



THE INTERNATIONAL FOCUSING INSTITUTE

Building on the work of Eugene T. Gendlin since 1979

Board of Trustees

MINUTES

April 9, 2022

Online

Documents sent via email prior to meeting

From Nelle:

- Agenda
- Policies 4-8-2022 (document with all policies – sent immediately after the meeting)
- ED Evaluation Procedure – edited for 2022
- Peter Afford Resignation letter

From Catherine:

- Draft minutes 2022.03
- Israeli Coordinators request for an exception to the new membership rates.
- 2022 Q1 report
- SWOT analysis recap
- DEI (Diversity Equity and Inclusion) statement
- ED report – this was accidentally not emailed, although it was put in the shared Dropbox folder

PRESENT

Nelle Moffett, Florentina Sassoli, Darryl Commings, Evelyn Fendler-Lee, Catherine Torpey

There were about 15 minutes when only Catherine, Evelyn and Nelle were present. They had an informal conversation about ways to engage people with us from outside the existing Focusing community; young people and well-known people whose work is in keeping with the ethos of Focusing.

We also discussed the problem of the word “Focusing” as having a public meaning which we cannot overcome. Google Translate will never recognize the word’s special meaning over above the common public meaning.

I. MINUTES

The minutes of the March meeting were approved as submitted.

II. EVALUATION PROCESS OF EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR (ED)

The revisions of the process were briefly discussed and voted upon.

APPROVED

III. PORTFOLIOS

(2022 assignments)

- a. Finance – Darryl
- b. Nominating Committee - Flor

- c. Intellectual Property rights - Nelle
- d. Gendlin Center - Evelyn
- e. Membership and Goodwill Calls –
- f. Strategic Planning – Nelle
- g. Diversity Statements– Evelyn

CONSENSUS: Based on March conversation, add something like "Coordinator Relations" to the Membership/Goodwill portfolio

IV. DRAFT POLICY ON PAYING TEACHERS (Catherine) Discussion
This was tabled to the end of the meeting if we had time (we didn't)

V. DIVERSITY, EQUITY AND INCLUSION STATEMENT (Evelyn, Catherine)

There was substantial discussion about whether to use language identifying specific groups who are discriminated against historically. This can unnecessarily raise tensions in an organization where we want to be inclusive to multiple perspectives. On the other hand, a lack of specific language can be a way of not taking a stand for certain peoples. There is always the possibility of missing identities that are not specifically named; we might miss one that is relevant. Our intention is to be open to all people. We are also planning to take this to the Coordinators, and we might see what they think.

DECISION: Evelyn and Catherine will make further revisions based on these suggestions and bring it back to the board in May

VI. REQUEST FROM ISRAELI COORDINATORS REGARDING PRICE OF MEMBERSHIP (Catherine)
Catherine introduced the topic by going over the letter from the Israeli Coordinators asking for an exception for Israel in the new membership pricing scheme. She expressed her appreciation for the tone and the care that the Israelis took in their communication. She also went over the input from the Membership Committee about this question.

There was a wide ranging discussion, but consensus that we are not able to accommodate special cases for any country. The same division of rich and poor exists in almost every country. Board members gave their opinions on the various ways in which a compassionate, appropriate response could be made to the Israeli Coordinators.

DECISION: Since this will be taken to the ILC, and Catherine will be the one responding, a vote is not needed. The Board requested a report back next month.

VII. STATUS OF NOMINATING COMMITTEE (Flor)
Flor reported on who is being considered for ILC and Board.

The conversation led to a discussion of a new idea:
Possible creation of non-voting positions on the board for younger people or others whom we'd like to cultivate. We would want to define and name this kind of position, with an intention of having them more connected as well as knowledgeable about our work, but without the full weight of being a board member. It would be for a designated period of time and a non-voting position.

DECISION: Nelle and Catherine will write up a draft proposal of the idea of having a non-voting member for a specified period of time and bring that draft to the Board for discussion.

VIII. EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR REPORTS

a. First Quarter Report

DECISION: Board voted to accept the Q1 report

b. General report

Catherine had put her report in the shared Dropbox folder but had accidentally not emailed it. She verbally reviewed the items in her report.

IX. STRATEGIC CONVERSATION

The Board reviewed the letter that Peter Afford had sent when he resigned, and it was read and felt-sensing time given to what he expressed about what didn't work well for him to see what resonated for members.

Meeting adjourned.

The next Board meeting will be on Friday May 13, 2022 at 12noon (U.S. Eastern time)

TO DO's arising from this meeting:

- Catherine will report back on the response to the Israeli Coordinators
- Evelyn and Catherine will revise the Diversity, Equity and Inclusion statement
- Catherine will have the policy on the ED evaluation process updated on focusing.org/board
- Catherine will report back at the May meeting on the response to the Israeli Coordinators
- Nelle and Catherine will write up a draft proposal of the idea of having a non-voting member for a specified period of time and bring that draft to the Board for discussion.
- Catherine will email her April ED report