

# Minutes for MFF Emergency Board Meeting of Jun 06, 2020

Board members notified by email. All confirmed intent to attend except Toby Murono(Perro).

## AGENDA

- Roll call and Quorum check
- Review statements from legal, risk, and social media
- Evaluate and vote on proposed social media release

Meeting start time – 12:56pm CDT

Welcome!

## Roll call and Quorum

Board members in attendance: Timothy Wood (Woody), Ian Layton (Rama), Lara Lester (Datahawk), Vince Lopez, Cheetah Goletz, and Robert King

Guests: Rattnip (Manager for Risk)

Absent: Toby Murono (Perro). (Perro communicated that he was unable to attend)

We have quorum.

Various logs of past private discussions with legal, risk, and other relevant parties on the matter of making a public corporate statement on Black Live Matter (BLM) were shared with the board via the board mailing list.

President: These are really trying times. This has been affecting the furry community and the nation as a whole. It is really hard to balance the needs of MFF as an organization to act within its corporate boundaries and obligations to remain viable and the very real needs and emotions of our staff and membership who are looking to MFF to take a stand.

## Review statements from legal, risk, and social media

1. Does making a public corporate statement run the risk of being prohibited speech which might endanger our IRS 501c3 status? Current investigation indicates this risk is not significant.
2. Does making a public corporate statement of BLM advocacy run afoul of our state charitable status? Our corporation declares that its purpose is scientific, literary, and artistic with a refinement that we strive to benefit animal and human welfare within the scope of science, literature, and art. An example of this was our selection of Sit, Stay, Read to benefit both animal and human welfare. This demonstrates a precedent of supporting the community through the actions of our organization within the scope of our purpose. We believe this should not block our statement.

3. We need to be mindful of strict state restrictions on fundraising. Fortunately we believe we can create a meaningful response without the need for direct fundraising, thus avoiding these issues.

So it appears this is something we can do. Next key questions are: Are we doing the right thing as an organization? Are we doing the right thing for our attendees? And as a matter of civics and policing, do we risk this being too far outside our purpose?

Rattnip (for Risk) is advising us on this as this is more important than just how we appear socially.

Woody summarized our goal as the expression of solidarity with BLM (a tweet at minimum). This is a natural outgrowth of our stated purpose of benefiting human welfare.

Discussion brought us to general consensus that this is something that we not only can do but should do.

## Evaluate and vote on proposed social media release

Various drafts of the message were discussed and revised.

The message was broken into two parts, with an external link broken out as a separate item due to possible delay in analyzing its content. The message will be released as an image to make tampering more difficult.

Motion to end discussion and hold the vote on the revised text. Motion passed unanimously (voice)

Resolution 1: The board will announce the following message: “

### **Tweet:**

Just because something goes without saying, doesn't mean it should go unsaid. #BlackLivesMatter

### **Text of image:**

Midwest FurFest stands together in solidarity with the Black Community. Together, we watch with the world in horror at the injustices they suffer. Our hearts go out to the families of George Floyd, Breonna Taylor, and countless others who have been killed by this systematic oppression.

We will not remain silent or complicit in the face of those injustices. Midwest FurFest believes that Black Lives Matter. We call on the furry community to stand united against the racism and prejudice that has been a constant threat over the lives of our black friends and loved ones. Now more than ever, black communities need our help with donation, action, and open communication as we educate those around us on why this is so important. We have also included a link to related resources that focus on assisting the black community.

We strongly encourage everyone to support black charities and artists as we work together to combat injustice. Together, we can make the world a better, more equitable place. If action or charity are out of

your scope, please consider taking a moment to talk to your friends and family about the importance of this movement. ”

Vote: 6 for, 0 against, 0 abstained.

Resolution 2: The board will include the following external link “<https://blacklivesmatter.com/>”

Vote: 6 for, 0 against, 0 Abstained.

The complete message was conveyed to Social Media for release.

Motion to close the meeting. Motion passed unanimously (voice).

Meeting closed at 2:25 CDT.

Minutes recorded and prepared by Robert C. King, Secretary