

FIC Board Meeting Minutes

Songaia, Bothell Washington

Sept 5-7, 2006

List of topics:

Stories of past meetings (15, 10, and 5 years ago):
Relationship with NICA
Development 5-year plan
Printed Material Needs & Graphic Redesign
Financial Review
Regional Networking
Cmag Management
Hate Speech Proposal
Events 5 year plan
Cmag Staffing Discussion
Budget II
Directory Price
Web Budget
FIC Promo Materials
Cmag Salaries
Marketing
Directory 5
Website
Budget III - Approval
Graphic Redesign
Personnel Committee
Personnel: Outstanding Cmag issues
Cmag Cover Design
Diana & Tree Proposal: Anthology of Cmag Excerpts
Evaluation and Closing

Opening (Laird presenting)

Songs led by Nancy: Woke up this Morning, Down the Road, Listen

Stories of past meetings (15, 10, and 5 years ago):

Lama Foundation (Fall '91): Snow on the way out and vehicles nearly getting trapped. Harvey and Barbara got trapped in the Texas panhandle when they left. Dan and Jenny went north to Colorado and had similar problems. Caroline remembers the great window and the panoramic view. Lama had a fire a few years later. Some of the buildings were saved by permaculture design. Geoph created a hot tub in the tiled shower area. Al Anderson attended his first meeting (and sends his regards to this meeting). There was a lot of talk about our upcoming "Celebration." Lois Arkin attended her first meeting. Harvey met his "cosmic twin" and worked with others on a construction project as part of the barter arrangement.

The Farm (Fall '96): Tony and Diana C. joined the circle. It was Halloween and there were rituals in the ceremony. Paul introduced a technique that has carried on other events to this day. A lot of restructuring work was done. Alex and Tree did most of the facilitation as novices. Jeff Grossberg attended for the first time. Paul DeLapa held up a sign that said "Crisp" to remind folks of their talking style. Geoph met Phil and Doug who ended up hosting his video production apprenticeship. Nate and Corina attended for the first time. We became aware that Laird's accounting management was inadequate and began a process to manage our finances better.

Sonora Cohousing (Fall '01): Diana M. was on the 20th day of a fast and had challenges integrating the resulting energy swings; our Ministry Cmtee was overloaded with other conflicts and/or too close to the situation to help her effectively. The phrase "stuck bus" was introduced by Scott Williams. William Cerf was the airport shuttle. Loren, Maiya, Sheri, and David were there talking about their idea for a new community. Talk about having another big event started. Deborah Altus joined ERB. It was soon after 9/11 and that awareness set the stage for the opening evening's soiree. Scott Byrd had a trapeze in his living room. It was VERY hot. Gail and Jim were living there.

Nancy will add a bead for this meeting in our closing circle.

There is a suggestion to add another bead for the A of C. Craig will select that one.

Relationship with NICA

[Fred] NICA started in 1993 and is the longest existing regional org. Eighty people came together and started to meet monthly. Since then it has hosted a one-day gathering in a different community in the fall or spring, plus an annual summer gathering alternating between Washington and Oregon communities. They published a quarterly newsletter for many years, but have recently moved to web based communication. However, it has become clear that face-to-face meetings are vital for real activity to take place. Craig has been the main person in developing the internet presence. The org has moved from being a membership based org, to having a 501c3 which was able to take donations and created the opening for matching corporate funds. The org has always been low risk, frugal, and the gatherings have always produced some income for the org. The org is now looking at how to increase the number of face-to-face gatherings throughout its region. NICA has encouraged BC to create their own org and this has happened. It will use selected media, such as selections from "Visions of Utopia" and other presentations to focalize local gatherings. There has always been a strong base in the Northwest coho community network, and they are trying to reach out to co-ops and collectives. NICA has been using FIC as a web server and last year started paying a fee for the service. They want to transform their website into being more interactive. Fred thinks that regional orgs are very powerful in bringing people together in face-to-face gatherings to communicate the value of community.

All NICA events are listed as free and people are encouraged to contribute what they feel comfortable with. This has been very good for the org. No one has ever been paid for NICA work. NICA put up \$5,000 to jumpstart next week's A of C event, with a request to consider 4K of it as a loan if the event could afford to repay it—which it looks like it will—plus a 1K contribution. NICA would like to continue to partner with FIC. They don't want to reinvent things and want to take advantage of databases and other resources of other orgs such as FIC and would like to help financially support those efforts. They would also like to provide regional content and be able to have regionally filtered views available from the FIC website: reach book, Directory, and events.

The relationship with FIC around the event seems to be coming along well. There was a rough start, but things seem to have been worked out. Hopefully the collaboration with FIC can be used as a model for collaboration with other regions. It remains to be seen how much the support for NICA will cost and what that leads to in terms of working with other regions.

There has been more success drawing in Coho groups rather than other IC groups. Is there any particular reason?

There has been a perception problem for both NICA and FIC. NICA is sometimes seen as being too mainstream for collectives which see themselves as more radical. NICA is trying to do other things to attract the local collectives such as create venues where information can be shared.

There has always been some participation from other communities and collectives, but the numbers are generally skewed toward Coho communities. Coho communities tend to come to more events and bring more people who look to take leadership roles.

Why has NICA been more successful in Washington than Oregon?

NICA met at Tryon farm in Oregon and had more people from Oregon for the first time. The next effort was in Eugene and there was low attendance with as many people from Washington as from Oregon. They were not able to determine what would encourage more participation. There was recently an event at Lost Valley that had over 100 people. There is a history that is getting in the way, in that NICA is viewed as primarily a Washington org. One possible solution is to recognize that the states are different and create an Oregon branch of NICA. Database structures are easy to adapt to this approach. It's important to recognize the differences within the region. It would also help to make a personal appeal to the various communities to participate in the network. One possibility is to recognize the differences and move toward a Washington org and an Oregon org.

There currently are few Oregon folks who can be counted on to show up at a NICA event. There is a feeling that there are folks from Oregon who would have organizing energy to make personal appeals to the communities in the state. The Lost Valley event was organized by an intern who felt the need to create a venue for a community event.

There are inroads that need to be made to bridge between ICs and other movements that are supportive or symbiotic, such as permaculture groups. The issue may be how to coalesce the organizing energy that exists in Oregon. Perhaps NICA can create a context for organizing in Oregon and catalyze something.

Development 5-year plan

[Laird] See written report. In lieu of verbal presentation, Laird gave time to read the written summary of the draft development five year plan. It has two sections: membership and fundraising.

Laird's two caveats: he works closely with Alyson, and she is only available to meet about 20 times per year. She has not responded to this report yet. Second, Laird wanted to list the goals and include specific numbers, but needs to check in with Tony first and has not had a chance to do that.

In general, memberships are up, and Laird spends more time on this than he used to. Conversations with Craig inspired an increased focus on electronic means for delivery of member benefits. Craig continues to be concerned that benefits of membership are "so thin." There's a sense that a lot of organizations don't have concrete benefits. Tony gives a 40% discount to members for on-line ads. Member benefits are mixed, depending on how much and what types are used. Is this a problem of perception or real? We put out the message that the main thing you are "getting" is that you're contributing to the movement, but it doesn't seem to be getting communicated very effectively.

Membership & Donations over the past 5 years: (Figures from Tony)

'01 \$16,000
'02 \$22,000

'03: \$27,000
'04: \$33,000
'05: \$47,000
'06: \$39,000 year to date

Within this, membership has been relatively flat until recently. A donation of \$100 gets you into the category of someone who gets personal attention. Laird maintains personal contact with a handful of people via phone, visits, etc. Some he's "holding" for a particular project we haven't started yet (i.e. the Summit idea). He also wants to do more with pledges (i.e. regular payments monthly or yearly).

Target dates in Laird's report seem far out in the future. Sense that Laird is being intentionally conservative (e.g. ambassador packets). This is largely about the juggling of his time. Also, the FIC graphics redesign work is slowing some of these other initiatives. Laird's open to getting something out sooner. If committee conveners have a thing they want fundraising for, talk to Laird about how to get it into the queue.

Board supports the general plan, would like to get a list of priorities and sequence for further specific input.

Printed Material Needs & Graphic Redesign

[Laird] Graphic redesign committee is Tony, Laird and Peggy, with Harvey as a process helper. Amy has stepped down or at least taken a break. We've settled up with her re compensation. Nothing else is happening at the moment. Susan and Diana C. both have people in mind who might be able to pick up the design parts.

Things we want attention from board about:

Composition of the committee. Peggy has stepped down from board; it's unclear if she is willing to continue on this committee. Tony is not clear that he is serving on the committee. He is still willing, but isn't sure he's being effective. Laird is looking for input: What committee is going to best serve the board?

Committee should be composed of people who know how to move through a collaborative design process. Laird thinks he's an amateur at this, and thus he may have made it harder. Tony's sense is that they weren't really following a clear path toward something that everyone could get behind. Amy is a fine designer, but she isn't one to drive a process. One factor is our range of aesthetic opinions, another is defining the work we want our new graphic design to accomplish. What's the priority: getting a design out or prioritizing our aesthetics? Seems like the committee has held their aesthetics as the priority, and we haven't gotten a design completed. Maybe it's time to step back a little and get perspective. You can get a committee together to design, or we could use the \$1,500 to do a logo contest. The 3 folks on the committee were not necessarily suitable as far as having someone who could guide the process. Harvey does have experience with taking inarticulate input and guiding the process through to something someone likes.

Ma'ikwe offers to host a summit in Albuquerque if Laird and Peggy stay involved. We have three options to explore: Susan's, Diana's, Fred and Kyle's. How will the designer be chosen? Are we willing to delegate this to one person? No. Not sure Laird should be on the committee, his strong point is not design. Laird OK with stepping down. It would be good to let the committee just do what is needed. We need a team that will work on not just logo, but the whole package.

Harvey and Susan have skills and experience and are generally trusted to know the organization and be able to honor the previously done work. The cmtee needs someone with the time and energy to convene and drive the process. Tony can still be the computer-related consultant. Laird is willing to be the convener to facilitate the process while not being involved in the content. Susan needs for the process be focused if she's to participate, not a trickle-in-slowly process. The timeline that would work for Harvey is in the fall. Map it out while we're still here, then pick a couple days when the team can get together. Mid-October to Feb. 1st is Harvey's window.

Q: Should we go ahead with the resources we currently have?

Q: Does the board want to have input into this specific design question? Earl thought that the board might want to have input into the specific question of whether we have a defined center in the logo.

Q: We are out of a number of materials; should we print more now or wait until this new logo work is done?

New printing is not as crucial for the next few months and can wait until this committee gets their work done to do the reprinting. So, all of the above questions can be left in the hands of the committee.

Jorge is willing to earmark a donation for Harvey's time.

Financial Review

[Tony] Handouts: "Summary", "Cmag"

Based on first 7 months of the year. The "Budget" numbers are for the total year, so 58% is "on target."

INCOME

Office expenses are divided by program areas (based on sales and various formulas for credit card charges) and have not yet been calculated for this report. Income numbers are solid to date, but most sections still have outstanding expenses.

Art of Community: Note blank line—no data yet.

Bookshelf: doing well thanks to cohousing conference. Hit our target already, with two events to go. [AofC next week, plus NASCO the 1st weekend in November]

Development and donations (including membership) doing well compared to expectations. Earmarked and restricted donations have not been included unless already spent on a specific item.

Directory (4th edition) sales pretty much on target, probably will come in a little low.

Video continues to sell at slow but steady rate, as projected.

Website had higher income than projected because of specific donation and sales of online ads. Online Directory ad sales were not very brisk, have not yet pushed them. Sold less than ten out of 1500 communities.

Other income: selling our mailing list to Co-op America and New Society Publishing (for promoting Diana's book?).

Auction: Normally in this report. Not in there for the cohousing event, those figures went into development. This is just through July, so the Twin Oaks auction in August is not included.

Loan fund interest low: PEACH offset. Past reports may have artificially inflated this line item because Walnut Street repayments of principal were misreported as interest.

EXPENSES

Development: Laird and Allison's wages/salary: none paid so far, probably will have some later in the year.

Directory 4: All attributable to fulfillment and overhead. Printing is a cash flow expense, not shown here, a transfer from liquid assets to inventory rather than an expense.

MO Office: Shift in office staff, pay rate adjusted. Still under budget as some aspects of the work being done more quickly. Some improvements made to the hardware, all covered by grants. Negative numbers here because we haven't adjusted allocation amounts by tweaking the figures to the nth degree in QuickBooks.

Secretary: Covers salary and projected expenses

Video: all just a formula there based on unit sales.

Website: At this point we have spent pretty much all the money that we budgeted for the website this year. Four months of work could still be done, but there's no money to fund it. This is a thing we've known since we looked at the budget in LA. Some money is available from the Cmag grant for a site redesign has been included as part of that. It's not clear what to do with parts of the website not specifically funded.

Other Expenses: A catch-all. Interest, miscellaneous. Used for really trivial things.

Other loan interest: Handout says 0, should be \$464 (58% of \$800). We still have loans that are accruing interest.

PROFIT/LOSS

Based on these numbers, Tony says it shows that we've made a significant profit in our operating budget this year, \$22k.

On the back: this is our non-operating budget, reflecting things like the Cmag grant not used in same calendar year. Total Profit \$38,742 in terms of money going to allocated funds.

Summary Info: Not allocated to project areas, take with a degree of salt. No radical changes expected in rest of year beyond what's been commented on.

FINANCIAL REVIEW

Cmag: Balancing income shown where expenses made, transfers from earmarked funds. 3 cover photos @ \$150 each. Spent more for better paper. \$950 for cover design may just cover 2 of 3 issues. Overall \$3600 of expenses covered by grants.

Cmag wholesale sales are looking good. These figures are for two issues. [last 2 columns on the right] May not reflect all the returns for all issues. We're keeping on top of distributors, not sure if sell-through has gone up. No longer bleeding money out through Ingram to get magazines into the major channels. Laird: Flat sell-through as of six weeks ago. Remember that significant time lag is a major factor in the business. Look at actuals 2003 v. 2006: see they're still much more modest.

Subscriptions: based on last year's actual – came in above budget. We're doing better than last year at the same time. New vs. renewal? Ask McCune. Laird notes that's a very hopeful number.

Sold a lot of samples and back issues. We've been printing about 250 extra copies for inventory at offices, increasing that for the current issue. Last three issues have sold out, though some

come back from distributors, depending on the sell-through. Laird: Some are hot for six months, others sell a few forever.

Advertising is looking good. Figures may include some of Diana's receipts for Winter '05 issue. Patricia is doing well, even with 10% higher ad rates. More rapid turnaround in cycle of collecting fees may make the numbers look better.

Royalties: Some articles are being reprinted in course readers. Single Cmag articles were being sold on Amazon for \$20. They still sell to academic resources, supposedly no longer on Amazon since we asked them to stop. Diana's 5% royalty on her book sales may not be recorded here.

\$40k includes \$10k grant money. On target, everything's ahead of the game. Graphic design is low, intended to provide more for illustrators, photography. Cover photo expense isn't immediately obvious where it shows. Contract Labor includes other work that Susan has been doing as photo editor. Not clear what she's billed for. \$90/quarter will go to new copy editor, itemized under Proofreading.

Commissions: for ads, is a straight percentage (25%) of ad revenue.

Printing expenses: looking good in terms of the budget, this represents just two issues. Includes higher-quality paper, four-color printing. Came in lower than projected because we are printing fewer than a couple of years ago. Jorge reports that the printer (according to Sue) is not refined enough to meet our photo-quality needs.

Promotions: \$4k budgeted \$461 spent; there will be a mailing by the end of the year. Utne ads cost \$400/issue, paid in chunks.

Fulfillment: Retail labor not allocated from office budget. 6-7k expenses should be allocated to Cmag, not in here yet. Probably 3k profit so far. Hard to tell midway through the year.

Subscription trends? Ask McCune who does the print orders. Sense is that it's been relatively stable. We print 3,000, maybe 1300-1400 go to subscribers, and a similar number sold on newsstands.

Do we have a way yet to track how much difference is being made by the Utne ads? Just anecdotal if the person comes through that referral. In the past sales generated through Utne ads were easy to track. Perhaps we should use a discount code and/or a second website URL to track those sales. If there's a way to do that which doesn't take lots of time, might be something to pursue.

2007 Budget will be presented tomorrow. By midnight: Tony needs to know if your project area is going to do something different next year. Balance sheet will be presented when we do the budget.

Newsletter is covered under "other expenses." In the past it cost \$600/year for four issues.

Website: Of the \$4400 expense, 90% is labor. Is it being allocated for parts of the site? Not broken out that way. Lots went into the general site redesign. Directory gets half the traffic on the site, is half the work in terms of users saying "I can't do this or that." Lots of work's been done on the wiki, which hasn't been launched yet. Store work in the wake of last year's re-launch. Features still pending include product-code discounts, gift cards, etc.

Q: If we run out of money in the web budget, will the work stop? Do we need to get more money? A: Through end of year, budget covers Cmag section on the site, NICA's site, Tony hopes to launch the wiki, and will also spend a fair bit of time working on the directory book project. All but the wiki have budgets. Can we cover those from unallocated funds? Some revenue continues to come in from the website. \$300 more.

Q: Can it go over budget? How much do we need to cover work Tony's anticipating doing that's not already covered? A: \$2k. Laird: So let's do it. Some of it's not earmarked, but that's not important. I haven't paid particular attention to it, but we're getting money to cover it. Customer support vs. web production – can that be delegated?

Video: What about using existing funds for video development approved at Madison for completion of second tape? \$3k available there. Probably already spent some of it doing a mailing to libraries. Want to use for video production if possible [was board approved in Madison].

Regional Networking

[Fred] Lack of activity since the last org meeting. Looking at questions of who/how people represent the FIC on a regional scale. One question is how to identify and recruit folks who are already doing regional networking type of activities. Could provide them with suggestions such as using the Visions of Utopia video or the Community Dialogues packets for designing events and to generate interest. Ma'ikwe has stepped off the committee. Would be valuable to create study guides to use with our materials. Could do a tie-in to the NICA website database, and eventually upgrade the website to make our web features available to other organizations. We have budget considerations for funding future web work ... how do we pay for the work needed to get it going? One possibility is that Skyhouse could help with that.

A lot of web work has been happening, but a lot of the networking happens face-to-face, sometimes using the Directory, and many of these folks don't have laptops and regular web access. Need to be sure that the printed Directory has updated maps and other basic regional resources. Would be helpful if it also included a list of regional networking contacts or groups so that seekers can connect with those resources.

We now have a directory of regional groups buried in a corner of our website, but it needs to be more available. We could print contact info of specific ICs and regional organizations if they're willing to be featured and field those inquiries. Does NICA have an interest to be available as a resource for helping forming groups in their region?

It might be helpful to have an ongoing column in Cmag on regional networking (the RegNet committee members said they were already interested in doing that) with a sidebar of contacts and could elaborate on related topics.

Is the RegNet committee willing to take responsibility for screening resource folks who can be "certified" and thus published? People all over the country have self-identified themselves in that sort of role, so there's a question about whether or not we'd want them to be featured under our umbrella. There are also insane folks out there who would fit that description. We could run a disclaimer saying they're not screened or approved. If we publish their info there's an implied endorsement unless we say otherwise. We could handle this by having a point person (or committee) who would do that sort of screening. A wiki, on the other hand, is totally open and can't screen in this way. Are we distinguishing between independent organizers and FIC-approved regional networkers? If we somehow plug in with them we will get more of our stuff into circulation, and eventually the end users will end up getting better information.

The issue of how we deal with people who take on the "FIC mantle" has been around for a long time. There are reasons for the caution that some people feel, and also reasons for the openness and enthusiasm that other folks have. What's the best way to find a balance between these two perspectives?

The RegNet cmtee wants to make use this week of folks here in this circle to move the discussion forward and figure out some promising next steps. Right now the Directory is an example of a self-selected list that has a disclaimer. Cmag could let people self-nominate, or the org could recruit focalizers in targeted areas. People tend to read right through disclaimers, so it's questionable just how useful that might be. Note that FIC is generally a clearinghouse, and to the extent we make it easier for folks to find each other and us it's a very useful service.

The RegNet Cmtee intends to look at ways to get documents and information out to folks who are seeking these sorts of resources. We need to identify what resources are already available and what's needed. Note that we do have a lot of this experience and perspective sitting right here in this room today. It is potent and we have an opportunity to make use of it, if we can get creative.

Cmag Management

[Jorge] Jorge noticed a call for support from Diana C at the Ithaca meeting, that Cmag needs help and improvements. He noted Diana is a great content editor and has great connections to the broader world of communities, and the magazine design has been becoming more professional in its look. He realized there was no rep from Personnel Cmtee at the Cmag summit last spring—in hindsight he thinks that this was needed since the Cmag production team is being almost entirely re-staffed. In August, Laird (as Ex Sec) asked Personnel Cmtee to look at the overall functioning of the Cmag team, specifically working with tensions between Diana as managing editor and Susan and Amy as staff (differences related to lines of authority, communication styles, handling feedback, managing deadlines, etc).

Coming from a Personnel perspective, Jorge outlined the need for managers in three areas: layout manager, photo person, and content editor. Plus an overall production manager—not necessarily an artist—who should be responsible for timelines and facilitate consensus between the three area managers. No production manager job description has been written as of yet. In Jorge's proposed model, all would be collectively responsible, as a team, for the whole of the mag (functions such as themes, art direction, etc.), and the production manager would make sure conflict or big decisions are resolved and consensus is found amongst the Cmag team members.

It's Jorge's impression that Cmag staff cannot just hire a new person such as a replacement for Amy, noting that Cmag is not an independent satellite of the FIC bd. Diana pointed out that she had carried that responsibility up 'til now, and what Jorge is proposing would be a change.

Questions/concerns:

Susan likes the idea of the direction Jorge is suggesting, but has trepidation about how this will be utilized and brought into clear job descriptions. Concern: Production Manager must help with the sorting out of all the different jobs of the magazine. Needs to be a person who has a background in creating a magazine. Someone ignorant of the business would need to be open to input by outside experience from others in the business rather than having fixed opinions. It could be a fine line to walk for whoever takes on this job. Bottom line: is the person taking responsibility for the final product? Can it be rolled into the business manager job also?

Does Personnel need to be brought into all Cmag hirings? In the past this has not been true. People such as layout people can be hired by the manager/editor. The three area managers need to be in consensus about the production manager. Would not be a good idea to have someone that one of the three areas cannot work with. What do the three area people want from this person in the job? Does this person do actual tasks or just oversee the work? Tony has been filling this role on an interim basis, and sees that there are certain tasks that this person would do. The job is like a contractor with the knowledge of how a magazine is created. It can be a job that a person can learn with the help of the three area people sharing the job descriptions. Jorge sees this person being responsible for prodding the team into a decision when necessary, and if the

team cannot decide, then the production manager can make the decision. Note: Craig says Coho is willing to share info about the process they went through when they restructured their production team that created their magazine.

The three on the team now can share what they do, and say what they are willing to do or can do under their job descriptions. Production manager does not have to have expertise about all the aspects of the magazine. Their job is to make sure all aspects of the work get done, keeping everyone informed and seeing that communication is flowing and all aspects are flowing. S/he is a coordinator of the team.

Do individuals have multiple roles? Will there be only four people on the team? Will it be a part-time staff creating a quarterly journal? Pieces of job descriptions have been thrown out here for discussion. Need polishing.

Diana as the main person on Cmag is asked what her thoughts are about this possible change in structure? Not ready to respond at this time. Fred asks if there is another way of opening up the process? Perhaps a smaller group session is needed where folks can feel safe.

Diana feels that an apology is needed. No one spoke to her about this possible change in Cmag. No one on the Board asked her about what she needed, and she's heard no appreciation from the group for the job she's done. Feels that she is being demoted. Needs to have a team of people she can work with. Recently she has had difficulty getting feedback from those she has been working with, and wants more straightforward communication. If people have a problem with her work they need to just say it. She feels that she has acquiesced many times. Admits she could use some direction in certain areas. Needs to feel she is working amongst friends. Would have appreciated being brought into the conversation earlier to consider potential changes in the management of the magazine.

From Diana's perspective, she does not have a sense of mutual understanding and trust with Susan. In August Laird heard about this tension in the Cmag team, and felt that Personnel should be brought in to create a change for the better for all involved. There's been a sense that communication had broken down. People felt discounted and not understood. Laird tried to catalyze some change, but points out no conspiracy has been underfoot to undermine anyone on the Cmag, and there's no intention to change anyone's salary.

One channel that already exists is that members of the Cmag staff can make contact for FIC org support in a number of ways-- such as Ministry, or Personnel. Diana said that Jorge's proposal feels like a demotion, would take away some of her responsibilities. Diana felt blindsided by the proposed restructuring. Do we set this aside for now, try to meet with Diana and work with her concerns, explore other options? Suggestion: No more work on this at this time, and be proactive to get Diana's input. Smaller group will meet with Diana to work on this proposal; it is definitely important to explore it further.

Tony will talk with Diana and provide feedback to Personnel. It was agreed that our hoped-for outcome is to keep Diana as editor of Cmag.

Hate Speech Proposal

[Laird] The policy should include something about physical appearance. This will be published as part of our Cmag, Directory, and Website policies. AGREED.

Events 5 year plan

[Ma'ikwe] The events team was reformed at the Madison meeting. The committee is Fred, Caroline, Peggy, and Ma'ikwe (convener) with Harvey as a listener.

The proposal is to have 3 locations with at least 3 people involved. There would be a rotation between the 3 locations. Some elements need to be handled by people who are local and some can be done remotely. This enables having a stable core team. The team in Seattle is very strong and this would create conditions that those people could stay involved.

There would be an event every 18 months which would return to each to each locale every 4.5 years. The locations are Seattle, Albuquerque, and another location to be determined. The org meeting would need to be within 100 miles of the event locale. There are efforts being made to find an east coast location as the third locale.

Another idea is to have 4 locations with 2 teams that would rotate. Another possibility is to do big events every 18 months. One concern with this is that the variety in locations for the events is limited. Repeating locations may create a base of repeating customers. There is a question as to whether the geographic requirements might be 2 restrictive, however returning to a place lends to efficiency. There also might be other locations that would be good to have events but would not be good to return to with this frequency. This could be served in times between the 18 month cycles. This format can be modified as we feel the need.

Fred, Syd, Peggy, and Ma'ikwe have expressed interest. Peggy needs to be checked in with to confirm her interest, as her life situation has been going through transition.

FIC could also support regions if they want to have more frequent events.

The biggest problem for the org has been finding organizing energy. The new proposal addresses that problem. It also addresses the issue of moving the events around to different parts of the country.

We have not identified a third location which would preferably be in the east. Possible locations are Ann Arbor, Tennessee, Madison.

NICA's 5k sponsorship grant for this Seattle event has replaced FIC seed money to fund such things as paying the publicist, and that has been critical to the success of the event. It would help having a similar fund available for future events. We could decide to allocate the 1k contribution from NICA as a beginning of this fund. We can decide to have this fund, but it requires more conversation to figure out how to seed that fund.

The next event is proposed to be in the Santa Fe Corridor in 18 months, and the committee is encouraged to flesh out a proposal. There are no budget requirements at this time.

We need to distinguish between bringing people in to work on an individual event and working on a permanent team.

There was talk about having an event at some point in the Rutledge, MO area. Would the permanent team be open to helping with one-time events?

The team should be augmenting the current info packet regarding putting on an event.

Cmag Staffing Discussion

[Tony] Diana understands that there is desire for change in the structure of Cmag production. She is trying to be non-attached to how things have been and is open to change. [Note: Diana wasn't present for this session; comments attributed to her were reported by Tony.]

She said her preference would be if there was someone managing the production schedule and pre-press work that Susan has been doing, and Diana would maintain authority over the editorial content. This would leave her in the role of overseeing the photo and layout managers. Tony told her that there were concerns about her ability to manage time and people.

Diana acknowledges not excelling in time management. She thinks she has more capacity in people management, and that recent events have been more of an exception rather than a norm. To support this analysis she cites her solid history of working with writers. The question for the board is whether we want Diana to specifically focus on the actual editing rather than also managing the production staff. Funding for Cmag management positions is a major consideration.

Jorge suggests two ways to approach the question: 1) Give Diana a six months trial period in the management role she is proposing, and oversee how that goes. He is not inclined towards this although he supports her having content authority. This approach would require someone else having overview responsibilities in order to make the analysis. 2) He is in favor of her not having authority over others, and instead hiring an overall project manager who would be responsible for personnel and schedules.

Fred leans toward, as much as possible, giving Diana a sense of continuity and ownership in continuing the role she has already been doing. His question is to what extent she would have control over the art—which is where the tension has been and where it would be most likely to continue. His suggestion assumes that there would be a production manager who would be responsible for managing the schedule and production and business aspects. That person would need to be in a “final authority” position. Clear job descriptions would be required.

Caroline thinks that, given our timeline for making Cmag viable, we shouldn’t be planning to make many changes. We should stick with Diana as content editor and she isn’t sure what other new authority roles would involve. The key point is raising Cmag to the level we want it. We should be very clear on all the job descriptions, and creating them might require some professional help.

Tony thinks it comes down to which individuals are in which roles. It depends on who the production manager is in determining who has authority over various aspects. Its hard to write job descriptions without knowing the people involved. He thinks Diana has been forced to learn some basics of magazine production management such as marketing, but her expertise in such areas isn’t based on in-depth research. Having someone with more experience or the ability to synthesize more information would be a help. If the three production people had compatible styles and got along well, they wouldn’t necessarily need someone to help resolve issues or to make final decisions. He thinks it’s unlikely we’d find a team that compatible, and that we’d be better off with someone strong in the production management position.

In the past Diana has had final authority over all aspects of production with the exception of ERB overview. She thinks it would be helpful to have someone responsible for overseeing the schedule, and notes this could result in conflicts between scheduling needs and editorial/graphic needs.

Two potential sources of conflict were identified: scheduling, and collaboration regarding the “art” of the magazine. Diana says she’s not attached to how the magazine has looked, and is open to new possibilities. It was noted that she’s a skilled editor and brings a great deal of other positive things to the mag. Both Amy and Susan also have special gifts they bring to the magazine. The three of them have run into some collaboration snags, and it’s difficult to conceive a change that would prevent that from happening again. At this time Diana prefers to maintain overall responsibility for producing the magazine, and to have the final say when there

are differences of opinion. Marty thinks it's important that the other core team members have strong influence in making the final decisions.

One question is how much confidence does the Board have in Diana's personnel management skills. There are other relevant issues affecting production that have to do with inconsistencies in how decisions are made.

Q: Should Diana as content editor be under the authority of a production manager, or should she have final word on aesthetics?

If we ask "How would we design the staff if we were beginning now?" the best option would be to have a project manager who has final authority. We still need to assure there's a collaborative relationship between the content and photo editors and the layout person, and this might be dependant on who's the project manager is and who are the other staff members. The three staff positions need to be in a good relationship with the project manager. The photo editor and layout person could be the same person. We need job descriptions for all positions.

TASK: Tony will talk to Diana about the ideas that were discussed in this session.

Budget II

[Tony] New handout circulated. Overall a profit is shown, but some specific areas have projected losses. This is the same as the handout from yesterday, except with a new column added for the 2007 Budget.

Bookshelf: \$906 projected loss. In this budget Tony bumped the office allocation a bit higher. Allocations don't necessarily reflect the actual cost to the organization, so there are some variables buried in the numbers. Laird makes a lot of sales happen in the course of his going to events, and in those instances there's no additional labor cost billed to the area. Bookshelf definitely serves our mission. Ma'ikwe also has some inventory that lives in her closet that she displays at various events from time to time.

Cmag: Figures in the top five lines are covered by grants we already have secured. Subscriptions, samples, and back issues were slightly bumped up, but not as much as would have been using a straight line projection. A big bump projected for ad sales since that's been performing strongly lately. The \$1250 earmarked for photo editor covers only one issue, and we would need to come up with additional funding for subsequent issues. Promotion includes ongoing Utne Reader ads, some tear-out cards, and other things covered by the grant. Bottom line shows a loss for the year, and also does not include any funds for a possible new production manager position. Personnel would want a budget for that staff position should we affirm to move in that direction. On the summary sheet Development shows \$30,000 in funds raised.

Directory 5: The question of cover price will really affect our budget, and that's a board issue. This initial cut is based on a \$25 cover price, which we would generally sell with a 20% discount. An additional membership discount would bring it down to \$18, which is reflected in this budget. We could price it as low as \$10, sell many more of them, and still break even. What is the proper balance between balancing the budget, making the Directory affordable, and getting as many as possible into circulation? This is not a budget issue, but should be covered in a separate discussion. Ad sales can make a difference of \$5k-\$6k which covers most of our original production and printing costs, expected to be about \$8k. On the handout, the total cost of goods sold should be \$5,100 rather than zero, so the bottom line profit would actually be \$4,358.

Office: Upped the office labor budget and changed some of the percentages for overhead allocations. Cmag and Bookshelf allocations were previously artificially low.

Other: Includes auctions, org meetings, travel reimbursements, community dialogues, personnel cmtee, and non-book items that we sell. Budget might need to have an addition of around \$2k to cover printing of new brochures and other promo materials.

WWW: Included a projection for ad sales and the endowment. Put in \$10k for labor (this year we had \$4k that was upped to \$6k). This is another board issue to discuss. Also this reflects a bump in the cost of services. Tony hopes to return it to ANU again, which will increase our level of services. Earlier ANU couldn't offer the level of Lennox support we need, but now they do.

Directory Price

Tony's budget dropped it from \$30 to \$25 ... what do we think? Last edition we sold \$23k retail and \$5k wholesale. We've had it in play a long time, starting at \$12 in 1990. Directory 2 was \$25 and still sold strong, but Directory 3 hit \$30 and sales really dropped then—but that was also when the web really was taking off, so it's impossible to derive a reliable conclusion from that. Laird is guessing the demand is not elastic right now. If we drop the price we will sell more copies, but will likely end up with about the same net income. Caroline says at Alphabit it's harder to move them at \$30, and shares Laird's impression. The question is how low can we price it to get more copies in circulation and still make money (not lose money?).

Price setting is not actually a board level decision. We need to come up with guidelines and goals and then delegate the final decision. There's also a question about how the online directory labor relates to this. The endowment was conceived to be supporting the Web work and data collection. Right now it's costing us \$10k/year, and the Directory could conceivably bring in that much which could be used to support the website. Right now the Directory starts paying for labor beginning when the snapshot of online data is taken. We set up the endowment when we didn't think the Directory sales would cover the costs. Even if it does, it would be useful to combine the endowment funds and sales profits to double the web budget.

Those present seem to feel most comfortable in the range of a \$25 cover price, and okay to tweak that even lower if the numbers suggest that might be helpful.

Web Budget

Raising it from \$8k to \$10 seems like a good investment. Raines says that NICA and other orgs have looked at offering some matching funds ... for every dollar that regional networking donates, we could offer matching funds for the program. Would need an additional source of funding for something like that. Laird has done that whenever matching funds seemed promising. NICA was looking at putting in up to \$1000. Right now what they are getting is use of the software we've developed at a cost of about \$20k. Tony invites the Coho-US folks to come to him if they have that interest.

FIC Promo Materials

We agree to allocate up to \$2k for printing new materials.

Cmag Salaries

What we're paying out right now for labor:

3300 Managing Editor

1050 Photo Editor (grant supported ... expires after 1st issue in 2007)

1500 Layout Person

5850 Total

Adding a production manager might cost an additional \$500/issue, bringing the total to \$6350.

We're interested in further funding of the photo editor, but we're not sure of what numbers to use. We definitely are liking what work's been provided lately, as Susan has also been covering a lot of the pre-press work. One important question is who's going to handle that. Most likely \$1050 is fine for the Photo Editor work, but the pre-press work is not presently being funded. There's also the question of having reached our current printer's capacity, and we may soon find ourselves shopping for a new one. The things we're wanting the production manager to do would generally be in addition to things that Diana has currently been doing. We need a target for what we want to accomplish and a range of what we think it might reasonably cost. Staying the same is not an option, but we're not clear about what to do and how to go about it in order to get the magazine on a self-sustaining track.

Proposal that we budget an additional \$1500 per issue which, added to the \$500/issue grant we have for a business manager, would make a budget for a total of \$2000/issue for a person filling the production manager/business manager role. Tony will work these numbers into the budget and bring it back tomorrow in the budget discussion.

Marketing

[Laird] The org has always had a problem manifesting enough marketing energy, and this applies to the Cmag issue as well. Laird does a certain amount of marketing that overlaps with his development responsibilities, but we don't presently have any solutions.

Many nonprofits have similar issues around money. We need to recognize how the availability of money enables the accomplishment of the mission of the organizations.

As a generalization, people in ICs tend to have a negative attitude towards marketing. Marketing can be done in alternative ways to the traditional "evil" marketing techniques. Making something good available is different from creating a need for a product that people might not have wanted before the traditional marketing effort. We do well at grassroots marketing by word of mouth and having good people use good products.

None of us is a focalizer for marketing in the sense of having the energy to create a team or a force to consistently reach out with a message for community. We might want to think about recruiting as a board candidate a person with those skills and focus.

Directory 5

[Tony] The issue at hand is that Tony has more work than he can do in terms of managing both the Directory and the website. He thinks we should find another person to coordinate production of the book for the next cycle. He is prepared to do the work for the upcoming Dir 5 cycle. He would also like to find someone to manage the more mundane elements of the web-based database. These could be the same person.

Neither of these is urgent in the next couple of months. We have about a year to find someone to manage the book production, and we could bring on someone for the website at any point. Funding is a question for those positions. Tony would not necessarily manage these positions. The hierarchy is not clear.

The last book production cycle took about 6 months and should be about the same for the new person. On-line directory maintenance takes at least an hour a day, and comes to about 10 hours a week. This could most likely be done from anywhere. There is no one on the horizon.

Some of the budget could come out of web-weaver budget, but the level of work could be higher. Funding for this is theoretically to come from the endowment which does not as yet exist.

Tony will create job descriptions with priority on the web site db maintenance. Skills in online and web work is necessary, plus an ability to help people who are having trouble accessing the information. Checking email and responding every day is vital. There is some phone work. This is a gateway to the org, so social skills are vital for doing cold calls, cold email, and tech support. We want that to be a good experience for the users. A high speed internet connection is not critical, but important. Ability to be on the internet and on the phone at the same time is important. This position could be filled by more than one person, but that would require coordination.

Creating the print Directory requires being able to coordinate with layout person, printer, etc. It is managing the project of creating a book.

Amy may be interested in continuing to do book layout, but she has a priority on working with people at her location.

Website

[Tony] The webweavers committee consists of Tony. He thinks it's vital to have others involved and to be building a team. We need web developers. People need to be reliable, available, and able to work on a team.

The position is currently being paid at \$10/hr. In the past it has not been easy to find people who fill the criteria. Tony does not have anyone in mind. Part of the problem is that it's not that simple to bring someone up to speed on the state of the art of the website. Easing someone in gradually would be easier than bringing someone on as a full partner right away. Someone could move into this at any point. Tony is currently doing about 40 hours/week and could share that time. Laird, in his travels, would be willing to screen people that are identified as candidates.

Tony is planning to put up a wiki, and that would require some people with a commitment to writing, editing, and creating a context for encouraging others to participate. It could probably be covered if a dozen volunteer people paid attention for a couple of hours/week. It would be participating in the multilog, and we need people who have relevant community experience to raise the level of discourse.

Having irrational or divisive postings can be a problem. There are technical solutions that can be used with discretion. It would be useful to have one person willing to pay consistent attention to check for sabotage. This needs to be checked on daily. The responsibility also can be divided.

Jim would be willing to pay attention to monitoring. Jorge will volunteer to spend 1-2 hours a week. Laird will volunteer and try to manage his participation. Tony will let us know when the wiki is up and running.

Budget III - Approval

[Tony] Changes made:

- Cmag: expenses for photo editor for the full year and project manager added.
- Directory 5 sales price has been kept the same and corrected the cost of goods error.
- Added 2k for printing promotional materials (under office expenses).

The result is that the Cmag budget now shows a loss of 6,682. We don't want a negative bottom line on the budget, so, how do we deal with it?

Laird created a long term view that is a reprise of a budget he created a couple of years ago for Ron Miller. It is a balance budget and does not depend on donations.

We could try to find another donor to bridge the gap between where we are now and the projected balanced budget, or we could decide to absorb a deficit for some time period until the balanced budget is achieved.

Part of our current plan is to boost ad rates a second time as the improved mag moves forward. There is peripheral marketing through Diana's upcoming book(s) that feature Cmag and the Directory.

Q: Is the key to increasing revenue having better quality, or is it better marketing and ad sales (which would be dependant on the business manager position)?

The COHO magazine is free online and includes a solicitation for contributions.

Laird's projections require a subscription level of 2000 which we have never had. It also requires a doubling in distributor sales which, due to the trends in the industry, seems doubtful.

Is that projection reasonable? How can we balance the 2007 budget?

- We can lower the allocation for the new Cmag positions unless there is grant money.
- We can be more optimistic on the revenue side.
- We can cut the promotional printing budget from 2k to 1k.
- We could cut the web budget.
- We could have more optimistic projections, but the only basis for it would be hope.

Jorge can pledge 1k for Cmag staff positions.

Should we consider making Cmag an online publication? It would cut costs and require more web savvy. The trends in print publication might not be relevant to a niche publication such as ours.

The big question was whether or not it is wise to cut the Cmag Production Manager salary, as Tony suggests. Revisit this in March at next board meeting, once we have all of this year's accounting and have the real story on how long it took to get people hired and what the specifics are on their finances and ours.

Graphic Redesign

[Laird] New committee has been meeting during the org meetings. They were charged, among other things, with coming up with a feel of dynamism, an org that is people friendly, engaged in world (not isolated or removed), with sleeves rolled up, doing good work, building things, not grim, positive feel, informal, accessible, appealing to a broad class range (not "just rich people" but also not sloppy, kooky, or exotic), needs to work with full or two color.

Recently they have been leaning toward abstract rather than representational work, conveying that we are not all the same. Not symmetrical, nor want to give perception that all should be in the center. Like round not sharp edges.

Personnel Committee

[Caroline] Have been moving into a different configuration of responsibilities. Now are seeing some responsibilities that we can carry out more completely than before and are taking that responsibility more seriously. This involves making a list of responsibilities, including tracking what people are doing, particularly with Cmag during the current transition phase. Diana has given us a list of things that she feels need to be watched, and this will be combined with the

information gathered during the fact-finding phase we've just completed with the other Cmag staff. The implication is that we'll have regular evaluations.

It also involves making new job descriptions, and we will be doing this over the next four weeks. It is urgent because we have Cmag work up and coming. Jorge suggests hiring Susan to be a consultant for Layout, Photo Editor, Content and Production/Business manager. He stated a preference for separating the Cmag Biz manager and Production manager roles, even though our hope is to find someone who does both. Also, Personnel is taking on staffing outreach for the two positions that Tony introduced: Directory Editor and Database Directory Coordinator.

Personnel is also working on getting very familiar with the functioning of Cmag in order to be able to responsibly evaluate needs and staffing. Allen Press offers a free workshop for clients that might provide this training.

Is hiring Susan as a consultant covered in the budget? Jorge will send a proposal about this to Oversight.

Caroline and Jenny are both well-experienced with Personnel. Noted as well that the board has fiduciary responsibility for the organization, and they'll be taking this on via Personnel in a more pro-active way.

Personnel: Outstanding Cmag issues

We are part way through the Cmag redesign process. What role does Personnel have in replacing the old team? How do we go ahead? Immediate need to fill the slots vacated by Susan and Amy. Personnel is asking the Board to be involved with hiring and firing for Production Manager, Biz Manager, Content Editor, Photo Editor, and Layout Person. Proposal to freeze any changes for the next issue at what we have gotten to so far. Also, the folks who are redesigning the magazine need feedback from the organization about what has been done so far based on #132 and #133, looking ahead to #134. We'll postpone further redesign work until we have the team in place. Possibly the folks working on the logo can continue after that work is done by moving into helping with the redesign process if we don't have a team by then. The old team was Diana, Laird, Tony, Susan and Amy. Just because Susan and Amy are stepping out, can't the others continue working on it?

APPROVED: Tony, Laird, Diana and the new staff will comprise the redesign committee. If changes need to be made on the next issues, Laird, Tony and Diana will oversee until the team gets running again (meaning when we have the permanent new people hired). It's fine to take input from any temporary staff, but the decision-makers for now are Tony, Laird and Diana.

There's a question about who's our target audience and how this fits with the cover design. We need to form an ad hoc committee to serve for now as Production Manager, and also to be the link between the board and the magazine staff. This may mean having very focused and intense work for some periods of time; is this one person or a small committee? Can this question be delegated to Oversight?

APPROVED: Delegate this to Oversight.

Cmag Cover Design

Susan and Diana have had a different take on it. Both want compelling photos. Diana wants either a pleasant and cordial expression on their face, engaged, etc., or at least not looking unhappy. Susan believes that this isn't required, and that if the photo is compelling, that will cause people to grab the magazine. This issue came up with the current cover (#132). Some feel that it's fine to have the cover image be more authentic, real, etc. This is really a question of how

we are marketing ourselves, not a right or wrong answer. Diana thinks that it should either be a pleasant expression (happy, thoughtful, engaged, etc.) or at least not unhappy; the question is whether or not it's OK to sometimes have a cover image with subjects that looked stressed or unhappy if the photo is otherwise "compelling." A concern with the fall issue: many mainstream people would have trouble relating to the image pictured in the cover photo--and we need to bridge and expand our reader base. The cover needs to reflect that. Fall issue's theme was "Elders in Community" and the image we used feeds into a common prejudice and fear about aging. Diana said that she thought the woman on the cover of the fall issue was a fine photo itself, as a photo, and she'd be happy for it to be a full page photo on the inside. She thought it just wasn't a good choice as a cover photo.

When is "compelling" more important than "a happy, thoughtful, engaged expression"? What will serve us better when it comes to our audience? There's a feeling that we need to sell realism. We aren't about being sensational, we're about being real. It can feel like bait and switch to have a happy image on the front. "Hopeful" is more important than "happy." The perfectionism conveyed by "Yoga Journal" can be off-putting. Diana wonders about shifting the standard away from being "happy" to just making sure that the cover photo is "not unhappy or miserable." Desire to have images that convey "power" more than "easy living"; different people see hope in different ways. Maybe it's not about the words and criteria, but about what happens when we disagree.

Another question is how true are we to our values in the content of the magazine? This is clear once a reader gets inside the magazine, but we only have five seconds to sell it based on the first impression of the cover. Subjectivity is rampant. We have had controversial covers sometimes, and controversial can be compelling. Variety in the covers might be the best marketing. Should we make a list of things we should try to stay away from (i.e. stereotyping) and a "yes" list? Not sure how many people buy the magazine the first time they see it. They probably see multiple covers before buying it. It would be good once we have a batch of higher quality covers to do a survey, either in-person or on-line, and ask them to rank them based on how compelling they are. Diana agrees that the variety is important.

While there is obvious disagreement about aesthetics, we seem to like hope, realism, variety, and compelling images.

Also the technical requirements have gone up and we should stick with those.

[closed board session]

Diana & Tree Proposal: Anthology of Cmag Excerpts and permission to use Cmag name

Diana: Tree and I have an idea for how to promote Cmag by compiling a book with some of Cmag's best articles on meetings and process & communication methods. We have all these wonderful articles in the magazine, but they're kind of generally inaccessible--only subscribers and newsstand buyers see them--and they could be helpful to a much wider audience. We want to use the Cmag name, right on the cover of the book, so that it promotes the magazine. We would like to call it "The Communities Magazine Guide to Getting Along in Groups." Tree and I would also write some new articles to weave the pieces together and fill holes.

Q: How many do you expect to sell?

Diana: First book surprisingly (to me) sold 5,000 copies. I think more. Don't know.

Q: Would we be giving away any of our own rights to reprint or sell?

Diana: Any publisher would explicitly not include those rights.

Q: FIC any official relationship to this book? Logo? Contracting through you vs. directly w/publisher.

Diana: Would negotiate with publisher for an FIC page in the back with info.

Q: Why go with your previous publisher and not FIC?

Diana: For certainty, sooner, faster, access to distribution/promotional network. Self-publishing requires a lot of spending and work up front. Authors get relatively little money when going with a publisher, but wider impact. That's our goal.

Q: Cover price?

Diana: Set by publisher, depends on size and page count. First book was \$22.95. For every 1,000 copies sold, \$200 to authors. The whole point is to boost the sales. Direct income for me is a little bit of a bonus.

Q: Proposed to New Society Publishers yet?

Diana: No.

Q: Have you done any market studies?

Diana: Proposed timeline includes preliminary work at end of this year, followed by official book proposal to NSP. Their proposal format includes questions about market comparisons to others, justification for trees cut down.

Two questions in here: Good idea to publish? Good idea to do outside FIC? Trying to get a sense of how much we could sell vs. NSP, etc.

Q: Would you consider publishing with FIC?

Diana: No, but perhaps Tree and others would be interested.

Q: How firm is that no? I'd be much more comfortable if it was published within the FIC.

Diana: Not interested in exploring for me.

Q: If the primary intent is to promote Cmag as a resource, doing through FIC vs. NSP is not the most effective way to get the word out.

Diana: Nonprofits are overloaded right now, and I'm in a good position to do it. Tree and I love to work together. We've already got an inroad to a good publisher. It seems like a fairly easy road, and will get the articles more widely read.

Q: Is there a downside to non-FIC publishing?

Tony: Plusses and minuses to who has editorial control. Higher risk if we do it ourselves. Front money for printing, advances, etc. We don't have same distribution networks. Could make more money per copy sold by publishing it ourselves. Could promote stuff as a package more if it's our own book. NSP will probably reach a wider audience – how much? Diana's first book sold 5k – 90% of those are aware of FIC, same congregation. If we got it in front of 50,000 people, that's different.

Q: Maybe we could do a deal w/the publisher for a special price to do package deals. If those conditions are met, that might allay concerns about our ability to offer package deals.

A: Publishers make author prices all the time, 50%, no different than non-returnable price. I think publishers would make a bigger deal for large-volume purchases.

Q: Important not to lose any FIC ability to make future use of the articles.

A: We only have one-time right to the articles, first-time serial. After that it reverts to the author. Implicit rights to put on the website. We'd also need to seek rights from each author.

Looking around the room, don't see a lot of publishing energy. We're already looking to replace Tony as Directory print manager.

It's also possible for the FIC as an org to pitch the book as a publisher, and negotiate the details directly.

Laird: What we're learning in group dynamics--about how to get along with each other in communities--is the most important product we have. I'm very protective of how we portray that if we put Communities magazine's name on the cover. I don't know how cleanly I can do this. This is a field I work in and care about a lot. Not willing to have FIC endorsement without editorial control. It matters to me, I care a lot about this. I'm worried about that, maybe too much.

Diana: I have connections, articles, and access. Tree is a nationally renowned process and communications person. To address Laird's concern, we are proposing that if any FIC person disagrees with something we want to include in the book, we will put those contrasting views in a sidebar on the same page. The authors of Building United Judgment did that, and it worked quite well and it helped illuminate varying viewpoints on different issues.

Laird: I want FIC to be an equal player if our name's on it.

Jorge: Does Diana have flexibility about how to proceed?

Diana: I get pleasure from writing, editing, etc. when I have control over the process. Laird and I have had some challenges working together, and my goal is to maximize the pleasure of doing the project and to minimize the stress. Maybe an FIC committee would review and add sidebars (as noted above) if/when dissent happens.

Q: If what you're attempting to do is create more market for Communities magazine by collecting/disseminating articles FIC seems to care about, why not let FIC have the authority?

Diana: To minimize potential stresses, as already noted. This project will take a good deal of our time. Just ask any artist: do they want to give up control of their work? Tree and I have talked to each other from the heart on what we are and aren't willing to work with. We can't demand that anybody trust us.

Q: Do we have a process to move this forward?

Bill: The early Emissaries books were changed by the publisher, and we had to choose whether or not to accept the changes. We did so, and 90,000 books were distributed. When we enjoyed a deep level of trust in the publishing professionals, it turned out wildly successful.

Q: You could go directly to the authors and ask them for permission.

Diana: But I wouldn't do that.

You could pursue the project without the Cmag name assurance. You would most likely work out any disagreements. No guarantee. FIC could say today: please go ahead and use the content. If it turns out we're uncomfortable with the product, then you couldn't put Cmag in the title.

It's her project, and she can do anything she wants.

Diana: That's a thought I never had, a Catch-22. My motivation isn't money, it's driving Cmag sales. Don't know if we'd want to risk the possibility of losing the Cmag name.

Q: Would it be possible for another member of the FIC board to work hand-in-hand for editorial review? [Tony was suggested.]

Geoph: I really resonated with the idea of proceeding without a guarantee of the use of the name Cmag. That's essentially how I did the video. I listened to the ERB, in the end FIC co-published it, and everything worked out great. I'm for that approach.

AGREED: No decision at this point.

NEXT STEP: Diana will sleep on it, incorporating input from today's meeting, then talk to Tree, and bring it back to Oversight for decision.

Evaluation and Closing

- + Great setting
- + Hosts and help very easy to work with, cheerful
- + Marvelous meals
- Depressing bulldozers
- Challenging temperature extremes in the yurt
- Smelly markers for flip charts
- +/- We uncovered some differences in tolerance for emotional tension
- Differences in definition of emotionality
- Unclarity about how to work constructively w/emotionality
- Not lots of new energy
- Missing Peggy, Jenny
- + Great budget report
- Frustrating to not have all five 5-yr plans
- Long, loud cell phone ringers
- + Excited about future events plan
- + Great progress on regional networking
- + Great feeling around support for Ganas
- + Evening events were cool
- Missed having a party or something strictly social.
- + Very open to a stranger
- + Loved loud, noisy dining room/sociability
- + Good interaction w/the cmty. Felt “at home”
- + Cleanliness, quality of food: love Songaia’s standards
- + Gail, Jim here for support a big plus
- Still felt we spent a lot of time dealing w/minutia in the whole
- + Impressed w/teamwork, focus on substantial issues
- Sometimes lacked info on agenda and changes
- No hot tub
- + Loren’s consistent feedback
- + Just enough WiFi
- + Fabulous internet tech support
- + Sharing work-tool toy (scooter) w/kids
- + Wonderful B&B
- + FIC’s a wonderful group to host
- + Good modeling of facilitation
- Facilitation could be better (says a facilitator)
- Need to respect authority of facilitator more when we intervene

Appreciations & Closing Circle