
Friendship Force news from your club April & May2020

1 message

Friendship Force of Southwest Florida <eagleswingsj+yahoo.com@ccsend.com>

Sun, Apr 19, 2020 at 4:17 PM

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To: michellejeanne11@gmail.com

**friendship force**

SOUTHWEST FLORIDA

April & May 2020 Newsletter*Our Website* www.friendshipforceswfl.org**Friendship Force International Appeal for Funds**

We hope this letter finds you and your family in good health. We are writing to you with concerns that we have for the future of Friendship Force International.

As presidents we feel it only fair to share with you the minutes of the April 9 conference call between

ALL of the FF Florida Club Board Members and Jeremi Snook, FFI CEO. In addition, FF Canada and New Zealand clubs have been in touch with our club to explain where we are today as far as how FFI will maintain its future.

At this time we have not received a presentation from FFI as to how they will sustain their organization moving forward. We are looking forward to a future budget and organization *restructure* and we are told that this information is

forthcoming. We do look at Friendship Force with optimism and hope to hear that their effort to restructure will allow us to operate again worldwide.

☆ The following are the minutes from both the FFI video meeting and our own Club Board meeting.

April 9th Conference Call with All Florida Clubs Minutes:

Friendship Force Florida Clubs Meeting On Status of FFI's Request for Funds during Pandemic April 9, 2020 via Go to Meetings Electronic App

CEO Jeremi Snook welcomed approximately 20 participants in leadership throughout the State of Florida. Allison Lindsey of FFI also attended.

He stated that 15 employees are currently on staff for FFI; however, many are employed on a part-time basis. Therefore, they currently support 10.38 FTE (full time equivalent employees). These employees handle 350 clubs worldwide in 62 countries containing 15,000 members of which 4,000 members travel with FF every year.

He informed us that FFI uses a "Revenue Model" for their budget that has been in existence for 30 years that is dependent upon travel for their revenue. The current pandemic impacts every single market. We can expect no journeys this calendar year with the hope that by April 2021, we will be able to begin to come back on track. His plan is to cut all projects, curtail expenses with furlough of some staff. He later mentioned 20 percent reduction in employee hours. He mentioned that there would be a world-wide rollout asking for funds and that hundreds of people have already stepped up with contributions. He mentioned that there is "no good time" to ask for funds, especially during this stressful time in our history.

At this point, individual members asked questions. (Please note that previously written questions had been submitted to Jeremi from Regional Representative, Marilyn Whelan, before this meeting, which he did not address).

- Mary Ann from Sarasota suggested that U.S. club appeals could wait until members received their government stimulus checks.
- David from Sarasota asked about last year's budget vs this year's and what the projections are to the end of the year. Jeremi stated that he is working with the FFI Board Treasurer, James Permana, to present a webinar soon (date to be determined) that would explain the numbers in detail. He stated that last year and the first quarter of 2020 were profitable (the best in years) and we had a surplus of \$100,000. He mentioned that instead of asking for \$500,000, after reworking the numbers, FFI now needs \$340,000. He is working on contingency plans for all scenarios. He mentioned many times that if FFI decides to hibernate (or freeze operations) until times are better, we would be able "to come out of the cage." We would lose staff and it would be difficult to start over. He mentioned on the FFI website, we could talk about it more on blog.ffi.org in the Chat section.
- He was asked by our regional rep, Marilyn Whelan about professional fundraising; specifically, there was talk previously about using someone in the Tampa, FL area. He stated that FFI has spoken to two firms and there was agreement that an endowment is needed to ensure the viability of the organization. He mentioned the name of Andy Bowen, an individual who can connect us to "high wealth" individuals and is a specialist in reaching our core demographics of 55-65 age range. All this is in the preliminary stages and not

ready for club-wide publication. Now that there is a pandemic, it is not being pursued.

- Maureen Butt, President, from Southwest Florida Group stated that his discussion of finances were generalizations. She would like to know specifics, for instance, what would the \$340,000 be spent on? How much money does FFI currently have?

Jeremi Snook stated that currently FFI has \$440,000 in its bank accounts. This money does not include the first quarter membership dues and the revenue from journeys in January, February and March 2020. \$200,000 is in savings and \$240,000 is in other accounts. These funds will keep FFI going until August 2020. He is hopeful that we can obtain \$100,000 from the US government for non-profit support, but that is not a sure thing.

Maureen asked about \$30,000 that was in the 2018 Tax Return filed by FFI (public information) that went to countries throughout the world. Jeremi Snook stated that these funds were needed to support regional clubs and give them small grants to further FFI.

- Carol Nasby, Vice President, from Southwest Florida Group asked how Jeremi decided upon a 20% versus a 50% reduction in staff hours. Jeremi stated that the number was established based upon where employees were located. He mentioned one of his plans was to reduce staff to 7.5 FTE in May and then down to 4 FTE by June 2020. He discussed FFI's liability on its lease on Peachtree Street, Atlanta, GA. Even though FFI made the decision to have its staff work from home remotely, they subleased to another firm who have not paid the rent in the past few months.

- Allison Lindsay explained the work the employees are currently doing issuing refunds and planning for 2021 matches. She was thanked by some of the people attending the meeting.

- Mary Place, President of FF Villages, suggested that FFI create a PowerPoint presentation that would accurately show where we stand financially today and project the budget over the next 12-24 months out. It would also detail what changes in the organization will be made to show cost cutting measures and identify where the requested donation money would go. She emphasized that FF members need to know this before they could consider any contribution. Jeremi stated he thought this was a good idea.

- Joanne Collins, Past President, from Southwest Florida Group commented that she felt we did not have enough information to decide whether to support FFI yet, and it is regretful that this info was not available in today's meeting. Jeremi talked about trust and how important it is to trust that our organization is doing the best it can under the circumstances. He reiterated that clubs with big treasuries should send money into FFI to keep it going. He stated that there is no reason to save it "for a rainy day", when there is a hurricane going. He mentioned he was willing to go over budget numbers line by line and that we could get on his schedule by contacting Chris@ff.org

Respectfully submitted,
Joanne Collins Past President, FF of Southwest Florida

Board Meeting FF of Southwest Florida Club Minutes:

Pres Maureen Butt called the board meeting to order at 2:15 ... via On-Line ZOOM.

Also present:

Co-Pres Ginny Dooley, Vice-Pres Carol Nasby and Secretary Sue Masters.

Absent: Treasurer, Rich Copeland.

TOPIC: The Future of FFI Atlanta and FF SWFL

This ZOOM Board Meeting was called to discuss the current situation with FFI and the request for donations to help keep FFI afloat financially. Board Members had previously attended and discussed these recent events related to this situation to evaluate the future and possible closing of FFI:

* The On-Line Conference Call with FFI Pres Jeremi Snook and our FF Region Rep, Marilyn Whelan. We also reviewed the minutes of this as recorded by Joanne Collins. These minutes will also be sent to our membership.

* ANALYSIS of FFI FINANCIALS by Robert Cooper (a 15 year board member with New Zealand FF) and currently serving as Accountant / Treasurer.

We are also in touch with Chuck Goldfarb, a FFI Board member, who covers FF Clubs on the East Coast of US. He had not been included on the original FFI Conference Call with us.

Since FFI has been over budget back to 2018, there is serious concern about proper management and over-site by the FFI Management and it's BOD.

Our board decided to hold off on any donation to FFI until further evaluation of this situation. We are hoping for a Restructure Plan from FFI at some point.

Individual members may send their donations to FFI if they wish. \$100,000 has been donated by FF clubs and various individuals.

The board voted unanimously that any new members who joined in October through Feb will have their membership extended to include the 2021 membership year. This is due to the current situation with COVID-19 and the possible closing of FFI.

Due to sheltering in place our May 1 General Meeting has been cancelled.

All 2020 FFI Journeys "worldwide" have been cancelled. We hope that our assigned "2021" Journeys will go as planned.

The Board discussed the need to review and update our current By-Laws.

Board recommends donating to Harry Chapin Foundation / Food Bank during this COVID-19 situation.

Meeting was adjourned at 2:35.

Respectfully submitted,

Sue Masters
Secretary

Separated but Not Apart



Many of us had a great time at our last holiday event

It's been a challenging time for all of us! Many of us miss dear Bev and wonder how Kev is doing. Bev's daughters sent a check to our club from donations they received at her funeral in Kansas City. It was so nice of her family to think about our club in their time of loss.

We've had to stay physically isolated, but many people are finding new ways to stay together. One way we have tried is using ZOOM, an app that is free to download. I even do my water aerobics class this way! The instructor calls me up and I put my tablet next to my pool out on my lanai. Others in the class do the same thing. We can all see one another and the instructor has us do our exercises in our personal pools. It's been so nice to have this wonderful form of exercise continue. I also found Yoga Classes on Amazon Prime for free. I like classes given by Lindsey Samper, who is easy to follow and has wonderful neck and low back stretches! Let us know how you are communicating. If you would like to meet up on ZOOM, let me know and we will arrange a date and time for those who want to try it. Let's stay positive and talk about some of the silver linings or blessings you've found during this trying time.



Save the Dates 2020 -Events & Meetings Starting time 10 AM

<i>April 3 - Cancelled</i>	<i>FF Romania Habitat Build by Michelle Kemps</i>
<i>May 1 - Cancelled</i>	<i>TBD^</i>
<i>June</i>	<i>Social with Lunch TBD^</i>
<i>July</i>	<i>No meeting</i>
<i>August</i>	<i>Ice Cream Social TBD^</i>
<i>September 4</i>	<i>TBD^</i>
<i>October 2</i>	<i>TBD^</i>
<i>November</i>	<i>TBD^</i>
<i>December</i>	<i>Holiday Event TBD^</i>

^TBD = To be determined

**CHANGING THE WAY YOU
SEE THE WORLD**

"Often when you think you're at the end of something, you're at the beginning of something else."

Fred Rogers

Parting Shot



Michelle visited India a few months ago and here she is interacting with the women

Quick Links... help you find info fast!

Just put your cursor on what you want and click away! See below links...

[**Friendship Force International \(FFI\) Website**](#)

[FFI Journeys Scheduled for 2020 Worldwide](#)

[Journey Application and Agreement Form](#)

[**FFI Stories of Friendship**](#)

[**Friendship Force of Southwest Florida Group on Facebook**](#)

[Order our Club Shirt](#)
[Join our Club](#)

2020 Elected Board

(voting members):

Presidents

Ginny Dooley

Maureen Butt

Vice President & Membership

Carol Nasby

Treasurer

Richard Copeland

Secretary

Sue Masters

2020 Non-voting Board

Publicity

Luvvy Koviak

Host & Journey Mentoring

Cheryle Phelps

Newsletter

Joanne Collins

Webmaster

Michelle Kemps

Social Committee

Maureen Butt

Club Photographer

Maureen Butt

Sunshine, FaceBook, Ice Cream Social

Open position opportunities

**Experience Different Views.
Discover Common Ground.**

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