



2021-2026 Secular Hub Strategic Plan

Community * Altruism * Reason * Education

Vision

A vibrant community where atheists, agnostics, humanists, and their families can meet, support each other, have fun, and explore ethics, science, and the human condition. We seek to establish a positive presence that contributes to the society at large.

Mission

To support and build up the secular community by providing a physical space and a broad range of activities that encourage learning, critical thinking, advocacy, altruism, and social connection.

Who We Are

Formed in February 2013 as a chapter of the American Humanist Association, the Secular Hub started out as a grassroots-organized center for atheist and other secular groups in the Denver Metro Area. It has since evolved into a community of its own, becoming the largest, member-run secular organization in Colorado. It is a friendly place where non-believers find camaraderie, learn, and give back to the community. Its members organize educational events, social activities, and volunteer opportunities.

Hub activities embody our values of community, altruism, reason, and education, including:

- Bringing in high-profile speakers such as Seth Andrews, Dan Barker, and Aron Ra.
- Hosting local experts on topics such as evolutionary biology and Denver history
- Weekly Coffee and Community and monthly Pancake Breakfasts
- Hikes to places like Dinosaur Ridge and hosting get-togethers such as our annual picnic
- Weekly movie nights, monthly game nights, and “dinner and documentary”
- Community service such as street cleaning and food/clothing drives
- Support for the group “Atheists Helping the Homeless” by providing donation receptacles and helping with distribution
- Participation in citywide events such as Pridefest and Juneteenth Music Festival
- Hosting Secular Scouts to provide a secular youth development program for our youngest members

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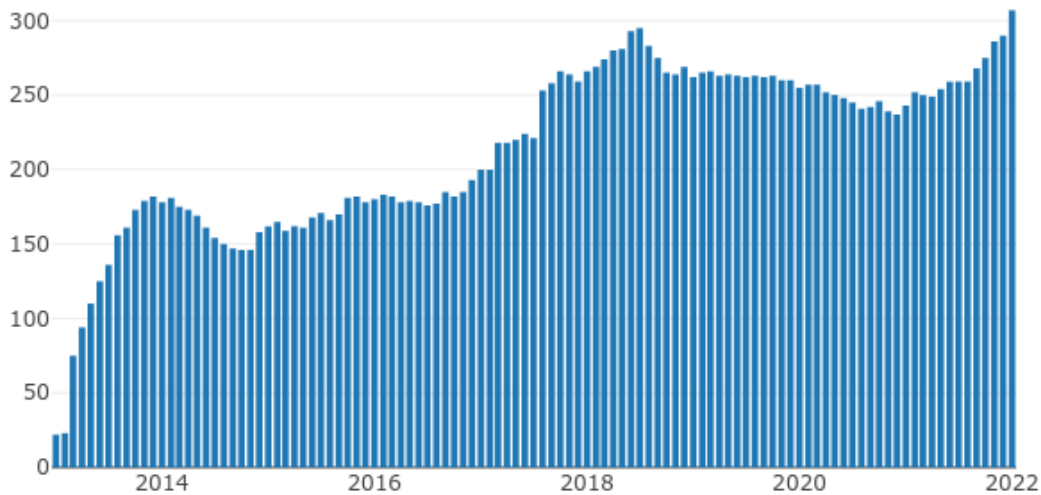
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The Hub also continues to build and unite the community of secular organizations across the front range through joint programming with partner groups and providing use of its space to them for events and meetings. In 2020 it joined the American Atheist Association as an affiliate.

Membership

The Secular Hub has grown since its inception. Prior to the COVID-19 pandemic, membership stood at approximately 260. The months of the COVID-19 shutdown resulted in a small decrease in the numbers, but efforts to maintain activities online also produced some new memberships. Since moving into the new building, member numbers have climbed up above 300. There are currently five membership levels, with the highest being \$100/month. Most members are very committed and close friendships have developed.

Secular Hub Member Counts by Month



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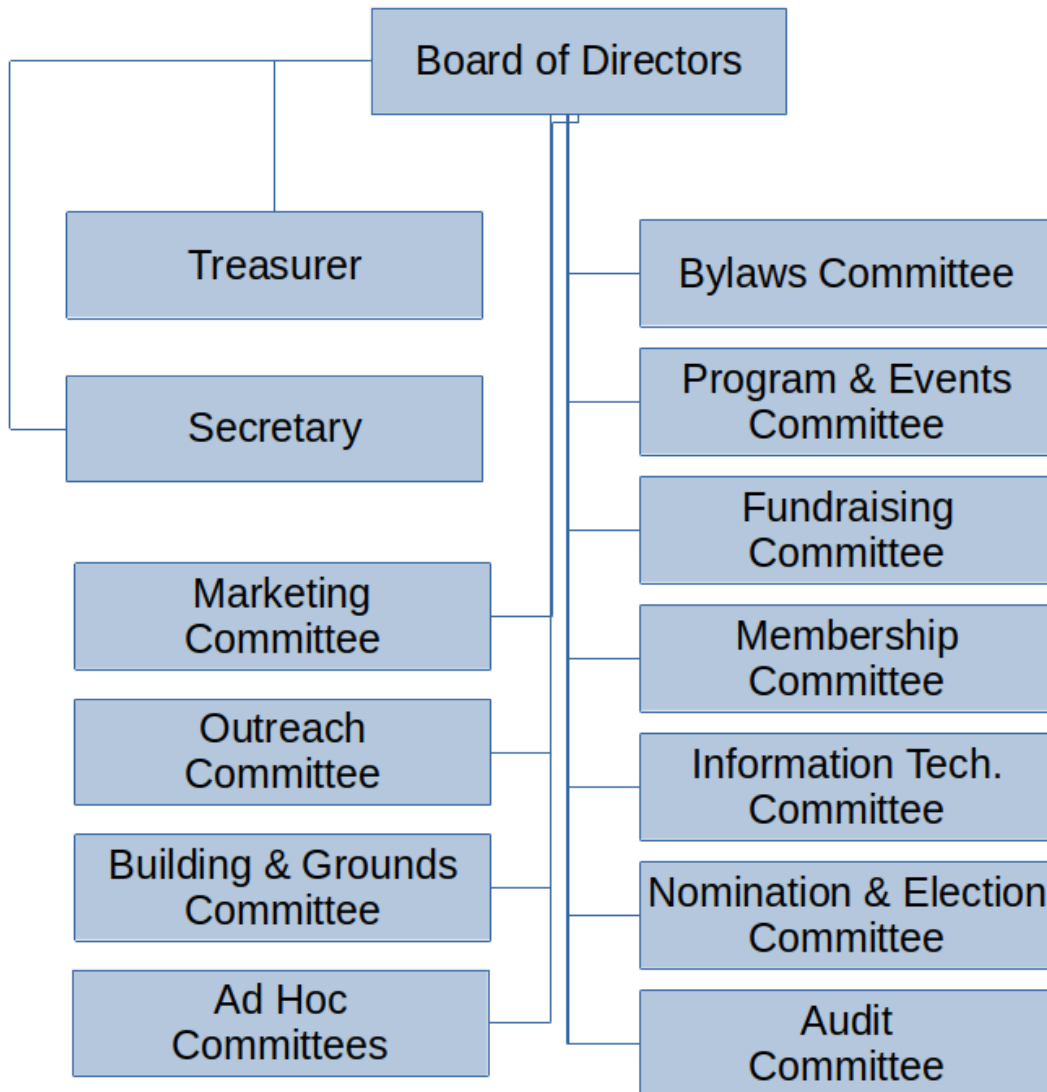
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Structure

The Hub is governed by an elected board of seven members. Each board member is elected for a two-year term and can serve multiple terms if elected. The Hub is 100% volunteer-run and various committees help plan and execute events, outreach, and service. There are no paid staff, and the board reaches out to membership for assistance when specialized skills are needed.



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Board of Directors

Board Role

Mission

Set priorities and develop strategies to achieve them. Oversee program implementation and evaluate effectiveness. Ensure the necessary resources of leadership to implement the mission.

Financial

Take responsibility for the organization's financial integrity and accountability. Ensure the necessary resources or funds to implement the mission.

Legal

Perform duties in good faith and in compliance with legal and fiduciary obligations.

Secular Hub 2021/2022 Board of Directors

Officers

Chairperson	Barb Sannwald
Vice Chairperson	Monica Toole
Treasurer	Paul O'Brien
Secretary	Becky Greben

At Large Directors

Dirk Huizenga
Heili Lehr
Steve DeBey

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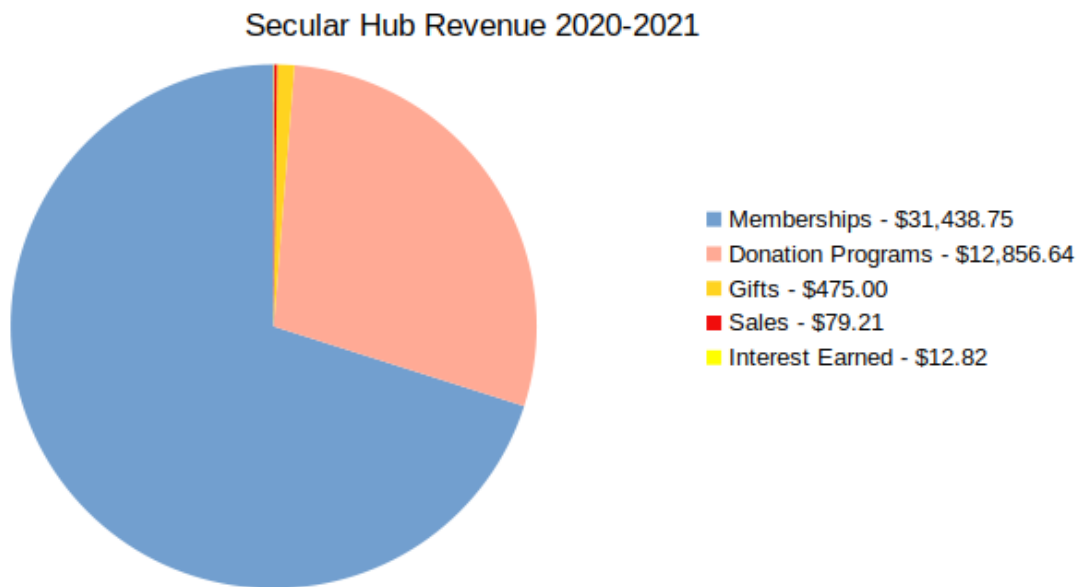


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Finances

The years 2020 and 2021 had unique challenges for the Secular Hub. In approximately March of 2020 the spread of COVID-19 forced the closure of the Hub rented facilities at 3100 Downing St. This resulted in the loss of traditional income streams including: pancake breakfast, paid speakers, annual dinner, concessions/liquor sales, and affiliate support. The Hub continued to pay rent until December 2020 to fulfill its rental lease and then the property was vacated. During this time the search for a new property was undertaken along with fundraising activities. After over a year of searching, a property was identified for purchase. A combination of donations and member loans enabled the Hub to purchase the property at 254 N. Knox Ct for \$550,000 on June 21, 2021. The building purchase and the slow reduction of COVID-19 risk has allowed the Hub to slowly resume normal activities and revenue generating activities.

2020-2021 Fiscal Year Unrestricted Revenue and Expenses



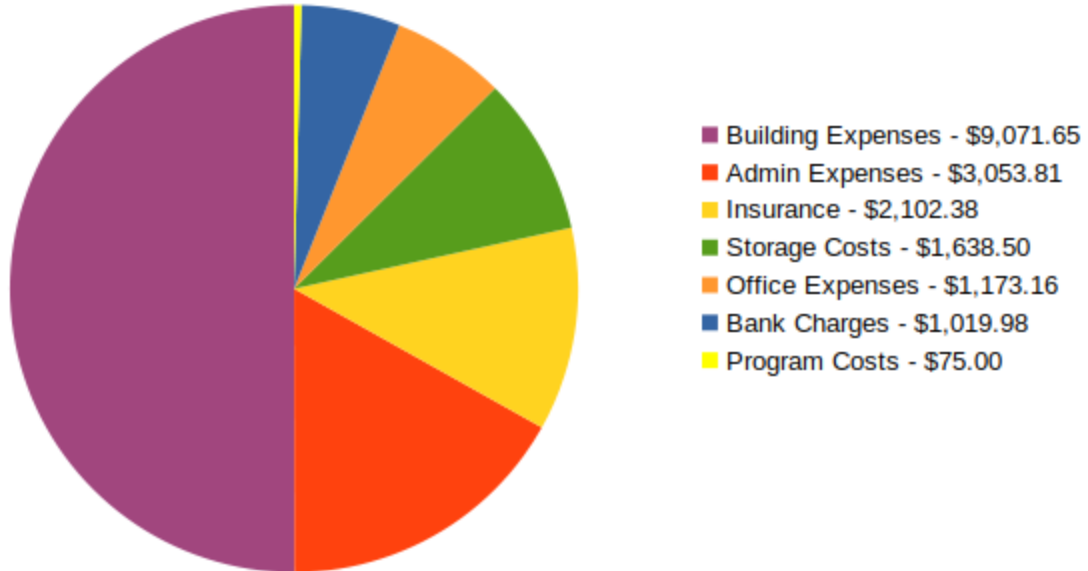
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Secular Hub Expenses 2020-2021



Strategic Goals

1. Reinvest seventy-five percent of annual net revenue into continued building upgrades and renovations, and set aside twenty-five percent of annual net revenue as savings for anticipated debt service, with reevaluation and adjustment at the end of each fiscal year.
2. Grow the family demographic in our membership; become more receptive to families to help build community by hosting at least six family-focused events a year.
3. Expand and encourage Membership by Hub participants with the goal of increasing membership numbers by ten percent annually.
4. Hold a minimum of four different types of events each month that appeal to the varied interests of the greater secular community.
5. Recruit a minimum of four non-Board member volunteers for leadership roles over the next year.
6. Develop a plan for reestablishing relationships with affiliates and expand cooperation with other secular groups for our mutual benefit.
7. Create Policy Manual from existing policies and identify needed additions

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GOAL 1: Reinvest seventy-five percent of annual net revenue into continued building upgrades and renovations, and set aside twenty-five percent of annual net revenue as savings for anticipated debt service, with reevaluation and adjustment at the end of each fiscal year.

The hallmark of the Hub's mission--and existence-- is to offer a brick-and-mortar community center where persons of all non-religious stripes can join other people for fellowship and support. The Hub purchased a building for that purpose in 2021. To meet the needs of continued building improvements to that property and fulfill anticipated debt service in five years related to that purchase, the Hub will plan to use a significant portion of annual net revenue to make necessary improvements to the building, but maintain a savings sum of annual net revenue to use for future debt service.

In the first year, 2021, the Hub intends to reinvest seventy-five percent of annual net revenue into continued building upgrades and renovations, and set aside twenty-five percent of annual net revenue as savings for anticipated debt service, with reevaluation and adjustment at the end of each fiscal year. The Hub anticipates increasing the percentage of annual net revenue set aside toward debt service and decreasing the percentage used for building improvements each year for the next five years.

Strategies

- Maintain a minimum reserve balance for one year's expenses, currently estimated to be \$14,000.
- Reinvest amounts over that to capital improvements (75%) and debt service savings (25%).
- Increase the percentage of annual net revenue set aside toward debt service and decrease the percentage used for building improvements each year over the course of the next five years.
- Create special use fundraising campaigns for desired improvements that exceed the capital improvement budget.

GOAL 2: Grow the family demographic in our membership; become more receptive to families to help build community by hosting at least six family-focused events a year.



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The Hub currently does not have a major family component and members want to change that. There is a small but growing number of members with families and we want to support them by creating more family-oriented programming.

Strategies

- Work with existing secular family groups on joint events and activities. A Denver-area Meetup group called the Secular Parents Group has expressed an interest in utilizing the Hub for events and activities.
- Continue supporting the growth of our new Secular Scouts troop under Hub sponsorship.
- Recruit a member with minor children to join the Events Committee
- Encourage input from members who have families about family-oriented programs and get-togethers
- Actively recruit Board members with children.
- Create a children's area in the new facility.

GOAL 3: Expand and encourage Membership by Hub participants with the goal of increasing membership numbers by ten percent annually.

Membership numbers at the Secular Hub have plateaued over the past three years. Although stable membership numbers throughout the challenges of the pandemic are laudable, the Hub still intends to maintain and increase membership to further serve the entire secular metro community. While a 2019 Member Survey showed that members view the Hub favorably, there is still turnover in membership. Demographic studies show that Colorado has a large population of non-religious people. We must take measures to ensure that non-religious people in the Denver area become aware of the Secular Hub.

Strategies

- Complete marketing plan.
- Recruit a Marketing Coordinator.
- Staff a welcome table for Coffee and Community and any major events/speakers.
- Increase our traditional and social media footprint.
- Add more material to our YouTube channel.
- Restart/renew the Secular Hub's podcast.
- Improve follow-up on prospective members who attend events.
- Improve follow-up with past or lapsed members.
- Consistently send newsletter to current, past, and prospective members.
- Periodically survey past members to better understand attrition.
- Seek out and be responsive to requests for interviews and articles.

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- Recognize and celebrate volunteers and donors.

GOAL 4: Hold a minimum of four different types of events each month that appeal to the varied interests of the greater secular community.

The Hub seeks to appeal to the full spectrum of the local secular community by creating variety in its programming. Closures and a move to a digital platform during the pandemic has created a need to rebuild and restructure in-person programming consistent with other strategic goals.

Strategies

- Events Coordinator will engage in informal outreach to membership for ideas to create new and varied events that appeal to the talents and interests of our membership.
- Create a coordinated planning calendar for events and meeting room reservations.
- Include at least one nationally recognized speaker event annually.
- Revise events instructional guide and make it easily accessible online and in print- AV equipment, setting up/opening, cleaning up/closing, etc.

GOAL 5: Recruit a minimum of four non-Board member volunteers for leadership roles over the next year.

Historically, the Board has been actively involved in running committees and daily operations. As the organization grows, we would like to transition to an organization where committees are empowered to act autonomously with some support and oversight from the Board. This will help our members to become more engaged and involved in our community.

Strategies

- Add members to committees that need support: Events, IT, and Building & Grounds
- Set-up or revive needed committees: Marketing, Membership, Fundraising, IT
- Improve and better-execute internal processes
- Expand/enhance participation from members on committees and during events
- Provide Board support to committees as needed and appropriate so they can be effective.
- Give committees autonomy with some oversight.
- Train all Board members, Committee Chairs, and Coordinators in addition to other interested members to open, close, conduct events, use AV and office equipment.

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- Incorporate our values [C.A.R.E.] by name in communications and at events to advance ownership of these values by our members.
- Build the expectation that membership in the Hub benefits not only the individual but is an investment in the secular community as a whole; there is a concomitant duty to help this organization thrive, grow, and contribute to the charitable, social, and educational sectors in Colorado.

GOAL 6: Develop a plan for reestablishing relationships with affiliates and expand cooperation with other secular groups for our mutual benefit.

The Secular Hub hosts many groups for their meetings and events. Indeed, this desire to assist related groups with providing a place to meet, mostly *gratis*, was one of the Hub's original objectives. Affiliates or allied groups may be asked to contribute in some fashion for the use of the new building space.

The COVID-19 Shutdowns have highlighted the need and importance of communities in that they provide support and much-needed social interactions for many individuals. This is true for our secular community no less than it is for other types of communities. This is a time for more cooperation and creativity in sharing common values and interests. The Hub looks forward to having more interaction with other secular groups in the area.

Hub Groups and Projects:

Secular Hub Podcast, Secular Volunteer Corps, Humanism at the Hub, Secular Scouts

Affiliates: Independent secular groups that use the Hub for meetings and events

Freedom From Religion Foundation-Denver Chapter, Recovering From Religion, Freethinkers in AA, Survivors Network of Those Abused by Priests, Atheists Helping the Homeless

Allies: Independent groups with which we share common goals and interests.

Jefferson Humanists, Denver Atheists, Pikes Peak Atheists, Boulder Atheists, Secular Parents Club of Denver, Godless Bitches, Humanist Legal Society, Central Colorado Humanists

Strategies

- Host a Secular Summit to seek advice and input from allied and affiliated groups with the goal of establishing more productive and active working relationships.
- Improve/expand cooperation with other secular groups, both in-house and external groups, for our mutual benefit. Example: Hold a statewide leadership conference.

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- Have a flexible policy on fees or donations for use of the Hub by affiliated or allied groups.
- Continue cross promotion opportunities which promote goodwill and more communication.
- Create more in-house affiliates or groups.
- Develop a more active working relationship with the AHA and the American Atheist Association.
- Include information regarding our affiliates and allies on our website and request that they reciprocate for the Secular Hub. We recognize that other groups may have discrete functions and goals which may help serve our members in specific ways.

GOAL 7: Create policy manual from existing policies and identify needed revisions.

The Hub Bylaws Committee, with input from the Secular Hub board, rewrote the Bylaws that were ratified by the membership in 2018. The next step is to develop a comprehensive Policy Manual. Some policies have been written and approved, but additional policies are needed. All policies should be consolidated into a single manual that will be available to members and others as necessary and appropriate.

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