

THE INTERFAITH ALLIANCE OF ROCHESTER
+People of Faith Working Together for Justice in Public Policy+

Board Meeting Minutes
May 18, 2006
Held at Covenant United Methodist Church

Attending: P. Brayer, D. Byrd, , S. Chamberlain, B.J. Gottorff, E. Herman, N. Jaschik, G. L'Esperance, A. Masood, I. Morrison, H. Parreno, M. Parsons, L. Rao, F. Razvi, W. Spilly, G. Strothers, D. Wynn, D. Yarbrough.

1. Opening Reflection- by N. Jaschik.
2. Additions/Changes to Agenda of the Regular Meeting. N. Jaschik requested a volunteer Secretary Pro Tem to take minutes because of absence of Secretary R. Herman. B.J. Gottorff so offered.
3. Introduction. Members introduced themselves and welcomed newcomers I. Morrison, A. Masood, F. Razvi, L. Rao and D. Wynn.
4. Minutes – Motion by W. Spilly, seconded by F. Razi to approve the minutes of the April 27, 2006 meeting as distributed by email. Approved unanimously.
5. Co-sponsorship- “Gathering of the Spirit” – a program scheduled for Sunday, September 10, 2006. TIAR has agreed to co-sponsor activity but still needs volunteer to serve on the planning committee. Interested parties should contact G. L'Esperance.
6. Poverty Task Force. G. L'Esperance reported that E. Lemon and his team are ready to present the updated version of “Faces of Poverty” to interested organizations.
7. Report of Nominating Committee. Representing absent committee chair R. Herman, N. Jaschik reported the TIAR slate of officers for the upcoming year: President: G. L'Esperance; Vice President: S. Chamberlain; Treasurer: M. Parsons; Secretary: R. Herman. Proposed members for the class of 2009 are: D. Byrd, S. Chamberlain, E. Herman, N. Jaschik, G. Weathers, G. Strothers, T. LeBeau. New members include: C. Appleton, E. Johnson, E. Lemon, A. Masood, I. Morrison, J. Noronha, P. Peters, L. Rao, and D. Wynn. E. Herman moved and P. Brayer seconded accepting the slate of nominees. Unanimously approved.
8. Annual Meeting. N. Jaschik reported. Preparations for the TIAR Annual Meeting on Sunday, June 4, 2006 at 3 p.m. in the Shults Center at Nazareth College are progressing. The program will include a business meeting with election of officers and Class of 2009 Board members, a video about Rosa Parks, the African American resistor who sparked the civil rights actions of the 1960's and a discussion lead by G. Wethers. All are welcome.
9. County Policy on Burials of the Poor. H. Parreno discussed a new County Policy effective March 1, 2006 to reduce the burial allowance for indigent people from \$1800 to \$1250, to require the surviving family members to apply for these benefits and to cremate, rather than bury, the body. A group of concerned citizens, the Citizens for Dignified Burial, are attempting to rally support to rescind this policy through write in, call and in –person protests. Ms. Parreno distributed preprinted

post cards and “Buried or Burned?” leaflets to board members. Opportunities to participate in the action include a meeting Monday, May 22, 2006 at Peace Baptist Church, 6 Oregon St. at 1:00 p.m. and a meeting on Friday May 26, 2006 with County Executive Maggie Brooks at 10:00 a.m. The County Legislature is scheduled to vote on the proposal to rescind on Tuesday, June 13, 2006 at 6:00 p.m. In response to a board member’s question, Ms. Parreno said the funeral home directors are not united in a response to this issue. P. Brayer moved and S. Chamberlain moved to support the Citizens for Dignified Burial. Approved unanimously.

10. Fair Share for Health Care Act. N. Jaschik reported that there is a bill in the NY State Assembly and Senate that would require employers of 100+ employees or employers who occupy 100K square feet of operational space to provide \$3.00 of benefits for each hour worked by hourly workers. Penalties for failure to provide such coverage would be equal to the amount denied the employees. The proposed bill claims enactment would provide coverage for 400,000 otherwise uninsured employees in the State, take 200,000 employees off Medicaid and save the State \$1.2 billion. N. Jaschik said TIAR had been asked to sign on as a co-sponsor but felt uneasy about the inflammatory wording of the proposal. He said he would discuss the issue with M. Mich, TIAR’s Health Care committee Chair.

11. Immigration. G. L’Esperance distributed a handout, based on the 2003 Pastoral Letter of the U.S. Roman Catholic Bishops which identified their view on “Values Rooted in Faith” and “Legislative Concerns.” Board members discussed the issue and agreed that an educational venue would be a good place to begin dialogue on this multi-faceted and controversial concern. G. L’Esperance, E. Herman and H. Parreno volunteered to serve as a subcommittee to pursue idea of a program open to the community.

12. TIAR’s Faith in Action Awardee is Marie Parsons. N. Jaschik encouraged members to contact GRCC directly (call Marie Gibson at 254-2570 and request to be seated at the TIAR table) to make reservations for the event scheduled for 5:30 p.m. on Tuesday, June 6, 2006 at the Clarion Riverside Hotel. N. Jaschik will email invitation to all TIAR members.

13. Other. M. Parsons distributed flyers on two Memorial Day celebrations dedicated to the United States Colored Troops (USCT) during the Civil War: “We Recall in Words, Reenactments and Song” from 2:30 – 4:30 p.m. on Sunday May 21, 2006 at Center at High Falls, Seneca Room, Browns Race and “Salute to Civil War Veterans at the Hallowed Ground of Mt. Hope Cemetery” at 2:30 – 3:45 p.m. on Sunday May 28, 2006 at Mt. Hope Cemetery.

14. Thanks. P. Brayer moved and S. Chamberlain seconded that TIAR designate \$100 and a thank you letter to be given to the Covenant United Methodist Church which has allowed TIAR to use its building for board meetings this past year. Approved unanimously.

15. “State of Belief” Radio Show (Welton Gaddy’s radio show on Air America radio.) P. Brayer and R. Herman are attempting to get WROC (950 AM) to carry program.

16. Membership. D. Byrd encouraged members to get their dues in as soon as possible. She also is looking for a volunteer to help with the creation of membership letterhead stationery. Prospective member letters were made available.

17. Announcements: H. Parreno distributed a leaflet on the “Faith Based Organizing Around Issues of Worker Justice” with Rev. Alexia Salvatierra, the Exec. Dir. Of Clergy and Laity United for Economic Justice (CLUE) who will be presenting a three hour workshop on Wednesday, June 7, 2006 at the Jewish Community Federation from 8:30 a.m. to 11:30 a.m. Interested parties should register with Michael Boucher at 325-5260. Admission is free.

18. Announcements: N. Jaschik announced there will be a brief memorial for servicemen and women who have given their lives during the Iraq and Afghanistan war. The program will begin at the Sister Cities Bridge in downtown Rochester immediately preceding the Memorial Day parade May 29, 2006.

19. Transition: N. Jaschik (symbolically) handed the gavel to incoming TIAR Presidential Nominee G. L’Esperance who will set the dates for all upcoming meetings.