

ROTARY CLUB OF MENDOCINO

MINUTES OF BOARD MEETING OF 8.6.2026

Opening

The meeting was attended by seven members of Mendocino Rotary as well as the District Governor for Rotary District 5130 Jeff Kolin. Mendocino Rotary members attending included Gary, Toby, LaDonna, Jeff, Margaret, John Cottle and Leona, all members of the Board. Gary opened the meeting by declaring a quorum, while saying he had not circulated an agenda beforehand because he wanted to focus on our club goals, of which there were three, and what was needed to achieve them.

Club Goals and Activities

Gary led the meeting through a discussion of club goals. He said our primary goals were to increase membership, improve our public image, and plan fundraising activities. He asked for proposals to help us gain new members, keep existing members and re-motivate inactive members. Jeff responded by saying that a new corporate membership category might be of interest to the businesses, NGOs and public agencies of our community. It would allow such entities to divide the time required to attend meetings amongst several persons, and allow secondary members to take part in Rotary activities at lower cost. A proposal had been under discussion since June 23. After discussion, a corporate membership provision was formally approved, allowing companies to join at tiered pricing (base + 25% per additional attendee). The Interact Club at Mendocino High School (more than twice the size of the Rotary Club) was identified as a key pipeline for future members via parent outreach. Jeff Kolin suggested we prepare a list of 10 or so potential members, to be updated regularly as we go through the year.

Participants also discussed the need for a stronger social media presence, including regular posts (three times a week) on Facebook and Instagram, and the importance of face-to-face outreach to local merchants. Margaret would lead an effort to improve and expand our PR activities, including not only through the just-named social media, news outlets and radio but also through an updated website. Lastly, she would take the lead in preparation and printing of a new brochure, to be ready for our August 20 social mixer with the Chamber of Commerce.

Fundraising ideas were reviewed, such including an Oktoberfest/Poker Crawl, a Bingo by the Bay event, holiday-themed activities and the dinner raffle. It was decided that a Bingo by the Bay fundraiser would be planned for February 13th, with a projected revenue of approximately \$14,000, with LaDonna assembling a team to make it happen. An Oktoberfest/Poker Crawl event would be explored for September/October, potentially in collaboration with Trailborn. Last but not least we would aim for a slightly smaller (100 tickets) dinner raffle

Gary concluded the discussion of club activities by announcing meeting format changes to improve engagement, including a 12:15 start time, structured speaker slots, and fun elements like the Wheel of Misfortune and a Finemaster.

District Goals & Initiatives

District Governor Jeff Kolin outlined district-wide goals including net membership growth, new club formation, the "You Belong Here" social media campaign, Simple Gesture food program, and the Polio Torch Relay. The Ignite app (district-purchased, free to clubs) was introduced as a key membership management and communication tool. His targets for the year would be as follows:

- DG visits to all 46 clubs and 3 Rotaract clubs by mid-November.
- Net membership increase: RI President Yinka Babalola targets 1.25 million members globally by 2030.
- "You Belong Here" social media campaign targeting 30–50-year-olds~\$4,000 district investment.
- Simple Gesture food program: Rotary-organized food collection using green reusable bags and volunteer drivers; 12 clubs already participating; Windsor Club collected over a ton of food.
- Epic Day of Service: nationwide service project platform, second Saturday of May (May 15th); clubs register projects and receive volunteer recruitment support.
- Rotary Redwood Memorial Grove: 75th anniversary rededication planned for September 1, 2027 under District Governor-Elect Jack Strange.
- Rotary Foundation: goal to increase contributions by 10%; annual report to be created showing fund usage and grant impacts.
- New club formation: two new clubs nearly chartered: Roseland (Santa Rosa, potential first Spanish-language club) and Napa (Ukrainian community club).
- District leadership training: two-day seminar planned for January (~30 Rotarians invited); location options include Benbow Inn or Mendocino Hill House.
- District awards: goal to increase submissions from 15 to all 46 clubs; fillable form, three recognition levels, deadline April 9th; awards presented at district conference May 7–9 at Konockti Harbor Resort and Spa.
- District annual report: transparent accounting of foundation contributions, grants funded, and community impacts.
- Youth programs: encourage integration of Rotaract and Interact clubs into club leadership and projects.

Discussed Topics

1. Polio Torch Relay Event

The group discussed an upcoming district-wide Polio Torch Relay planned for October, starting in Crescent City and ending in Petaluma. Clubs can participate in any format — walking, cycling, paddling, etc. A real 1984 Olympic torch (recovered from storage by Bob Rogers' son-in-law) will be used during the relay.

- **Details**

- The relay will be promoted via mass email; clubs will be plugged into stages of the route.
- The goal is to raise money for End Polio Now, increase collective Rotary visibility, and foster inter-club collaboration.

- **Conclusion**

- The club expressed interest in participating.
- Jeff Kolin will send a mass email to inform members.

2. Corporate Membership Proposal

The group discussed and voted on adopting a corporate membership provision to attract local businesses.

- **Details**
 - Jeff Stubbs: The idea has been discussed since mid-June; Renee McKenna in Petaluma (district membership chair) and LaDonna's club experience were referenced.
 - A corporate membership allows a company to hold one membership with up to three rotating attendees; only the designated primary member can vote or serve on the board.
 - Pricing structure: Base membership \$260/year; +25% for a second attendee (\$325); +50% for three attendees (\$390).
 - One attendee noted the appeal for small "mom and pop" businesses where only one person can attend at a time.
- **Conclusion**
 - Corporate membership provision was formally approved by unanimous vote.
 - Seen as a practical tool for engaging local businesses.

3. Membership Attraction & Retention Strategy

The group discussed multiple approaches to grow and re-engage club membership.

- **Details**
 - Gary: Current inactive members who pay dues but don't attend reduce fundraising capacity.
 - Jeff Kolin: Recommended building a targeted list of 10–12 ideal prospective members and assigning the best-suited person to personally approach each one.
 - Jeff Kolin: Encouraged outreach to local organizations to obtain or share membership lists.
 - Jeff Stubbs: Suggested a mailing or systematic contact campaign targeting local merchants.
 - Jeff Kolin: Highlighted the district-purchased Ignite app as a free membership management tool for clubs.
- **Conclusion**
 - A personal, face-to-face approach was identified as the most effective recruitment method.
 - A dedicated membership tracking team should be established.
 - The Ignite app should be adopted club-wide.

4. Social Media & Public Image Strategy

The group discussed the need to significantly improve the club's social media presence and overall public image.

- **Details**

- Margaret: The club's social media is underutilized; the upcoming mixer is not being adequately promoted.
- She suggested posting a minimum of three times per week across platforms.
- She recommended using Instagram (which auto-feeds to Facebook) and scheduling posts a month in advance to reduce workload.
- Jeff Stubbs: noted that Donna Shuler currently manages Facebook but the club may lack an Instagram account.
- Jeff Kolin: Introduced the district-wide "You Belong Here" social media campaign (cost: \$4,000 district-wide), which uses targeted video content on Facebook, Instagram, and YouTube to attract 30–50-year-olds and generated ~400 interested contacts in its pilot run.
- Jeff Kolin: Recommended contacting Margaret Padovani (district public image chair, Rotary Club of Santa Rosa) for a ready-made club public image guide.
- LaDonna: Emphasized the power of in-person outreach to local businesses for sponsorships, citing personal success distributing Bingo by the Bay flyers.
- **Conclusion**
 - Club needs to confirm and set up an Instagram account.
 - Posting schedule of at least three times per week should be implemented, with themed content (e.g., international focus Fridays, local club updates, upcoming events).
 - Contact Margaret Padovani for the public image framework.
 - The "You Belong Here" campaign will be leveraged at the district level.
 - Margaret: A Zoom orientation on PR is scheduled for Wednesday at 10:00 AM.

5. Ignite App Introduction

Jeff Kolin presented the Ignite app, purchased district-wide and free to all clubs.

- **Details**
 - Jeff Kolin: Features include membership leads tracking, service project hour logging, flash surveys, club calendar, selfie posting to social media, invoicing/dues collection (upgrade), Rotary Foundation contribution tracking, attendance, birthday/anniversary recognition, and membership action planning.
 - Jeff Kolin: Login uses first initial, last name, and Rotary International ID number; subsequent logins use facial recognition.
 - Jeff Stubbs: Noted the club currently uses WordPress for its website and has limited DACDB usage.
- **Conclusion**
 - Club members should download the Ignite app (flame icon) from the App Store.
 - A club meeting exercise to onboard all members simultaneously was suggested.
 - Zoom orientation should be attended by interested members.

6. Fundraising Plan & Calendar

The group reviewed a proposed annual fundraising schedule covering both activity-based and administrative fundraisers.

- **Details**

- Gary: Two fundraising categories identified — activities (external revenue) and admin (operational support).
- Proposed schedule:
 - September/October: Oktoberfest/Poker Crawl (potentially in collaboration with Trailborn).
 - December: Selfies with Santa, cookie exchange, hot cocoa at Hill House — nominal charge, primarily for visibility.
 - January: Charter Night.
 - February 13th: Bingo by the Bay — projected revenue ~\$14,000 (96 attendees, \$50/head raffle packages, silent auction with 42 items already collected including international trips, table sponsors).
 - Easter: Selfies with Easter Bunny, Easter egg hunt, children's coloring contest.
- Suggested raising ticket price to \$60/head for Bingo by the Bay given the quality of prizes.
- LaDonna: Hill House is waiving meeting fees and taking the bar; church ladies will provide appetizers.
- Margaret: Proposed that Trailborn handle the Oktoberfest portion while Rotary focuses on the Poker Crawl fundraiser element.
- Jeff Kolin: Encouraged adding creative/themed elements to Bingo by the Bay (costumes, table decoration contests) to make it a recurring community event.
- **Conclusion**
 - Bingo by the Bay confirmed for February 13th at Hill House.
 - Oktoberfest/Poker Crawl collaboration with Trailborn to be explored.
 - Dinner raffle to begin in January and run through the Bingo event.
 - Annual fundraising calendar to be finalized.

7. Meeting Format Changes

Gary proposed restructuring the weekly meeting format to improve engagement and fun.

- **Details**
 - Gary: Food and setup must be completed by noon; meeting starts at 12:15 PM with the Pledge of Allegiance.
 - Speaker to receive 20–30 minutes including Q&A; last 15 minutes reserved for fun activities.
 - Proposed reintroduction of: greeter/check-in, fine master, "Who Am I?" segment, Wheel of Misfortune (spin or pay a fine), and a growing jackpot pot (currently \$30).
 - Attendee (food coordinator): Requested a helper (John confirmed) to arrive by 11:00 AM to assist with setup; noted physical difficulty managing alone.
 - Attendee: Suggested Lisa (from Presbyterian Church) be brought in as a new member to assist with food setup.
 - Jeff said he could help when John cannot.
- **Conclusion**
 - Meeting start time officially moved to 12:15 PM, with meals served at 12:00 and conversation while eating.

- John and Lisa to arrive by 11:00 AM to assist with setup.
- Fun engagement elements (fine master, wheel, jackpot) to be reintroduced.
- RSVPs required by Wednesday evening to ensure adequate food preparation.
- **Conclusion**
 - Club encouraged to explore state parks grants for Rotary Park improvements, potentially partnering with the county.
 - Club to submit district awards application by April 9th.
 - Club to register a service project for Epic Day of Service.
 - Club to explore club models (companion, satellite, passport) on the RI website given current membership challenges.

9. Interact Club & Youth Pipeline

The group discussed leveraging the Mendocino High School Interact Club as a membership pipeline.

- **Details**
 - Gary: The Interact Club is more than twice (possibly three times) the size of the Rotary Club.
 - Jeff K: Suggested co-hosting a meeting with the Interact Club, inviting parents, and having students co-lead the meeting.
 - Jeff Kolin: Noted that only three out of eighty board members started in Interact before becoming Rotarians.
 - Attendee: Identified parents of Interact members as a key prospective member demographic.
- **Conclusion**
 - A joint Rotary/Interact Club meeting open to parents should be planned.
 - Rotary should formally introduce itself to Interact parents as the sponsoring organization.

10. Rotary Promotional Video Resources

Jeff Kolin shared a short Rotary promotional video produced by Ray Sanborn of the Rotary Club of San Juan Capistrano.

- **Details**
 - Jeff Kolin: Ray Sanborn produces approximately 40 free short videos (90 seconds to 2.5 minutes) on Rotary themes; available via his mailing list.
 - Attendee: Expressed interest in using videos at meetings and during Bingo by the Bay via the venue's AV system.
- **Conclusion**
 - Jeff Kolin to send Ray Sanborn's contact/email to the club.
 - Club to subscribe to Ray Sanborn's mailing list for regular video content.

Challenges

- **Membership decline:** The club faces aging membership, low meeting attendance from paid members, and difficulty attracting younger demographics.

- **Social media gap:** No confirmed Instagram account; Facebook not updated regularly; no structured posting schedule in place.
- **Fundraiser capacity:** Small active membership limits the club's ability to staff and execute fundraisers effectively.
- **Meeting setup burden:** The food coordinator (age approaching 80) is managing setup largely alone with no kitchen on-site; requires committed volunteer support by 11:00 AM each week.
- **Technology adoption:** Very few members currently use DACDB or the Ignite app; club-wide onboarding is needed.
- **Club viability:** The club acknowledged it may need to consider becoming a satellite or companion club to Fort Bragg if membership does not grow.
- **Website:** Current WordPress site is outdated and difficult to maintain.
- **Oktoberfest timeline:** September/October is approaching quickly, limiting planning time for the Poker Crawl/Oktoberfest event.

Action Items

- **Overall**
 - Send email to members about the Polio Torch Relay in October.
 - Finalize the annual fundraising calendar including speaker and town hall scheduling.
 - Coordinate with the Membership Development & Public Image Committee (Margaret, Toby, Leona) — schedule a meeting (proposed for next Thursday, pending availability).
 - Confirm and set up an Instagram account; speak with Donna Shuler about current social media management.
 - Implement revised meeting format (12:15 PM start, greeter, fine master, Wheel of Misfortune, jackpot).
 - Ensure RSVPs are collected by Wednesday evening for food preparation purposes.
- **Margaret**
 - Lead the Membership & Public Image Committee meeting to define the first concrete steps for outreach and social media.
- **LaDonna**
 - Confirm John as the regular 11:00 AM setup helper; identify a backup volunteer.
 - Bring Lisa in as a new member to assist with food setup.
- **Jeff Kolin**
 - Send Ray Sanborn's contact/email to the club for access to free Rotary promotional videos.
- **Club members**
 - Download the Ignite app from the App Store and complete setup using Rotary International ID numbers.
 - Join via Zoom the Ignite orientation sessions beginning next Monday.
 - Contact Margaret Padovani (district public image chair, Rotary Club of Santa Rosa) via the district website for the club public image guide.
 - Explore RI website for club model options (companion, satellite, passport clubs).

- Research eligibility for state parks grants for Rotary Park, potentially in partnership with the county.
- Register a service project for Epic Day of Service (target: April/May timeframe).
- Submit the District Governor's Awards application by April 9th.
- Plan a joint Rotary/Interact Club meeting open to parents.
- Explore collaboration with Trailborn for the Oktoberfest/Poker Crawl event (contact Maya at Trailborn).
- Begin promoting Bingo by the Bay (February 13th) immediately via all available channels.
- Start dinner raffle ticket sales in January to build momentum ahead of Bingo by the Bay.

Prepared by:

Jeffry Stubbs

Executive Secretary

August 8, 2026