



TIAR Board Meeting Minutes
February 16, 2006

Present- Paul Brayer, Sally Brown , Sally Chamberlain, Sr. Gratia L'Esperance, Reggie Hopkinson, Neil Jaschik, Milt Lederman, Ed Lemon, Marv Mich, Gail Mott, Heidi Parreno, Farzana Razvi, Bill Spilly, Gil Strother, Peter Peters

Minutes from January meeting approved- no changes made.

Should TIAR endorse the organization New York Access to Justice? Bill Spilly reported on the national group. It's a non-profit, non-partisan group interested primarily in justice and tort reform. It got start up funding from Michael Moore; has an impressive list of celebrities and lawyers on its board. It essentially does research into tort reform. It wants TIAR's name to list as one of its supporters, but Neil Jaschik states would not move this until we are sure of what this organization stands for. Gail Mott will check with the Judicial Process Commission. Marv Mich noted that tort reform is on the margins of TIAR's focus. Action was tabled until we have complete information.

Should TIAR sponsor an Edison Tech student on a work/trip to Biloxi? Sr. Gratia L'Eperance has an email asking groups to sponsor students from Edison Tech who are traveling to Biloxi for 10 days to help rebuild Biloxi. The amount is \$800 per student. Marv Mich says GRCC is sponsoring a student and moved that TIAR give \$400; Heidi Parent seconded. We will ask the student to report back to us on his/her experience. The motion passed unanimously.

Should TIAR take on the poverty education task of Let Justice Roll?
Neil explained that it's been suggested by Let Justice Roll: that TIAR could use our poverty DVD and workbook, along with a Power Point Presentation being developed, to educate various religious and civic groups in the Rochester area. Discussion touched on whether to simply educate and not suggest an action or do both. There was also discussion between using the DVD only with TIAR presenters or just selling them to interested buyers concluding that both are good and that suggested actions after the presentation is important.

Both Heidi Parenno and Paul Brayer reminded the board of the limited membership of the poverty task force while the old poverty task force had about 25 people in it. Neil agreed but felt we would we would not need a large coordinating group and that presenters would be recruited from others besides TIAR.

Peter Peters reminded the group that some of the information is outdated; Ed Lemon said that the power point updates much of the statistics. Bill Spilly suggested that the board again appeal to the membership at large. It was moved by Sally that "TIAR board agrees to be the education arm of Let Justice Roll. They will work to reconstitute the Poverty Task Force in order to accomplish this goal." Gail seconded and the board voted in favor with Heidi Parreno abstaining.

Should TIAR join with Pax Christi and other groups on a Resolution on Civil Liberties? Heidi Parreno says that Pax Christi and other groups like the Rochester Human Defense Committee, that are interested in the Bill of Rights, have been viewing a DVD that discussed opposing sections of the Patriot Act. Sally Brown states that if members are interested in action regarding the Patriot Act, all they have to do is go to the LWVUS.org website, enter their zip code and it will automatically set you up to send a letter to your representatives. Since the vote will be done by early March before the next TIAR meeting it is agreed that if members want to take action they can use the LWV website.

The Board deferred any action on Wal-Mart. Neil says he will check with the national TIA and find out if they have a position on this issue. Also Marv Mich says that he has access to copies of the DVD called Wal-Mart, The High Cost of Low Prices, if anyone wants to borrow one. Paul Brayer says that there is one TIAR member working in Victor to stop Wal-Mart from building there, but the board agrees it is not one of our core issues. Should TIAR co-sponsor a Movie Afternoon at the Little Theater? Milt Lederman has received approval of the ACLU, the LWV and others to rent the Little for a movie afternoon. The cost for a Sunday at 2pm would be between \$250-\$500 dollars. Originally Milt thought the movie Good Night and Good Luck would be good, but says most Rochestarians who wanted to have already seen it. Sr. Gratia L'Esperance pointed out that we also have the Rosa Parks DVD. Peter Peters suggested we sponsor a Progressive Citizens Film Festival. Milt will investigate further.

Paul Brayer asks for Westside TIAR Members to Lobby the Monroe County Legislature. Paul says there has been a tremendous response by TIAR board and membership to help with the task of speaking to our legislators about problems with the Social Services: their unrealistic job interview requirements and problems with lack of access. There are areas on the west side of the county that don't have any TIAR members. We need to recruit members there to reach the legislature's west-side representatives.

Does TIAR want to become involved in the New York Interfaith Power and Light Project? Neil says that Elizabeth Pixley is inviting interested people to a meeting in Fairport. Gail Mott says it's a great idea but again not one of TIAR's core issues.

No reports regarding the Fair Election Practices Committee, or Theocracy Watch, or the Health Care Committee.

Gratia will continue to work on a values statement. Peter Peters asked why was this necessary and Neil replied that TIAR wants to respond when the religious right accuses us of not having any values. Peter and Farzana both expressed an interest in helping with that.

Neil set up a new Nominating Committee- it has Gail Mott, Sr. Gratia L'Esperance, Farzana Razvi and all agreed that Bob Herman (on vacation) should be the Chairman.

The following announcements were made:

*We are a co-sponsor with the group MCPEARL and the ACLU for a program at the 12

Corners Middle School in April. We are bringing in the NY School Boards Association Legal Counsel to discuss Religion in the Schools.

* Gratia paraphrased a letter from the custodian of the Church who returned the \$10 dollars we paid for not having a key. He says he has not much use for most of the groups that use the church but does have respect for TIAR!

* Heidi Parreno states that Interfaith Action had Mayor Robert Duffy in with many of his staff for a retreat where many issues were discussed and Interfaith Action educated the Mayor about their platform. Neil says it would be a good idea to have a spokesperson from Interfaith Impact come and speak to us—Heidi agrees and says she will work to set it up.

* Neil reminded the executive committee about the next meeting and that the next Board meeting will be Thursday, March 16th here at the Methodist Church.

Minutes submitted by Sally Brown