



SOROPTIMIST  
Best for Women®

*Improving the lives of women and girls  
through programs leading to social  
and economic empowerment.*

## SOROPTIMIST INTERNATIONAL OF THE AMERICAS

### March 2018 Board of Directors Meeting Summary

Philadelphia, PA USA

#### Friday, March 9, 2018

The board carried out their fiduciary duty through the following reviews, discussions and decisions:

- Federation headquarters investment performance in the prior fiscal year and over the long term. Performance has paced the equities and bond markets over the long term.
- Net income projections over next four fiscal years and current dues amount. Decision was taken to increase dues by the projected cost of living increase. Dues will increase on July 1, 2018 from \$72 to \$74.
- Cost to hold a single board meeting in the U.S. with more than 50% of its members traveling from outside the U.S. and Canada. The board decided to reduce the number of face-to-face board meetings from five every biennium to four.
- Budget parameters used to create the FY18/19 budget. The board agreed to an upward adjustment of the U.S. and Canadian club and region liability per capita insurance premium from \$3 to \$5 to cover associated costs. The plan is a shared risk plan, where all U.S. and Canadian individual members share in the cost of general liability coverage. The increase is due to club general liability insurance losses considered by the insurance industry to be catastrophic or “shock” losses. A board discussion was held about the plan to manage U.S. and Canadian club risk for their events going forward.

The board considered the results of their responses to, “What is our organization’s beliefs and purpose?” This question was prompted by a brand consultant who stated many organizations do not reflect their belief and purpose in their vision and mission statements:

Board results:

- Belief: Economic empowerment of women and girls who face obstacles through education to help them reach their full potential.
- Purpose: Provide resources to target population (women and girls who face obstacles such as poverty, violence and teen pregnancy) for economic empowerment.

Next steps are to reflect our belief and purpose in our vision and mission.

The board discussed their expectation of regions in light of the philosophy the board should be asking no less from the regions than we have of the clubs and the federation board – to make difficult decisions about long-standing programs.

The board conducted work as the Governance Task Force. In November 2017, the board agreed they would review three areas of governance during board meetings over the next two years because it is the least expensive approach to assembling a face-to-face taskforce meeting. In March, the board considered the current and possible future factors for electoral areas. The board will continue to discuss the factors and weigh the pros and cons at their July 2018 board meeting.

The Soroptimist International governing structure has changed. This requires changes to SIA's procedures as to who will be the SIA representative Si voting delegates (board members). SIA Procedures L. Soroptimist International section 3 was amended, section 4 replaced and a new section 5 was added. SIA's board will elect one recent interested past board member for a two year term, each year prior to June. For details, refer to the [SIA Procedures](#) available on the website. Attendant Board Policies were updated to align with the procedure change.

Two new Fundraising Council members were appointed for the 2018-2020 period. They are LeeAnn Cochran and Dona Gaddis Wolf. A one-year vacancy for 2018-2019 was filled by the board's appointment of Susan Gilbey. The board appointed LeeAnn Cochran as the 2018-2019 Fundraising Council Chair.

The board amended those eligible for the Fundraising Council Nominations Committee to include the Immediate Past President in [SIA Procedures](#) H. Nominations and Election Procedure, 4.

### Saturday, March 10, 2018

The board discussed the concern of several U.S. clubs and members about our use of the word "disadvantaged" to describe our target of women and girls. The Board approved the below statement.

*Use of the word "disadvantaged."*

*You may have noticed that recently SIA started to use the phrase "disadvantaged women and girls" to describe the population we target. We began using this phrase when we realized not all our clubs and leaders were on the same page when it came to identifying the women and girls we want to help. We took our cue from the United Nations—which uses this term to describe women and girls most in need*

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*of assistance—to help educate our members, clubs and leaders. We have heard from several members that they found the use of this term offensive because it labels our target population of women and girls. It was never our intention to disrespect the amazing women and girls we serve. We have taken the objections seriously and have changed the phrase we use to describe our target population to: **women and girls who face obstacles such as poverty, violence and teen pregnancy.** We thank our members who took the time to bring their objections to our attention.*

The word “disadvantaged” will be removed from our content.

Part Two of Board Ambassador Training took place, followed by preparation for the Healthy Region conversations held at each region’s board meeting before or after region conferences. Responsibilities documents, messages and timelines were reviewed. Speech coach training was held.

### **Sunday, March 11, 2018**

The next membership campaign, the Diamond Campaign, Shining Our Way to the 2<sup>nd</sup> Century, was presented to the board. It will begin this coming club year, July 1, 2018 and continue through May 2022.

The board agreed to give membership goals to the regions on an annual basis. The goals will be pegged to the region’s current standing and the growth the organization is trying to achieve. Staff support will continue to be provided to regions to help them charter new clubs and retain and recruit members.

Due to the political and economic climate in Venezuela, the board agreed to waive the 2018 convention fee for clubs in Venezuela as well as allow flexibility in dues payment.

An SI update was given by President Dawn Marie. SIA has been tasked with planning the worldwide 100<sup>th</sup> anniversary celebration. It will be held at the Fairmont San Francisco hotel on October 1-3, 2021. SI will hold its board meeting prior to the event. President Dawn Marie announced that Sharon Fisher was elected as SI President-elect. Her time as SI President-elect will begin July 1 2018. She will take office January 1, 2020.

The board concluded their board meeting by monitoring the Executive Director & CEO board policies and conducting board meeting, president and self-assessments.

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