**Minutes Rural Church Network of the U.S.A. and Canada**

Semi-annual Meeting

September 19-20, 2013, Shalom Hill Farm, Windom, MN

**AGENDA**

Present were: Alvin Luedke, Dave Ruesink, John Young (by speaker phone), Judy Hill, Lon Oliver, Mark Yackel-Juleen and Rachel Wrenn

1. **Opening devotion** – Mark = Amos chapter 8

2. **Executive Secretary’s Report** – Dave

See attachment

3. **Treasurer’s Report** – Lon

Balance today is **$2,826.73.**

Want to continue sending out cards to maintain contact around harvesting before Thanksgiving then another one around Easter with an appeal. September and December are considered to be the best time to send requests. Dave will target institutions and Lon will target individuals.

4. **Elections**

**Chairperson**

Judy and John nominated Mark Yackel-Juleen. He was elected by acclamation

Mark will call on either John or Alvin to fill in on Vice Chair as needed until next fall’s election for Vice Chair.

**Treasurer**

Mark and Judy nominated Lon. He was re-elected by acclamation with Lon continuing to pay expenses but Dave will receive all income and make deposits to the bank.

5. **RCN Archives** – Dave

No responses from anyone with material since the last meeting. Gary Goreham has some material that was flooded out and Dave will contact him about the condition of those items at this time.

6. **Rural Sociological Society**

Mark reported on attending the RSS in New York City. He met Judy and Bill Heffernan, Mary Hendrickson and David Andrews at the meeting. One of the concerns discussed was projects related to genetically modified seed and the benefit to third world parties. He was impressed with younger folks doing research today. He attended a faith-based session and heard a presentation from a Latter Day Saints researcher. Thinks it would be appropriate to have a session next year in New Orleans. The problem was that no one present was interested in organizing a session. Dave should send out a notice to see if anyone is interested in participating.

Two years ago had a round table session. Could do that again or have papers presented. The RSS meeting will be July 30-Aug 3 at the Roosevelt Waldorf Astoria Hotel in New Orleans. Theme= Equity, Democracy, and the Commons: Counter-narratives for Rural Transformation. The group consensus is not enough energy unless someone else wants to organize and pull it off next year.

7. **Rural Social Science Education** - Lon

Lexington Seminary willing to host and work on getting RSSE moving. They have a tech person to do a preliminary review for a nominal fund to get the material on line. Power point possibilities are rather limited right now. Gary Goreham is willing to work with Lon to feel good about material re-writing. He is willing to be on a team and look at resources to build into curriculum. Lon proposed that we find one other person in our membership to work on the team and by next meeting take one of the four units have an outline with prices for technical development. Community, Church, Family, and Ethics are the four units now. Peer based model using material and discussion concept. Current needs updating. The methodology is sound, but needs updated. Need a “gate keeper” to honor the creators and the RCN to be sure it is used appropriately. As revision takes place it should go through SHF and/or AMERC. AMERC is ecumenical and could offer continuing education.

It was reaffirmed that AMERC works with SHF for a working relationship as the repository of material and to provide recommendations for initial mentors. Lon will solicit someone from RCN to assist with developing material and manage the technological aspect. A training module will be needed to move RSSE ahead in today’s teaching methods.

8. **Website Development and Resources** – Dave

Lon provided Jake with categories to be included. See May 10 email. This was sent to Jake again today. It was recommended that we delete community forum and make it a chat room.

Lon has a friend who he will contact for pictures related to the RCN categories on the website.

For sources of information, consider seminary students doing special papers. Some of the RSSE material, especially the classical contents could be included and have a three sentence description to take them to another link called classical resources.

9.  **International Rural Church Association** (IRCA) – Dave

It is now scheduled to meet at the Emanuel Teachers College in Lilongwe, Malawi on July 28-August 2, 2014.

**10. Meetings**

Next Meeting in **spring** 2014 will be a **Conference Call on April 10, 2014 at 9:00-11:00 Central**

11. Next Meeting in **fall 2014**

First choice was to meet with United Methodist Rural Advocates in Portland Oregon on October 3-4 pending approval of UMRA at conference call in on 10/8/13.

Alternative date and place would be to meet with Rural Chaplains at the time and place they decide in a few weeks.

12. **Reports**

Great and wondrous work is taking place within the Board of RCN. Much of what is said in the conference room stays in the conference room, but it is a blessing to hear the reports. We also know that there are many more stories about what is going on all over the country to make rural churches stronger. One common theme is the amount of effort going on to do rural contextual training on line.

13. **Closing devotion** - Mark = Mathew Chapter 9

Recorded by Dave Ruesink, Secretary