



SPACE CENTER ROTARY CLUB

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December 12, 1978

As discussed with Governor Bob Kahn during his visit at our Club Assembly, one of our goals for this Rotary year is to reevaluate our club's participation in the four avenues of service: International Service, Community Service, Vocational Service, and Club Service. As a result of this reevaluation we can develop a rationale for why we do what we do, and can provide an information base for deciding how much money should be allocated in particular areas. It is the purpose of this letter to expand on this plan by the use of illustrations, to point out how this activity relates to the budget, and to establish January 15, 1979, as the deadline for receiving written committee reports.

The club by-laws provide that the club shall establish a budget early in the Rotary year. We did this, but only as an interim budget, and for two good reasons. First, we could not predict what our income would be until sometime after the Shrimporee -- after all receipts were collected and all bills were turned in and paid. (This has now been done and the net income is very close to \$16,200.) Second, a final budget could not be determined until the committees had met and performed their reevaluations, and were ready to present their specific recommendations to the Board of Directors.

It was generally understood that, except for some committees which had to function during preparation for the Shrimporee (such as Programs, information orientation of new members, etc.) committees would defer their activities until after the Shrimporee, so that members could focus their Rotary energies on this important project. The Shrimporee is well behind us now, and some committees have become active in performing their function. Others have not. There are several reasons why this phase of our activity needs to be completed by January 15, 1979. When you recognize that the real needs of the community exceed our ability to support them all (at least in the manner in which they would like to become accustomed), we must also recognize that hard decisions must be made concerning competing interests. To do this properly we should, as much as possible, consider all the competing interests at the same time. Also, the

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next Club Assembly is currently scheduled for February 5, 1979. The program for this meeting will be a report to the membership by each committee Chairman of his committee's activities to date, and firm plans for the remainder of the year. The Board of Directors will need the time between January 15, 1978, and February 5, 1978, to consider the committees' reevaluations and recommendations and to make those hard decisions and approve the final budget. Actually, the Board must complete its deliberations by January 31, in preparation for the February 5th date. So you can see, time really is of the essence now.

Let me give some examples of what is meant by reevaluation. These are examples only, and are not intended to suggest an opinion or conclusion on any particular matter discussed. The club has traditionally budgeted \$1000 per year for the American Field Service (AFS) wherein there is a student exchange with foreign countries. No one that I know questions the good purposes of the AFS. But what should our role be in this activity? What are the current needs of AFS? What are their other funding sources? How much does our \$1000 buy? How much more would \$2000 buy? How would they be affected if they did not receive our \$1000? Would the purposes of Rotary be better served if our contributions to student exchanges were all channeled through the Rotary Foundation, or is the mixture better? Why? What other needs are there in the field of International Youth that should be considered? Is the decision on the relative amount of support between International Service and Community Service necessarily an arbitrary one, or is there some rationale that can guide us in decision making?

Another example of reevaluation is in the field of Community Service. The Clear Lake Emergency Medical Corps was once a principal beneficiary of our Shrimporee, and they had a real need. We have subsequently contributed smaller (but significant) amounts to them. Have their needs changed? They now have contracts with all the communities they serve. Does this cover their expenses? Has the incorporation of Clear Lake by Houston altered their needs? How significantly would they be affected if they did not receive a contribution from our Club this year? How would they spend a \$200 contribution? A \$500 or \$1000? How do you compare the need/community benefit of the Corps with that of the Bay Area Committee on Drug Abuse, and the latter with the Palmer Drug Abuse Program recently established in our area?

Some of these questions may be too blunt or not appropriate for a particular situation. But perhaps they will illustrate what is meant by a reevaluation. Please be assured that it is not my intent to make radical or arbitrary changes in our Club's activities. However, as our community grows and its needs change, we should be aware of these changes and be prepared to adapt our service to a changing community. If it is determined that a particular activity should be funded at a lower level (or even dropped) because of competing needs having a higher priority, we should

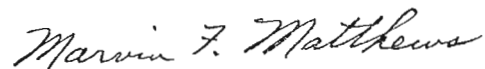
give careful consideration to whether the recommended change should be implemented this year, or recommended for implementation the following year. For example, if an organization has a reasonable expectation of receiving a certain level of funds this year and has a current need for these funds, I would be inclined to fulfill those expectations this year, but put them on notice of a possible change in the future. (No notices now, please. This would happen, if at all, after Board action.) In other words they deserve a period of notice if they will have to alter their plans. It might be otherwise if there was not a current need or they did not have such expectations. Needless to say, we need to exercise a great deal of tact and diplomacy in all our community contacts for this reevaluation.

One other thought -- please give every man on your committee the opportunity to serve through his committee assignment. Several ex-Rotarians have said they left the Club because their committee never met and they never did anything that fulfilled their inner need to provide service. Let's give all Rotarians an avenue of service through their committee assignment, and an opportunity to increase acquaintance and improve fellowship by working with their fellow committee members.

Written committee reports must be submitted to your Director (with a copy to me) no later than January 15, 1979. The director in charge of your committee has a copy of this letter, and he stands ready to assist you in any way he can. Ask him to attend your committee meeting, or a portion of it. I will be also be glad to help. Please call on us if you have any questions. By working together we can make this a good year for the Rotary Club of Space Center.

Remember Rotary's motto: Service Above Self.

Sincerely,



Marvin F. Matthews
President