and it is currently built with WordPress. They've also discussed another website building platform called Wix. Rev. Karen has looked into the difference between the two, and Wix is a little more user friendly but doesn't have as many features. Rev. Karen has been working with Annette and she also agrees that a re-design for the website would be beneficial.

Rev. Karen is working with Rev. Gil and sharing with him things he needs to know as he prepares to transition into his new role. She talks with Carmella once a week, and speaks with Michael almost daily regarding office duties, mostly helping with Breeze.

Rev. Karen, Rev. Gil, and Rev. Martha have been chatting about doing a ritual the last weekend in August, (August 28th). Rev. Karen will be here in person, along with Rev. Martha and Rev. Gil. The ritual is going to celebrate the beginning of RGCSL with Rev. Martha, Rev. Karen helping in the middle, and the end of this era transitioning into the hands of Rev. Gil for the next part of RGCSL's life.

Tamara expressed that she feels the ritual will be amazing. And Greg suggested we invite other reverends around the state to come and celebrate the ministers' "Passing the Torch."

Senior Minister Report – Rev. Gil Olmstead

Rev. Gil sent a message saying, "I am so grateful and excited to be stepping into the role of Spiritual Director with the RGCSL Community. Thank you all for being so supportive and making this process such a collaborative experience. I am so sorry that I'm couldn't be with you today – however I suspect there will be many more opportunities."

Here's what's happening:

1. He is In town this weekend getting familiar with housing options.
2. He attended the Practitioner meeting on June 11. They shared with him some of what they love about being Practitioners and what might create more community within the Practitioner core.
3. He will be attending CSL Teen Camp in Oregon as an advisor from July 6 –July 13.
4. He has added his speaking dates to next quarter's schedule that Rev Karen is so graciously coordinating.
5. He has one virtual speaking date in July.

6. He and Rev. Karen are meeting weekly.
7. He will be working with Rev Karen on co-leading a new member orientation on June 28.
8. He and Rev. Karen are also excited about a celebration for RGCSL at the end of August.
9. He is excited about an opportunity for RGCSL to participate with multiple other centers in a 4-week Abundance class in September led by Rasheryl McCreary. Rasheryl was a keynote speaker at the CSL conference in January. Details will be available next week.

4. Discussion with Technology Director – Annette Martinez

- *Update on Office Manager:* Mark has been working with Michael and Selena getting the monthly financial reports. Rev. Karen and Annette are working with Michael to ensure he's doing okay and able to do the job duties needed. Rev. Karen shared that Michael is very good at some duties, however he does struggle with some of the technical duties needed. For instance, Michael didn't realize what the difference between an account payable and a summary of the expenses. Rev. Karen feels he is ethical and honest, and she feels he can learn the duties he needs with more time. Michael is also willing to take classes as needed.

Thomas shared concerns about Michael and feels that there should be some concrete timelines set in place for how/when we move forward if we will keep Michael in his position as office manager. Mark said to have a timeline of up to our next Board meeting in July to see if Michael will continue to be a good fit as office manager or not. If it comes to a point where Rev. Karen feels that we are going to have to look for a new office manager, we are going to investigate a better hiring process if it comes to it. Thomas suggested that we have a probationary period set for the next new hire if this comes up.

Rev. Karen will give us a week's notice when she feels a decision is made from her as to how we are going to move forward with Michael. This week she is going to share with him what the Board has talked about and with a month timeline, she'll see how he is feeling about his job position. If Rev. Karen doesn't see a noticeable difference in two weeks, she will let the Board know so that we can prepare for how to move forward. The Board is going to make a final decision either way by the next Board meeting in July at the very latest.

- *Proposal for Computer Needs as part of Summer Appeal:*

- *Website management:* Mark shared that the website has been a major discussion lately and is something that really falls to the Marcom Committee to look into updating.

Last weekend Barbara Dawson did the announcements and she noticed that a lot of information on the website is out-of-date. Annette mentioned she would be training Michael on this. However, the Board feels that the website is not going to be part of Michael's duties as it was not part of the job description. Rev. Karen agrees that Michael is the wrong person to put in charge of the website. Up until this time, Annette has overseen the website. She agreed to share the duties of the website with others who can help ensure that the website is staying updated and current.

Rev. Karen feels there should be a website committee and said she is willing to work on it through the next 6 weeks of her time with us. Tamara said she felt that the website should be under the umbrella of the MarCom committee, but she has been hesitant to bring it up in the past because it is a huge project to overhaul the website and possibly create a new website. Tamara said she spoke with Annette about it and Annette has been receptive to discussing a website overhaul, and to let Tamara and Rev. Karen assist with this. Rev. Gil is also very interested in helping with the website and has knowledge of how to build and work websites as well.

Mark made a motion that the website is to be under the purview by the MarCom committee moving forward. Tamara seconded. The Board gave clarity, commitment, and consensus. Tamara, Rev. Karen and Rev. Gil will create a sub-committee temporarily to discuss revamping of the website in a timely fashion. Hana, Thomas and possibly Barbara Dawson will also assist on this committee.

Doug asked about which website creators are going to be the best and most accessible for users. Rev. Karen shared that her own WordPress sites she's created are accessible for any browser no matter which device or browser the user is using.

5. Financial Report – Mark Ayers

a. Review May report – Thomas made a motion to approve the financial report, Hana seconded. The Board gave clarity, commitment and consensus.

Our finances show we are still on a downward decline. By September or October 1st at the absolute latest we need to have a treasurer in place. Mark does not feel comfortable continuing to make Doug stand in as treasure as he did not initially want this position. Donations were very low in May resulting in a \$3300 deficit. Our checking account is currently down to \$500 so we need to approve a transfer from our savings account.

Rev. Karen shared that in the summer months, attendance and donations tend to fall slightly due to members being out and about for the summer. The Center is also in the middle of transitioning to bringing Rev. Gil on board as our senior minister. We still have \$35,000 in a savings account. This is what the savings account is for -- to assist when we are in times of need and transition. Rev. Karen believes that within the year we are going to be in an upward trend of finances and be able to begin adding back to our savings once more.

Rev. Karen said she has been in “dying” centers before and she knows that this is not one of those dying centers. She trusts and knows that we are going to come back strong as a community and center.

Mark made a motion to transfer \$3000 from savings into checking. Thomas seconded the motion. The Board gave clarity, consensus and commitment.

b. Tithe to CSL – 8% * = \$689.43 and \$100 goes to the La Placita Institute Community Fund (per Selena)

c. Consensus on Summer Appeal (amount, dates, parameters, timeline)

Mark said we fundraise \$2500 for Rev. Gil's relocation expenses. In addition, we have to purchase three laptops and one desktop for the center. One laptop is for the tech team to support the camera and livestream. We need another computer to support the large tv that we use to support online workshops or other online activities. Rev. Gil has also requested that we have a laptop for the center for his use. And a desktop computer is needed for the office manager as well.

Tamara feels that we need to ensure that we develop a list of specifications for these computers because we may need smaller processing computers for some of these tasks and we may be able to allow for a smaller budget for laptops. Mark is going to work with Annette and Rev. Karen tomorrow to see which computer specifications are required and ensure we are very clear on what we need.

Mark would like to also include a request for about \$1000 for website development and whatever is needed. He is unsure what may be involved in this process, but really feels we should have some sort of budget involved to revamp the website.

Tamara expressed some concerns with asking for \$5000 when donations are already down. However, Mark shared that in the past when we have put out a clear need, the community has been more than willing to support the center in getting the funds required.

Mark made a motion to approve the request from the community and Thomas seconded. The Board gave clarity, consensus and commitment.

6. Special Board Dinner (Members & Spouses) to Celebrate Letter of Call

Mark will send out an email for suggestions for dates of when a special Board dinner will work for Board members plus Greg Gardner and Carmella Herrera. The Board will all respond and the idea is to have this dinner before the next Board meeting.

Next Board Meeting – Sunday, July 17, 2022

Benediction – Greg Gardner, Practitioner

Meeting adjourned at 7:23 PM