

FIC Org Meeting Minutes Dancing Rabbit Ecovillage Rutledge, Missouri October 23-26, 2014,

Thursday 10/23

First Morning Session, 9am - 10:30 am

Facilitator Harvey; Notes Betsy

Welcome by Ma'ikwe, our host, liaison to Dancing Rabbit

We are meeting in Sky House.

Logistics/Housekeeping

Bead Ceremony. Each bead chosen for a particular event or meeting by the community host or primary lead on the event.

Fall 1989, bead is the early wooden block; we met at New Harmony, PA. at The Abbey. Don Pitzer, chair of the Communal Studies Association was there. Daniel, Harvey, and Laird were all there. Albert Bates from the Farm was there. Daniel asked "what should I study to prepare for community? Albert said, without missing a beat, "auto mechanics!" We were trying out the University of Southern Indiana as helping as staff. We still have to work out how to work with Universities;

Fall 1994, Miccosukkee Land Coop, Tallahassee, FL. Elph Morgan said we have to be on the web! Ic.org was formed then. We had a Saturday evening party with a blues band; we were discussing how to relate to the cohousing movement. Velma, Laird, Harvey. early founder. We started a Personnel Committee. Jenny Upton and Jillian Downey were working with Caroline Estes, who lost the minutes. Caroline and Tree facilitated the formation of GENNA in 1999!

Fall 1999 – Sirius Community. Blue bead. Laird, Marty, Gio were there. Harvey was home helping his wife battle cancer. The first ENNA meeting was in October. Tension around events, just before the Art of Community at Frost Valley. We were looking at losing \$ there. Mixed stories. Last AoC Alex McGee ran for us. Bo Lozoff, Prison Ashram project in NC. Jeff Grossberg was promoting a strong ED top down model for FIC. Jeff and Tony had tensions around that. Gio – it was a pivotal meeting for ENNA. First time we had approached FIC and met to explore collaboration. All these South American people had shown up to our meeting in Quequecoatl. Then we went to the Frost Valley AoC. We decided to have an ecovillages space in the magazine. Was our second meeting at Sirius. They hosted a big Y2K event. Jeff Clearwater was there.

Fall, 2004 – Miccosukkee II, the 10 year reunion. Green with gold filigree bead. Ma'ikwe, Marty Harvey, and Laird were there. Ma'ikwe remembers cooking; she remembers Laird with his then-girlfriend, gave her cooking. Marty remembers it as the end of the Lotus era. She had a grievance and asked for an FIC apology. He didn't think FIC had done anything wrong, and he and Tony had a blow-up. Laird: we as an organization try to be an open door, and sometimes it doesn't work. FIC disinvited her after that. Let go. We've had 4 or 5 people disinvited over the years. Harvey – 2004 election was the next day; he stayed after to work for John Kerry.

Fall 2009 – Berea, Marty, Betsy, Laird, Harvey, Ma'ikwe were there. Greg Olsen hosted from Berea Ecovillage, a part of the school. We were cohosted by Berea Transition Town – Laird consulted with them on group dynamics. FIC offered training to help them and it was not accepted. Faith Morgan was there showing “Cuba: Power of Community” DVD. Difficult meeting for Marty, facing surgery. Ma'ikwe was asked to choose the bead.

Fall 2014 – now we're here!

Announcements:

Nominating Committee – Alyson is stepping down from the board after this meeting. Marty and Harvey are NomCom and anyone interested should speak to them.

Community Solutions (formerly Community Services) – Susan Jennings is the new ED, in Yellow Springs, she replaced Faith Morgan. Trying to figure out their mission and focus, so looking for a board member from FIC with a strong community voice. 1-2-3 years. They meet a couple times a year, and want someone with strategic planning experience. If interested, speak to the Oversight Committee.

Spring 2015 - Next meeting will be in the front range of Colorado – among 5 communities, Wild Sage Cohousing, with Bryan Bowen is interested but it has to be approved there. April or May. If GENNA people are interested in coming, give Laird good dates and bad dates.

Fall 2015, Nov. 6-8 We will meet at Heathcote Community in Md. (Close to staff)

CHECK-IN:

Present:

Lee (via Skype) – his wife June has eye surgery today and tomorrow; tricky operation today. Would like to participate more. Just here for the morning today.

Sky – first board meeting, youngest member; hung out at DR yesterday, played Frisbee. Last few months have been crazy busy; transitions; shifting toward network outreach movement building focus – very excited about that. Trying to slow himself down.

Russ – early on the west coast, 7:50. Less rain and winter is coming. Happy to be here by skype. BC. Cocque Ecovillage in the Rockies,

Lee Tequuite, family ecovillage, restorative farm, in Uxbridge, north of Toronto. – we're upset in Canada, a soldier killed in Parliament by a Canadian, links to the terrorist movements in Syria. Brings home there is a war, and Canada just joined that war.

Daniel – blessings; feels like connecting 2 families though he's not been so connected. He left Living Routes last year. Transition. New enterprise. Monique, his wife, is studying midwifery up in Toronto, 2 year stint, and the family might move up to Ontario next summer. If we can take fear and suffering out of the equation, what decisions can we make.

Christopher and a friend are putting together ideas for a community. Big thing since last time together – he got married!!!! Just before that got his permaculture certification. Spent 3 months just before the wedding, wwoofing in Europe, couchsurfing, visited friends, enriching, and exhausting. Made us crave roots even more – which is the next chapter. Looking for a place to

homestead for the next 5-10 years before we create the vision. Been intellectually stimulated and enjoying work with FIC. Glad to be here.

June – worked for Community Bookshelf since last August. Lives at Red Earth next door, will be here for some of the meetings part-time.

Alyson – also from Red Earth, ¾'s mile from here. This is the last FIC meeting she will be a Board member. Hard 6 months to figure out what she can take care of in her life. She is homeschooling with her 6 year old and 4 other kids. 2 jobs, fundraising for DR and FIC for new community center, and general DR fundraising. Has a 7-acre homestead to tend. Has a little sore throat, so a little low energy. Also co-managing her daughter, so will be in and out.

Kim Scheidt, FIC employee and bookkeeper for the magazine for 2 years, lives at Red Earth Farms and has a subcommunity called Dandelion, only adult member on 1.8 acres. Will check the agenda, and see what she can join in with. Very busy with Red Earth, FIC, and trying to be more ruthless about taking time for herself. Emotionally doing well.

Giovanni Ciarlo – from someplace else, trying to figure that out. I bring collaboration; it's a whole circle from 1999 when I was at the FIC board meeting. I come from a community background, sheepherding back in Italy. Involved in Round Mountain, and Greenfield Ranch in California and then moved; found my community Illuminated Elephants on the road, doing theater and gypsy life-style for 10 years. Then, with many members from Mexico, in 1982 we founded Huehucocoyotl, part of the FIC directory. Also founder and council member of the ENA, and the global GEN board – just stepped down from that, so very open to taking new direction for this GENNA FIC work here today.

Cynthia Tina – been living at Sirius for last year. Got involved with GEN and NextGen – starting in Switzerland last summer. She and Nebesna were named as GEN/NEtGen representatives. Also a student at Goddard, studying sustainability, very busy, and she's running low on sleep. Tired but excited. Working on a bunch of other projects that she hopes to share.

Laird – lives here now. He left Sandhill after 27 years to live with his wife Ma'ikwe here, so had to let go of some things he's been involved in. Here he's a community member, but not in the middle of things. He had a break in his schedule to prepare for this meeting. Exciting to have so many people in the room who are interested in networking. He hurt his back, is slowly getting better.

Linda Joseph – like Giovanni, has been involved in the creation of GEN as well as ENNA. Lives in Southern Colorado, with a rural residential coop, with 480 acres. We have a new member so she's very excited. Major life transition, she's term limiting out of being a County Commissioner; also a nonprofit administrator, local and international orgs, always more to do. Really happy that will end, because she's NOT a politician, she's an administrator. Whatever's going on with FIC, I see ENNA, and government struggle, we see that collaborations need to happen, for us to soar. Very excited to dive back into collaborative mode in all areas of life, and also discover what FIC and GENNA can do together.

Ma'ikwe Schaub Ludwig – there are 3 distractions. Logistics for this meeting; Son just started his first semester of college, and preparing for DR, Inc board meeting. She is ED. She is taking off her wedding ring, to derole, and focusing on the good of FIC. She brings a commitment to detach from relationship. And is here to show up for the FIC and international movement.

Marty – has left much to be done at home at Shannon Farm, has committed to homesteading, that's a lot of work. Not distracted.

Betsy – Tired/not enough sleep; Exploding community energy in Bay Area;

Harvey – Dunmire Hollow Community just celebrated its 40th anniversary. Marty modeled the t-shirts.

Bozivatva – came back to the community center. Fixed appliances in CC so we could have potluck. Doing pretty good.

Thursday 10:30am Second Session

Facilitator: Harvey, Notes: Christopher

GEN/FIC Collaboration

Important to note what we want to accomplish; let's start at the beginning, broad strokes, then details as needed (for resources, time, etc.)

What are the goals? (generated by group)

- structure that facilitates collaboration, and which can evolve
- reach a broader range and more groups, with higher level engagement
- better use of resources/energy
- international collaboration
- reaching the public with more useful information about sharing, sustainability
- reduce redundancy for greater synergy
- what is a structure that best meets the needs of NA and the world
- make an impact on policy (ecovillage, tiny houses, recycled materials building)
- embodying and modeling conflict resolution and flow
- what can we do to promote and assist the development of cooperative culture in NA
- build on common ground without losing uniqueness
- create language to bridge to wider culture
- gain legitimacy and professional support for public face
- training and educational outreach
- creation of an economic base to support operations
- getting out in front of publicity, PR, to be able to create and manage our own story
- clear responsibility, organization, and accountability
- to promote community living
- where are the opportunities for partnering, doing what we each do best?

Program/project areas of interest (Brainstorm)

IT -

Events -

Education - institutional

Advocacy and PR -

Policy - influencing building codes; UN

How to reach broader range of groups:

- how to get groups who don't know about or who don't necessarily identify with intentional communities or ecovillages to want to get involved with orgs; to be modern, hip, appealing to more people, social networking
- how to get more benefits out of membership
- idea to engage in telling our story by plugging into local media
- "GENSites" can help people to collaborate
- maybe we should focus on Development, as it's something that relates to all of this.

International:

- FIC needs to collaborate with more organizations on an international level to see how they are doing certain things around the world; GEN has 'open forum' meetings
- FIC ships books, dvds, and magazines around the world; international listings in directory
- NextGEN has meetings and projects, but it is hard to send all members to meetings with low funding
- Reminder that including both Canada and US makes this an international meeting

Influencing Public Policy:

- Twin Oaks fields calls from journalists about this (CNBC, Al Jazeera America)
- Ma'ikwe is doing a speaking tour from her TED X talk
- Can we plug into other marches, events, groups in the area
- FIC connects some people but does not have a toolkit to help people to change building laws, etc. (Nor does NextGEN, ENA, ENC)
- UN work from GEN to try to influence policy; sustainability aspirations that we can interact with and influence
- Gaia Education curriculum includes learning from policy victories/challenges (like Ithaca Ecovillage changing their zoning laws)
- 'Law in the Sharing Community' - paper to advise BAR association on changing views/laws

Events:

- lots of untapped potential and ability to collaborate here
- Youth Ecovillage Summit - put on by NextGEN
- FIC has done 1-3 day "Art of Community" Events, using staff and volunteers, has a template
- Collaborate with: Ecovillage Education course at DR, The Farm, NASCO, Coho US, Twin Oaks Communities Conference
- Findhorn has done an event with 400 people plus 100's of people participating online (with audio and video; the tools exist!)
- Gaia Education has online courses and webinars, would love to invite more people in
- ENA has not done large events for a long time and does not do them often

Promote Cooperative Culture & Community

- Next GEN has ecovillage ambassador programs (about 15) who share resources, have profiles online for people to ask questions and get plugged in
- FIC may be able to contribute help on how to alleviate poverty issues (such as were discussed at Tamarack)
- ENC is sharing information among themselves and Permaculture Network; easy to get on public radio to reach 30 million people

NextGEN Presentation from Cynthia

NextGen looking to collaborate, be a part, be integrated into something bigger. Can nextGen just be a program within another org?

Maybe better not having an age restriction on NEXT Gen. Do we have one (15-35) maybe it's the Next Way of Gen

Next GEN could be for and about Youth, says Daniel

Trying to define Next Gen has been an issue; subject of next Open Forum (International GEN conf call).

NextGEN started as an Anarchist movement that has evolved several times with different leadership. Current leadership is Cynthia (and Nebesna)

Thursday, May 23, 2014

1:45 to 3:00 pm Facilitator Alyson. Notes: Betsy.

Budget and Business Manager's Report – Present: Both Kims are here. (GIO, Harvey, Alyson, Christopher, Lincoln, Sky, Laird, Linda, Ma'ikwe, Betsy)

Third quarter financials

1. Currently Net operating profit is \$1634, 303% of expected \$539.
2. Last year we lost \$14,000.

Development consists of membership and fundraising, auction at Twin Oaks; we're looking at adding a Development Director, currently \$3600 for 2014; and is rolled over same #
Donations to support the website are higher than expected, but are very small. \$300 vs. estimate of \$100.

Membership budgeted as \$10,580 for the year; currently at 69%. 2015 projected higher by about 20%. For our 2015 goal, Christopher has projected a 20% increase in unrestricted donations.

Only 1 auction, at TO, under budget for the year.

We also invited donations to FIC, and will solicit at NASCO too in the fourth quarter.

Kim is currently helping Laird with membership renewal, working with McCune; wrote 35 personal notes and letters. Very effective. Mostly unrestricted donations.

We will cover development in more detail; elsewhere in the agenda.

Bookstore - print directory sales dwindling, \$77 for year.

Just one functional quarter with the improved bookstore website, almost at target; 69% vs. 75% for the third quarter!!! Approximately \$14,000 expected by year end.

Now marketing Best of Communities compendia – June wrote about one in the newsletter (Power and empowerment), and 8 copies sold. If any board members want to write about a given set, let Christopher know.

Mail order sales: \$534 for books at Twin Oaks – low, but expect to reach target with NASCO. Chelsea Green distributes Four Keys to Sustainability, and FIC works with them.

Consensus Books, both *Manual for Group Facilitation* and *Building United Judgement*. Now digitized, searchable by regular websites – sold 12 copies in October but that's not in this budget --- will be \$500 just on those titles.

Alyson - Let's focus on 4 digit numbers!

Visions of Utopia, DVD when we have book and film rights we can digitize and sell.

The Within Reach video is now handled by Derek Rowe; we sold a dozen the first time it was promoted by FIC. Don't yet have access for digital sales. Now screening kits and individual DVDs are selling together at \$25 for both. We have 900 copies left!!!

June's buying carefully. Takes suggestions; seniors in community books selling well.

Eurotopia selling well at \$35.

Cost is lower than projected. Many of our best sellers we got for free --- so cost is very low.

Revisit: Kim Schiendt proposes raising June and Kim 's salaries up to \$10/hour. 11% increase in wages, but they may work fewer hours. Kimi and Christopher have wage increases already in the spreadsheet.

Communities magazine subscription sales are way down.

CMag – asked in general – peak in last 10 years, 1555 subscriptions, (about 500 were free/exchanges) it has been dwindling, so we are at 1050 (up from 900+). Digital subscriptions, already made \$500/year. Subscriptions will be available on other digital lists too. Digital back issues. Reprint packets "Best of Community " are really, really selling well, \$10 each. We have 15 different packets; we sell all for \$100. Great graphics, lots of people helped create the packets. Amazon has a space, "Creative Space". Christopher will put our packets in there – Amazon uploads these books, print on demand, and into catalogs that go to libraries all around the world.

CMAG shows a gain of \$1400 this year, we're at +\$2200.

(currently office overhead is not considered in this figure).

Main issue for the expected income of \$7500 – has been loss of subscription income.

Business Manager: Christopher

What to do with entire set of back issues?

We can try getting our stuff reprinted in other digital publications.

We should not expect to make more this year than we did in 2013 , (we're at 55% of what's planned);

31,344 up from 33,773 planned, and 21,982.

So change the 2015 budget to 22,000, up 10% only over 2013.

ADS – online display ads – lots of people interested; eager to participate. Ads already booked for 2015, so expect 17,000 for this year (includes 2-year sales), last year ended at 5700, this year we expect nearly \$15,000 already. \$17,000 was budgeted for this year, (Some of the income is for 2-year ads). We project the 2015 budget at \$18,000 of additional income and space.

Currently up to 20 ads per web page, he's changing format so more people can be higher up on the page.

Ma'ikwe – DR is now priced out of the ads. Christopher: but not the third-place ad or higher. Lowest ad is \$800; with discounts for doing both print magazine and online. Most advertisers are cohousing groups, and sustainability consultants.

EXTEND TIME for WEBSITE:

Contract Labor – Website dropping from 17,000 down to 6,000 from 2014 to 2015. Fox left; Pavan only needs 20-30 hours a month; down to one-half of previous level.

Web hosting costs will go down, from \$120 a month down to \$40/month since October. \$3000 budgeted for next year, but we have rented plug-ins from WordPress; most companies have given 50% discount, but still \$3000/year for web hosting.

Org/Board travel - is set at \$1000 for 2015, but we'll discuss this later in the agenda.

Admin Office – McCune stable.

Ex. Secretary is still \$8400

Total contract labor is up about \$5000 for 2015, more for Christopher, and Kimi, but doesn't include Ex. Secretary or June/Kim increases.

Net profit/loss 178K in 2013, and 173,000 in 2015 -2%.

Expenses going down.

Net profit, 8004 projected for 2014 up from \$310 in 2014; and projected loss of \$13,847 in 2013!!!

ITEM: FIC Office. Lincoln Facilitator

Laird – At the April meeting we wanted to figure out a solution to our need for a new office now rather than waiting until the DR community building is built.

So we put out bids to build a new building, and options to buy, discussions with Sandhill or DR.

Allium seems like the best option, so far. It's smaller than the current trailer. But the staff said it could be done as we can get rid of some boxes of inventory.

The building is priced at \$32,000. Best option, except a trailer. No plumbing. But it does have a composting toilet. Easy to get heavy goods moved in and out. Rachel is willing to carry the money; down payment is negotiable, but can carry a note at 5% interest. To build we'd need \$50,000.

Oversight felt it could oversee this based on Board input in April. Laird is negotiating with April. We can then sell Allium and transfer that into the Green Community Center when it is ready. You have to manage moisture in summer months; so we'd have to put in a dehumidifier; it will require a maintenance budget to stay in this space. It's 350 SF, half the size of the trailer;

We hope to co-office, and rent space out to others; we use it 3 days a week, not full days. We will have a fee for the land, electric coop fees. We'll have debt load, ongoing operating expenses. But we can get into that without a lot of fundraising.

Betsy – Can we have a tour? Yes. Does it fit in the budget for 2015? Yes, we can work that out. What do we owe DR? Not \$90,000!!!

Marty – is space adequate for staff?

Kimi – concerned about the structural integrity, repair; budget; Space is adequate.

Will require a caretaker, or shared office; staff will not be there to maintain it, or keep it warm; won't be great with no heat in winter.

We have lots of incidental expenses – changing letterhead; heating the building, maintenance. Being in GCC is optimal; and having equity in Allium is good.

Kim K – heard the idea of sharing space as an office or an apartment. Suggests FIC board not count on income from sharing in some way – can't see how that can work yet.

Kimi – we will have to dispose of the trailer.

Mai'kwe – Probably not possible for someone to live there, but we could share it as office space. But she doesn't think the space is big enough for some kinds of tasks. Concerned that Allium is not the best choice based on where the org is headed, rather than the most immediate low cost choice.

Ma'ikwe is registering a stand-aside on purchasing Allium.

Alyson – Allium is a transitional space; it can work as an interim space in moving over to Dancing Rabbit; we can launch ourselves from there.

Green Office Campaign on Sat. Morning. Are we making a decision today – yes. Saturday morning we will come back to it.

DEVELOPMENT

Informal debrief on ENA funding; Betsy and Harvey; seasoning further before bringing back to plenary.

Green Building campaign

Ma'ikwe ok asking how to discuss GCC's shift from a community center plus nonprofit to being all nonprofit. No board preference; tho some interest in the full nonprofit. **No FIC preference to express in DR board meetings.**

Alyson is requesting an additional FIC liaison to the DR Green Building Campaign besides Laird. Person would receive/provide feedback as needed. If Ma'ikwe has many hats. Development director ought to be another person, not Ma'ikwe. Help FIC get its needs met. Alyson will work on a stronger relationship with Cole, and use of Database. If DRF hires an active consultant, and Alyson steps down from FIC; she has less ability to represent FIC. New Liaison is 3-5 hours a month. Marty will explore; with Laird and Oversight followup.

Laird announced a commitment to sponsor a Communities issue by Bel Paulson for \$5000;

Beth Rapps proposal - Laird

- recommends the board provide a true map or laundry list of EVERYTHING, including what Laird does, particularly in working with potential major donors.
- Scenario 1 - if we had an internal candidate, she would help the FIC help that person to grow into a Development Director. She's proposed 10 hours a month for 6 months: \$6000
- Scenario 2 - no internal candidate; 15 hours first months; 10 months - \$6500
- Scenario 3 - Beth's org takes on Development position, but her primary role would be delegating to staff, board, and volunteers the activities they need to do. She would be active in creating the infrastructure, help us work smarter, document what's done, and prepare the way for a future DD. 20 hours/6 months = \$12,000.

Responses - do we want to vet her more? How would we do that?

- Ask her and several others, what could you do for \$2000? (our budgeted amount)
- We could put more on the table though based on which scenario we choose.
- Laird, Christopher, and Ma'ikwe are a subcommittee to negotiate with her (and others).
- Alyson: We could send sky and christopher to a training for \$2000; or do a board training. Ok with having Development committee explore options. But Alyson wants off the committee (We don't know where Mary Schoen-Clark is at this point about being on the committee).
- More specificity about deliverables verbal coaching/talk, on all 3 scenarios.

Agreement for board to delegate next steps with Beth Rapps to this ad hoc committee.

Thursday 4th session; 3:30 - 5:00 PM:

Harvey Facilitates on the Desire to Collaborate with ENA

Gen-NA Org Chart Draft is shown

GIO describes the Org Chart

CASA is a natural formation from ENA and not a split

Exploring a merger or a New Organization

START with Constituents: please see the CHART

There are other Next Gens around the world.

Can we engage with Indigenous groups?

GEN International has 5 Working Group Models:

We can use these or create our own.

Who can take on the role of Management? Is it the FIC or something new that is not incorporated?

Can we create an AGM of all the GEN groups internationally?

Bottom 2 circles on the far right represent how we can be present in Gen International

9 GEN members would be present from each region at the AGM; North America sent 9 people to the International GEN AGM

North America, Africa, Europe, S. America, Asia, Next Gen; those are the regions.

Working Groups come from Swabental in Switzerland, what are the working groups and where does GEN go from there? Having parallel groups in the different regions facilitates communication. 5 people in each Working Group; international working groups would be made up of one rep from each region; GEN is looking for the simplest model to facilitate communication across all the regions. All of the working groups are still formative; conversations are about what is going on in the regions as well as the international scene.

3 Goals for the Collaborative Process:

Immense value in just being able to talk to the other groups and share resources. It will be a year or two before the whole GEN working group model gets rolling.

Information Sharing is a good thing to do together. An AGM is an obvious progression of the collaboration. Working groups are designed to be working groups, not just conversation groups.

Working groups are collaboration points for all the partner organizations, but each org can still do stuff on its own of course.

Marty wants to understand the vision for GEN North America? The left side of the Chart is what a GEN North America could look like. It combines folks from independent organizations to make GEN North America. This is how the South American region is set up; this is what a region of GEN looks like. All the regions are formative, a region may organize in a way that it sees fit. Gio says let's open this up to other ideas. Cythia asks if this organizational model is being used by other regions, and is it working well? This is the emergent format in Europe and CASA and N.A and the other regions are really reforming right now. Alyson says this helps her understand that we do not need one org like FIC to be the umbrella; instead there can be autonomy for the orgs involved.

Russ: To be sustainable and continue to exist, we need to be practical. Right now, all of GEN is living off GAIA Trust funding. What is the plan to go forward without that funding base?

\$500,000 euro grant for GEN EURO Region

So there is funding for regions that goes beyond GAIA Trust.

Sky: What are the requirements for a GEN region, participation in AGM and working groups, and WHAT ELSE?

Gio says each region has its own face. To be on the GEN board you need a multi-country set up to create a region. There is an expectation that all regions will have working and steering group members.

Betsy and Linda have worked out the following: FIC is a partner among other partners, that is part of regional network that is part of an international network. The first KEY question is does FIC want to be a partner in this organization?

Ma'ike: can we have a simpler North America network that does not contain all the working groups? Linda: How we partner is decided in the working groups and is flexible by partner organization; we all contribute to the national level.

Ma'ikwe: what is missing is about 75 human beings!

Every partner is not required to be in every working group. International working groups and National working groups need to meet once a month.

Funding is flowing to working groups in small amounts, through GEN and for big projects.

Marty asks: ENA is proposing that the partners maintain independence? ENA people say maybe...

Marty asks: Is the idea that FIC would be a GEN Regional Org? One of the objectives is to do things more efficiently. Will we maintain all the independent Orgs or are we going to be all under one roof? One of the motivations for this discussion is concern about efficiency and duplication of effort. What about similar contributions from all groups? These are not mutually exclusive ideas, we can be our own independent groups and we can work together.

Ma'ikwe: Having 3 orgs combined is best: FIC, ENC and ENA combined into one organization GEN US is the best path to explore. Because we are all understaffed and underrepresented.

Linda: What we all agreed to do is do this for a while and sort this out.

We need time to sort this out. It's premature, says Linda, to try and figure this out now; we need more time. We are on track but all we need to decide today at this meeting is, Are we going to continue with the 3 goals?

Canada has a separate org because of tax laws. ENC is not in favor of the working group trying it out phase; they say the most important thing is how are we going to collaborate? ENC does not like the idea of a trial phase, says Russ.

Cynthia: talked to NEXTGen about working groups as a trial. How can we collaborate together as a single organization? We need to combine because we do not have enough people. The trial is not going super smoothly in NextGEN's opinion. Cynthia says she has not been invited to working group meetings, but she has tried to attend.

Alyson: We are progressing towards more collaboration using the working groups. She says that what we really need is another staff person and that is what needs to get funded by GEN. She wants that person to be the link between all these groups; without this person it will not happen.

Linda is representing the GEN North America region, with ENA doing the work now. Alyson is concerned about volunteer time and energy.

Events discussion

Session I: Friday Morning 8:45-10:15

Harvey presenting, Marty Facilitator, notes Ma'ikwe

Current events on FIC and other present orgs plate that don't need discussion:

- Community Solutions Inc (Nov) looking for someone who can attend, but same weekend as NASCO
- NASCO (Nov) have done joint conference but usually Laird takes Bookshelf and does workshops, and promotes the FIC.
- The Farm Memorial Day weekend, usually about 30 people, Harvey goes, we co-sponsor
- Cohousing Conference: Chapel Hill in May, Laird attends, Ma'ikwe might be the headliner speaker, will take bookstore and do auction
- San Diego unconference event in Feb
- Org meetings in Spring and Fall (Nov 6-8)
- Youth ecovillage summit, dates TBA
- French/English Ecovillage Design Education course
- Canadian Annual General Meeting
- Twin Oaks conference Labor Day, will do auction, bookstore, workshops, Sky is main organizer
- GEN's international AGM in the summer, back to back with GEN Plus 20.
- GEN Plus 20: 20th anniversary of formative meeting, also Gaia education 10th anniversary. July 4-11. Can have up to 350 people, at Findhorn. Invitation only.
- COP 20 happening in Peru in December (climate activism). GEN is an NGO registered with the UN. Gio is the contact person for choosing delegates to go to the UN events. Can give papers at these events.
- Consejo de Visiones: Nov next year: Council of Visions, convergence of bioregional, IC, ecovillage groups. There will be a breakout session of Ecovillages.

Events we are making decisions about

- Build the New World (VA) in May: want to sponsor? Marty will go, Sky maybe.

Oracle Institute running it. Laura George attended the TO conference, then Laird visited with them. Building a peace pentagon, fundraising has gotten it pretty far along. Very influenced by Barbara Marx Hubbard (who will be lead speaker). Event will be at Radford University, working with a professor who is promoting international peace work. Ecumenical spiritual overlay, and this is something that is a mixed bag for our constituency. Damanhur connection (Betsy Poole). People seem solid. We've been asked to sponsor; they want a presence about community.

Decision: Board approves sponsorship, so long as we are clear in our language that we do not promote any particular spiritual path.

- West Coast conference in Fall: what's our relationship?

New community called Groundswell. Radical Fairy affiliated. One of the folks (Kyle) is a former TO member, very involved with this new group's events. Pax and he have been talking re: West Coast conference. Unsure if this would be an FIC sponsored event, or we could be more involved at the level of providing content, bookshelf, etc. Interest in this being an ongoing event. What level of interest/capacity do we want to have? They've talked with Raines and Betsy and they are already leaning toward sponsorship. Site is a fully equipped former boys camp, with kitchens, etc and cabins plus camping. Could accommodate up to 200 people. Pax has some awareness about the newness of the group and event and not wanting FIC to be disappointed. Right now, Sky is sharing info. FIC's involvement depends in part on whether we are compensated for organizing time and travel expenses. Also need to know a bit more about the theme-- too narrow a theme makes it less appealing to us. Theme is more ala "Communities Convergence". Knowing Pax and Sky is very helpful-- probably an easy yes.

- Annual Gen mtg w/ GEN: wider membership meeting where GEN leadership is elected
- Org summit: bringing leadership from different organizations together.

Will return to these two items after some more GEN conversations.

Question from Gio: has FIC considered having a lower level of relationship ala an "endorsement"?

College Sustainability Programs

Identified a few years ago that lots of colleges have sustainability-related programs, AASHE (Association for the Advancement of Sustainability in Higher Education) connection, various individual college connections that we have. Have had trouble getting connected with AASHE; that hasn't always flowed well. Daniel and Cynthia are going to the conference, and Daniel generally goes. He'll be presenting about Gaia Education and EarthDeeds. He could possibly do something about FIC in a future year. Cynthia will be there as a participant on the student track, and promoting the greener campus block.

We haven't had a lot of luck getting started with this, mostly for lack of people energy. Betsy has done a little more.

Lots of the progressive colleges have students very interested in IC's.

Green Schools listserve, greenschools alliance (pre-college)

ACUPCC (American College and Universities Presidents Climate Commitment) managed by Second Nature. Climate action plans, climate neutral date, lots of universities have signed on.

One option would be to sign on as a sponsor of Ma'ikwe's tour and could coordinate info through that and reshare with all these orgs. Daniel is interested in possibly collaborating in a speaking tour since he does similar things. NextGEN interested in a similar tour,

PIRGs in Canada have been the plug in organizations, active on campuses. Nebesna Fortin has been quite successful in making those connections, especially in Montreal.

Twin Oaks has stable connections with local universities, so this isn't really very haphazard and are actually very closely tied to the direct relationships. Would be good to knit the connections together.

FIC doesn't want to promote general talks about climate change; they need to be intentional community focused.

Skeptical about doing cold calls to Universities. Agreed. Part of the good thing about the tour is that we aren't cold calling, we are working directly through people's personal contacts and going as directly as we can to the decision-makers for talks. Universities really need speakers.

Do a shared table at AASHE. It is cheaper and mutually beneficial to all the orgs.

TO searched for professors that had a book about TO in their curriculum... we each have these specific connections and ways to get in.

UDEMy.com where people are designing their own courses online about anything... sustainability, climate, community. Can offer classes through this, register, students can rate you, do classes. Gaia Education also has its own platform for doing courses. What's the opportunity for FIC getting in on this? Gio is the coordinator for this and could help collaborate. Need to have a marketing plan and business plan. They've been doing webinars with 100+ signing up.

Timeline/success on the online EDE course. Two semester course, just started it. Process leads to the group design of a sustainable community or project. Very successful. This year we have 22 students, which keeps the intimacy. Gives enough to pay the staff, plus maybe a bit of seed money. 1,100 pounds (~\$1,500USD) Have had an average of 20 students each year. They come out with a certificate of completion. Would like to see this branch into work training more explicitly. Maybe potential to work with veterans. Can find online courses at the gaia education website.

FRIDAY Oct. 24, 10:30 - 12:00

Harvey facilitating; Marty taking stack.

Agenda for session -

1 – what is the gap in our orgs resources?

2 – followup 4 steps agreed

3 - eventual structural process.

Linda – I can answer questions

Sky – discuss eventual structural proposal

Betsy – follow up on the 4 steps/working group proposal

Maikwe – doesn't have energy to work on WGs

Russ – ENC doesn't want to go the 6-12 month working group path to work with FIC

Marty - 4 Groups here; each group does not have to be on the same path to collaboration.

The discussion on R&E shows how fruitful the discussion is when we meet face to face.

There we should be one group.

Harvey - FIC may create different collaborative models for ENC, NextGen, and ENA

Daniel – let's just brainstorm ideas of what we are doing.

Alyson is now facilitating, replacing Harvey.

Gio – we fill the gap by collaborating on a campaign to reach more people.

Propose FIC and ENA work on the working group proposal. Has energy to work with FIC on common goals.

Personally feels Russ is undermining what ENA is doing; what does ENC want to collaborate on? Who is the board – I never hear from others besides Lee and Russ.

Russ may be misinformed.

Russ – happy this has come out. Russ and Lee do represent a board. The names are listed on the letterhead. The biggest source of inspiration for GENNA is Gaia Education. ENC sees more collaborative possibilities with them, not with ENNA.

Daniel and Gio are on the board of Gaia Ed.

Daniel – who are the ENC board? It would be great if we could meet them and if they were more directly involved.

Linda – the working groups are still being formed, getting off the ground, and Lee asked her to put Russ on the Finance WG. ENA is not simply a burnt out group of folks; we are managing the GEN regional liaison work. As a model, GEN-Europe is way ahead here. The WG structure is how GEN is working well and expediting things enormously. Need time to explain that.

Ma'ikwe – isn't Lee involved in ENA and working groups.

GEN Board has 2 members from each region; when ENC resigned from ENA, we were left alone as a single country, so technically we're not a region of GEN because it's just 1 country. To bridge the gap, Canada was asked by ENA to serve as a voting member of the GEN Board. So there are 2 board members from North America without meeting the requirements of GEN's regional membership.

Russ – good discussion to air the issues; not on WG.

Sky – what is ENA doing? People and meetings but not hearing specific activities by ENA as an entity. North American working groups just getting started.

Gio – ENA right now is doing regional partnership. And members are serving on working groups, collaborating with nextGEN, creating linkages and agreements. Open Forums and the networking function is the work of ENA members.

For many years, ENA members provided the leadership for the GEN board. (Linda and Gio were providing international leadership), ENA has suspended its functional work until partnerships are in place to replace them.

Summary – we are looking at the conflict, and exploring what's happened with ENC, and now what is ENA doing/is.

Ma'ikwe – important if we create 1 org or collaborate; but we don't want the ENC/ENA conflict brought into FIC. We should ask the ENC and ENA to resolve their conflict.

Linda – resolving the finances will work a lot to help resolve conflict, create new agreements based on today's work. Financial agreements will help. Each partner needs to speak for themselves.

Gio – I think this conflict can be resolved easily, though very hard to do! Asking
For example: Russ said that ENA was an illegal organization. How do orgs in different countries and states legally raise money together. ENC board asked him to hire a lawyer to look into this.
Laird – there's a backlog of hurts here, not easy to solve. Would Linda, Gio, Russ resolve their conflicts?

Ma'ikwe - But if we are folding orgs together, we'd need them to work it out.

Marty – elephant in the room: ENC and ENA need to work out the conflict before we can work with them

Cynthia – ENC and ENA conflict has been affecting NextGEN. NextGen requested that the place for resolution be with a trained facilitator, NOT in the working groups. Needs to be resolved.

Betsy – see difference between a network rather than one organization. A network of organizations sharing information and potential activities, not one big organization running programs.

Lincoln – so to have an active/valid GENNA there must be 2 countries; so the conflict has to be resolved, in order to have a GEN region. ENA leadership was helping GEN, and then CASA. Now you're reaching out to us to create a stronger network.

Linda – in other regions the working groups structure allows partner groups to decide how to participate. It's an opt-in process; up to Canada how it wants to participate.

Daniel – attachment to the working group concept is part of tension, from Russ and other people.

Alyson – Russ is that what you feel?

Russ - ENC feels that no test is required for FIC to be the networking coordinator.

Daniel – Working groups are how we do the work, not a test of FIC's participation or org structure.

Marty: I thought the working groups are a measure of if and how FIC would work with ENA. To see if we would function well together.

Daniel: bottom up or top down – do we become one or what? We're more than the people in the room. Let's create a structure for the grassroots to get into the room.

Let's create a structure. Re-envision GEN-US? What is that? Maybe working with Ecovillages in the US? -à mini-AGM, or? Create its own entity, or "let's let FIC do it?"

Linda – working groups being dictated --- that's been the GEN structure, not personal.

Ma'ikwe – what do you mean working? with ecovillages as a special class of communities?

Some IC's identify as ecovillages, some not.

Daniel - FIC members mostly individuals; in GEN regions, most of the network has been people representing communities. ENA wants to engage communities as members.

FIC membership is a mix of individuals and communities. The directory is all mostly about communities; the board is mostly but not all people living in a community. C-mag floats between people seeking community and people living in community. Then we've added the "community where you are" promotion of cooperative culture, not just intentional communities. So each of our program areas have a different focus.

Betsy – FIC Constituency is not the same as paying membership. Paying members are scarce, and not communities per se. FIC is not a network, or a membership organization.

Sky - Working groups can be a process for figuring out the collaboration. We're going to be separate orgs. How can we make the working groups worthwhile? Who is going to meet the responsibilities of ENA to GEN? We need to get clear on our roles and responsibilities for GEN-North American.

SCRIBED NOTES:

Goals for Session:

What is the Gap? -> GEN

Followup on the 4 steps agreed

Eventual structural proposal

Group did not find focus;

Harvey stepped down, Alyson came in to facilitate).

What's needed? (to be a functional region of GEN)

Within NA with ecovillages as constituents

To communicate with GEN

Heal rift between ENC and ENA

Facilitate effective collaboration on specific projects (on an option basis?)

Ecovillages/communities not necessarily see value in membership in FIC's budget

Achieve clarity on roles and responsibilities in being a GEN region?

Interactions and much conversations on how to move forward from this session:

Check-in on conflict res: – Gio and Linda, yes and org position; Russ – personally goal to willing to work toward; Lee will have to decide. Alyson will take the lead on figuring that out.

Evaluations –

Betsy – glad for both aspects of meeting;

Lincoln – Thank you, Harvey, for stepping down. Alyson for stepping up.

We need a process to deal with direct response; yeah we have a stack; but folks are jumping in as a free for all; we're getting cross-talk. Let's have a protocol;

Cynthia has a set of hand signals.

Laird –we drifted away from the conflict discussion.

Friday, May 24, 2014

SESSION 3: 1:30-3PM

Facilitator: Alyson.

Non-verbal response options:

Twinkling (wiggling fingers in air) – I agree with you.

Direct Response is back and forth fingers.

C with a open hand- clarifying questions (did not understand something)

Rolling hands – you're going on.

T with hands – process suggestion.

Snap – same as twinkling

Open discussion on FIC/ENA roles in GENNA.

What is the need from ENA?

Gio – identify what we could do together to represent ecovillages in NA?

- coordinate an event; recruit people to populate working groups, build trust and relationship, and grow next steps from there.
- He is overloaded. ENA is tired and wants to have help.

Daniel – Venn diagram of ENA – current ENA; ENA leadership mostly international; FIC more focused on North America. What would be the practical steps for engaging with NA ecovillages? Don't know how. Does FIC want to be more international? ENA exists to have a GEN focus, so will always be international.

Linda – GEN international working groups do exist and all regions are asked to participate, so if we want to be GENNA then we would be on the international working groups. Working groups are the cross-hatch overlap in the Venn diagram. If there were GEN-international volunteers then she could step back and be more involved in North America.

Daniel – still hasn't heard FIC's vision of how to move into this cross-hatch. Does FIC want to step into that area.

Sky – does FIC want to be in the network? If so, then we have to agree to take on these tasks.

Cynthia – glad to hear individuals, not orgs, speaking up on what they want to do.

Even if FIC people don't want to do international work, it's still possible to form one organization.

TOPIC:

What would FIC people like to see FIC meet of the things named by Gio and Linda and Daniel?

Ma'ikwe – Let's leave the previous boxes behind. if the point is to have a vibrant strong NA network, then it would be great to form a new org. If the purpose is to form an international level org, maybe not.

FIC's strength is NA and especially the US. Doesn't make sense for us to take on the international responsibilities of GEN. We'd need more than 3 people for FIC to be part of an international network. An ENA member could join the FIC board.

Daniel - is FIC willing to grow its bubble? Thinking there'd be reps on the WGs, one of which is a rep to GEN. Sees partnership as a way to take care of NA and international. How would the international group get involved in North America? Needs to hear from FIC what it is offering to GEN, or how FIC could engage ENA members.

Does FIC want to play this role? How could FIC play a global game and how can global game players play locally?

Marty: have 1 org dipping into both sides.

FIC is focused on North America. ENA does have some energy to stay involved.

We don't need people on each other's boards. Intra-org communication. It would simplify things to have 1 org. Seems clearer and cleaner.

Lincoln - seems like we would start as partners first. twinkle. If we create just 1 org, we would need to work out the Mission, as FIC has a broader mission than ENA. But we have several orgs that all need more energy. Ecovillage mission is cool, but we could be stronger in bringing in ecovillages. Agree that we as an org need to take care of our own house. We were barely making payroll. FIC's not weak, we're improving, taking our energy and putting it into this other basket.

Christopher - simpler to work together, if we aren't checking in on all these different orgs. We can fulfill our mission even better and reach more people through an international association. We would not just be giving energy; we'd be getting business benefits. GEN has a larger base around the world than we do, and it is growing. Traffic on GEN website is 10-20x higher than FIC website. Gen has folks who might be interested in Communities magazine, more constituents for books, films, magazine. GEN has a newsletter, and people, but it doesn't have a long term sustainable financial base, but they do have grants that we could tap. GEN would take and give energy.

Gio - no point in playing international game if at home we're not together. He'd like to offer to work with you to strengthen NA; get more ecovillages into FIC; and help IC's become more sustainable. Suggest we all focus on strengthening NA in a strong service org. Then we can send 2 board members to GEN.

Then we (Linda, Daniel, Gio) continue to handle the international side.

Daniel - where can people get involved outside the board?

Betsy - created a regional network would be new to FIC; we have a leadership transition coming; becoming one org couldn't happen overnight. We'd have to learn how to manage a regional network.

Ma'ikwe - we're planning our evolution - either with or without GENNA on our minds.

We don't have a lot of entry points. She's into setting a timeline for merger.

Is it possible for FIC and 2 reps of ENA to work together for a grace period? Let's decide now to combine, and then decide how. But not fulfilling all the working group requirements of GEN.

Let's set a merger intention.

Cynthia twinkles.

FIC has a sustainability intention anyway.

Linda - false to set the merger intention now; value in being in partnership for a while. You get more money as a consortium of groups rather than being one new org. And we need time for that to happen. All member groups can decide on funding, rather than one admin.

Internal communications WG exists. It is Laird, Lee, Cynthia, Linda. So Linda can send an invitation to them. Other regions have been problematic with centralizing; networking is working better.

What do we lose with a merger?

Linda - the collaborative is more potent than 1 organization.

Betsy twinkled.

Cynthia - NextGen is in favor of a guiding northstar, a single organization.

It feels good to be part of an organization; nextgen would be a committee. you'd have more people in 1 org. Like to see show of hands in favor of one org.

We don't need working groups. We can figure out all the structural needs as we go rather than using the WG structure.

There aren't any NextGen regions thriving as much as they could be.

Betsy: clarifying point - scribed notes about Merger benefits and concerns rather than Regional Network, pros and cons.

Daniel - I want to get work done! How would I engage if it was a merged structure? I have no idea. Events, engaging with ecovillages; Cmag becomes more international; FIC feels like a black box. If we work together, we'll find ways to be organized, and see how that goes. WGs were ENA's best effort of how that could work. Create the network around the work we are already doing. ENA is a collaboration of several organizations - who are we merging with - would Gaia Education merge with FIC, ENC?

Alyson - yes, I thought merger meant everyone in the room.

Let's focus on North America, what's the structure for getting things done now.

Sky would also like a north star.

Russ: I see the point for ENA to be part of FIC meetings; and strengthen FIC because FIC has the base. How can ENA contribute to that? Ecovillages are part of that base. It's unrealistic for Gaia Trust to keep funding us forever, and see if FIC's biz model will help sustain this work. Let's focus on the biz functions in NA, start from strengths - applauds Christopher's biz plan. GENNA needs a sustainable financial model and FIC has one.

Laird - FIC doesn't depend on GEN \$. We think about how to raise our own money. I know how to have conversations and coming to agreement. If we are part of a network that is undefined, my time will go elsewhere. If FIC is taking on GENNA as a project then he can be involved. I don't need to know that we are merging and consolidating, I just need to know if FIC is leading so then I will put my time in. After a year, we've done nothing. I'm in a fog otherwise. I'm not withdrawing, I need authority to invest in being a leader.

Gio - clarifying question - What would FIC do?

Laird - We would take responsibility to populate the working groups. It's unclear on youth stuff. We would talk with sister orgs and see if we can get them involved. And then putting systems in place.

How would ENA play into that?

Laird: does ENA continue going forward? I believe in my capacity to deliver on all these things. I don't have international capacities, so that's a challenge, and we're up to it.

Daniel - I don't feel invited. I don't see a mechanism for me to participate. What's the structure? We do need leadership and direction but see that coming from the projects we work together on.

Perhaps Daniel is saying less is needed from Laird, more from people in working groups.

Sky: where is the authority? GEN has to grant authority to some entity to send the reps. ENA already has that designated authority.

Linda: Direct Response to Laird - "nothing has happened in the last year". That's because the Task Force talks about names, and structures, rather than doing something together. Shared leadership of orgs across working groups. Proof of pudding is in doing the work. If we talk about concentrating leadership with Laird, we may cut off opening doors to leaders from subgroups, getting more people involved from Nextgen. I trust collaborations because they are working.

Sky - please acknowledge that FIC is doing the work.

Linda - we do acknowledge that; but we haven't done work together. The best conversation has been among partners.

Alyson -- maybe the north star is collaboration, not merger. playing off our strengths where we are energized and eventually there may be a clear direct line to GEN.

Friday, 4th Session 3:30-5:00 PM

Lincoln facilitating.

Topic - Collaboration energy - Point Person; and Next Action.

Ma'ikwe, Cynthia, Harvey on stack.

Ma'ikwe - I'm confused by what Linda and Daniel are saying. A year ago somebody approached FIC and said, let's talk about collaboration and combining or something. So I'm frustrated, why did you approach us? Are we not here to talk about collaborating or merging?

Linda - The Task Force met with multiple other partners, and discussed what a regional network would look like. But trying to predetermine a structure has slowed us all down. We thought the working groups were vehicles for getting projects and collaborations going. And, be open to other partners and constituents.

Marty - I saw it as FIC got involved expressly to explore if FIC could be GENNA, but we can talk about how to collaborate now.

Cynthia - I thought the Task Force was to look at the WG tasks with the goal of determining how an organization would handle those functions. Now I hear the WG's are supposed to work on projects. It would be a shame to lose Laird's involvement in the working groups and a mistake to lose his presence. We need to see if we can resolve that. The 3 ENA members here are those who want to continue to be involved, and need to be specific how each one would be involved if FIC/Laird manages things.

Harvey - I had hoped to move things in a positive direction and find agreements. I haven't seen a way to move forward to resolution. Normally we would have 2 working sessions where we would meet in smaller groups and accomplish things like what Daniel has identified. The irony is we've taken up those time slots with plenary meeting time. The primary question(s) are still unresolved. Structure does make a difference, making things easy or hard. Coming to no conclusion doesn't serve us in moving forward.

Daniel - I believe there has been movement here. Are the working groups a structure or a process? I thought it was structure, now I see it is a process. Letting go of the GEN model, let's focus on what FIC and ENA can do together.

Lincoln - working, merging, collaborating - it's a process, takes time, it's real work - we're all together here now. How can we collaborate, and see what kind of juice there is? Let's brainstorm.

Betsy: What can PfSC/Coho Cal/me do? We can notify all the sustainable communities/ecovillage meetup groups.

We can facilitate effective collaboration on specific projects, achieving clarity on roles and responsibilities.

A brainstorm will not clarify Laird's role. and will not resolve the conflict between ENA and ENC; between Russ and Linda/Daniel/Gio.

Russ: As for taking responsibilities, I can't commit for ENC, just myself; so for ENA, are the reps here able to commit for the organization? Are people committing just for themselves or for their organization?

Linda: It isn't just the 3 of us; there are more in the North America group; they are interested in participating. We can't commit them ahead of time.

What is the question - brainstorm ideas for collaboration, involve FIC, ENA, Next Gen and other groups whose hats we wear.

Sky wants to do an event collaborating among all orgs to get interesting people together for conversations and a dance party.

Other awesome events could use a boost in attendance; Twin Oaks; have our event at the same time. piggyback events.

Set up a speakers bureau.

Publications - Make Community Bookshelf more international;

Communities magazine published in another country - make it an international publication?

International ecovillage eco-audit project - metrics for an impact assessment, setting them up so that the same ones can be used in different countries. Get support from the UN and grants. (could align with the GEN Community Assessment Tool.)

Dynamic you-tube channel.

Figure out a shared membership structure with benefits, more engagement.

Joint development projects

Improving public policies to favor ecovillages; lobbying, changing local codes, like Alec.
Founders best practices and seekers tools around ecovillages/ICs.
Database of zoning and planning positive changes.;

reviving Living Routes type of program
getting more people using the GEN tools
Research database of projects and questions for Masters and capstones projects. - community related topical index and network/forum.
Create a skills development internship program.
Interoperability/linkages across websites
Research pages and links and white papers in a centralized place
GEN solutions website
Invite Coho/US and GEN, community land trust researchers, networks
Help groups/communities that don't identify as ecovillages
Comprehensive education strategy
Disaster relief.
AASHE presence, joint tabling
Joint position paper on climate change - not just individual orgs
Staff positions could be shared (biz manager, an accountant)
Communities magazine updated for a younger audience and promoted through social media - whole magazine overhaul (Earth Island Journal has gone from dud to wow!)
Podcasts
Invitation for ENA to be at the San Diego and Northern California 2015 events
Web presence for GENNA
Web 2.0 more sophisticated way of communities finding members and seekers finding communities.
ProFounder is a matching model.
connect young people to impact centers a la Nuevo Mundo
Collect stories of our impact? share impact and success stories (GEN has projects within ecovillages) - the GEN newsletter is already collecting stories/cross promotion - get FIC and ENA stories out.
Cross promote social media
Post Growth Alliance, Earthdeeds and GEN already members, create our own online consortium of goals. "north american "thunderclap.""
ENC - psychological profile for new member selection tools, to better understand someone who wants to join a new community;
Harvey - has red flags that show up when someone applies.

Betsy mentioned 2 areas of interest - financing for new community startups or preservations.
And, creating an urban ecovillage curriculum.

Brainstorm items clustered.

1) Publications

- 2) IT - Linda currently point of contact; and Christopher
- 3) Research and information - Betsy or Daniel
- 4) Education and Communications - Youtube channel - Russ
- 5) Development/fundraising - Daniel would convene
- 6) Events - Sky can convene a conversation about events. Joint tabling at AASHE.
- 7) Policy - ecovillage; Betsy; Linda

Betsy - each work group convenes a call and prepares a project and budget, and sends that proposal to ENA for working out how it goes to GEN. GEN allocates money to the international working groups who then decide how it will be allocated to the regions.

Linda: GEN IT working groups have money;

Cynthia: NextGen also has some money for NA.

We're meant to have representatives in each WG from North America.

Ma'ikwe - what is the relationship of the 4 groups in the room?

Daniel - I don't want to lock into these groups as a committee structure.

Sky - tomorrow all orgs are independent, until more conversation all orgs will move forward.

ENA is still the administrator of GEN NA region; conversation open, FIC will discuss its role.

ENC and NextGEN want FIC to take on the responsibilities.

Gio - if FIC takes it on, ENA would lay itself down? That's too big for today. We need something to endorse and join.

Daniel - one way forward is to create a cross-organizational committee, of us and other people about how to engage with GEN. Another process is for reps from these committees to form a steering group. Doesn't want ENC and NextGen talking to FIC without ENA being in the conversation.

Marty - put off conversation of GEN or a larger consolidation of 4 groups, but individual conversations with FIC, NextGen, and ENC.

Ma'ikwe has energy for FIC long-term strategy.

Marty - we're looking for one project to come out of the brainstorm to do something together.

Betsy - we only meet face to face every six months. So Laird and Ma'ikwe will carry forward the negotiations with ENC and NextGen.

Linda - GEN has webex so we can meet without meeting face-to-face.

Gio - feeling like ENA is off the table; feeling not invited.

Alyson - we have included ENA through the project groups; FIC is not seeking to be a functional region of GEN. We decided:

Yes, we are going to collaborate.

Clarity on roles and responsibilities is in the future; Laird will need to know if he's on these conference calls.

Cynthia - NextGEN - not leaving ENA, but we will be talking with FIC. Thanking Gio and Daniel for identifying projects for collaborations. Cynthia is open to becoming a committee of FIC focused on youth education.

Sky up for being part of a continuing Task Force.

Laird - Cynthia and Gio and Daniel are leaving tomorrow - so I want to honor that they have come. We have made a good faith effort to see what we could do together. They are long-term veterans for accomplishing things. Let's honor that.

Betsy - ENA could be invited to the table to suggest nominations for the FIC board; and ENA could decide if it wanted to request board representation.

Ayson - A tree can have distinct branches and leaves.

Linda - all the NextGens are discussing next steps on the GEN Open Forum.

Ma'ikwe - I hope Gio will be a continuing presence.

Marty - I see that the word consolidation sounds too strong. Discomfort over how Betsy expressed stepping forward with ENC and NextGen, the whole FIC board will discuss long-term strategy, not just Laird and Ma'ikwe.

Russ - ENC organized a mediation; we're flexible about another mediation. Request from Gio if Russ could get a computer with video.

Sat May 25, 2014

Sessions 1 & 2:

Development Director Job Description

What are the performance metrics? E.g. raise membership by certain percent. Is this something we might include in the job description? Job description does talk about major goals. ED should be working with the major staff positions to set goals, which would feed into the budget. Board shouldn't be involved with that; it should happen at the staff level. Maybe not included in the job description because metrics will change year to year. It would make sense if it was a one-off campaign.

Suggestion of including something about working with the Business Manager. It's already in there in the first line. Maybe something in the bullet points about how that relationship would work.

Desire for 4 year commitment in the wanted section. Do we want to require something? Or maybe just something to look for when hiring.

Concern that we have unrealistic expectations about commitment, pay, and experience.

Request to have the expectation of working on the Green Community CCenter funding more clear. We don't have an understanding with DR about our role or expectations in that project as an organization. One way to think about it is what percentage of time should go towards different projects or activities.

Have something more ambitious than having them cover budget short falls.

Alyson raises process concern. We need to fill this position. We're getting too knit-picky. We don't want to send this back to committee.

Suggestion to take out the major goals section. As long as GCC is mentioned somewhere in there, or something about capital campaigns.

Our goal is to approve this job description.

Discuss salary, what's appropriate given their location, experience. Budget considerations. This isn't in the budget right now.

DD and Biz manager relationship. They are peers. ED manages both, and all work together as a team.

How will DD work with GCC? Suggestion to include working on capital campaigns as part of the general job description. Work with the ED to establish goals and metrics. Work on capital campaigns. Fulfill all responsibilities in any campaigns that we're party to.

Question about salary. Suggestion to have DD and Biz Manager salary/wage be the same.

Highlight the suggestion that salary/wage is based on location and experience and we're not likely to find someone who can do what we want at this wage. It will likely take a year for the DD to bring in much more than the money to cover their salary. Also, maybe asking too many hours, but can we afford that many hours. If we're going to ask them to do less hours there needs to be lower expectations (specifically the bullet points). A lot of this might be part of negotiations with specific candidates. Also appropriate to have staff that's been working with us for a while to be paid a little more. Idea of identifying a range of hours.

Do we have a plan that's realistic? Leave the salary and hours thing out of this for now.

Proposal to approve job description with amendments. Approved.

Green Office Campaign

Started off having FIC and DR Inc. having two separate capital campaigns for their different parts of the building. But it got confusing because some of the potential donors were the same for each and were being approached by both. We decided to work together and do one capital campaign.

There's a big gap in the campaign at this point at DR with Tony leaving. Alyson has taken on the Development Director position for DR Inc.

We had been expecting this building to cost \$750K. Thought maybe we didn't need to do a feasibility study. We were just going to go ahead. But then we got clearer cost numbers and it's going to be more like \$1.2M. Then it went up again to \$1.6M, half loans, half donations. We still thought it was doable. Now, we have a much more thorough cost analysis, which puts building alone at \$1.75M. With campaign costs included, we are looking at \$2M. At that point DR collectively freaked out, said "we don't know if we can do that"

\$100K has been raised in donations, some of which were pledges connected to Tony that we're not sure about. There is \$500K in loans. There have been expenses, including staff and materials costs.

FIC has raised \$15K, has given \$5K to DR. It's not actually in our coffers, but there is \$10K that FIC still needs to give to DR.

Decided we need to do a Planning Study to see if we have the internal capacity and external possibilities to actually do this.

New proposal for the building, that it be all for the non-profits, and smaller. It makes it easier for donors to understand and makes it more appealing. But how would the villagers get their needs met? Other smaller buildings in each neighborhood. Users would pay the fees to DRLT that would pay back the loans. It could take a while to actually get this built, and that maybe for some period of time villagers would use the GCC. This is an idea that the consulting company could test.

Questions for Beth Rapps for our upcoming phone consultation:

Does it make sense to scale the hours up as the year progresses or the other way around?

Advice from Jeff is that it'll take 2 years to create positive cash flow instead of 6 months. Does that sound accurate?

Crowdfunding

Collaborative fundraising with other orgs, particularly ENA with GEN

Is the range of pay and hours at all realistic?

Is it reasonable to start at a lower wage and ramp up?

What's the most we could do before hiring a DD to increase their productivity once they start?

Ask for feedback on our presentation of ourselves. How do we look?

How would you recommend FIC proceed in becoming more financially stable?

Expression of concerns from Board members:

Fear of losing money in hiring development person and having it end up being a net loss. Laird has had tremendous commitment to the org. It won't work very well for us if we hire someone and they only stick around for a year.

Worried that we'll take so long to find a new DD and ED that Laird will burn out and we'll have a gap. And worried that we won't be able to find someone with the skills we need for the amount of money we can pay.

Worried that we waited too late, and there are various people who are getting burned out or wanting to shift away that we won't be able to do the transition well. Also worried that there's a general resistance to fundraising and worried that there won't be enough support from the Board. Wanting to be a more professional organization. Fear that we won't have what it takes to get the organization where we want it.

We're in the middle of conversation with possible partner organizations, including being part of creating GENNA and working on the international stage. Concern that FIC may end up as a backwater.

Big, tricky thing to create these partnerships, which is a whole organization thing, but it also opens up possibilities for collaborative fundraising.

Response from Beth:

Heard an orientation toward selling products. You also have to sell the intangibles, your mission, what you're doing in the world. You tend to think you need to sell a physical product.

You have more choices than hiring a DD to avoid burning Laird out. Why are you interested in creating a DD? Do you realize that it's a choice to have one? You could have a COO, and a financial person, and an internal operations person. Donors and foundations often don't want to talk to a DD, they want to talk to the ED or staff on the ground.

How did you decide to create a DD position?

Response from Board:

We are going to be talking about what kind of ED we want. We're clear we want to do more fundraising and it seemed to make sense to separate it out. Laird would probably continue to be major donor coordinator. He'll have a role, still to be defined. Recognize that eventually his relationships with donors will need to be transferred to the organization.

Where are we? What do we need? How do we match up the needs with the people we have? We know why we're in the structure we're in, but not attached to changing things or keeping things the same. Laird's role in the org has shifted dramatically several times over the years.

Beth:

DD is a traditional structure that sections off those activities. Why?

Board:

Development is something we've embraced over time. Looking at having the ED, Biz Manager, and DD team sharing responsibility for the financial health of the org.

It sounds like you're recommending fundraising be spread amongst more of the organization rather than putting it in one role. When we decided to have a DD it showed a respect and acknowledgement by the org that we need to do this kind of work. Rather than having it be something the ED is doing on the side, having it be something that's recognized by the org and given more respect and engagement by the whole org.

In our organizational culture all these jobs are part time. That's part of the desire to split up the different roles.

Beth:

You could divide small and large donors. Membership is a way of talking about small donors. How do sales and fundraising go together? PR and fundraising events. There's so much interesting stuff.

The way to avoid someone coming on board and bailing is to bring someone up that we know and train them, maybe using Beth and Laird. I wouldn't be a good candidate because I'm outside.

It's important that the Board be more involved with fundraising.

Board:

Love the idea that we would build in a more sophisticated concept of Development related to business. Again, all staff are part time and distributed across the country. Rather than increasing one person's hours, we could have another person to focus on this aspect. Value what you've said about examining how we get the job of development done and spreading it across the Board and maybe other positions.

The relationship between sales and fundraising. Very dynamic.

Part of the impetus to separate DD out was that it would be harder to find someone to replace Laird if they're expected to do everything he does.

We are about community and promoting cooperative culture. We want people who live in that culture.

Beth:

Could help find and train the right person for the job but wouldn't be the person to take this job. Interested in working with us in the transition, to help train the Board, to help figure out the structure or positions that would make the most sense.

Board:

The commitment is to cooperative culture. Chris didn't come to the FIC living in an intentional community. He's been willing to immerse himself in cooperative culture. So, someone could come from outside our core constituency if they're willing to dive into cooperative culture.. What would the mentoring process look like if we had an internal candidate? What would it look like if we didn't? How can we structure our organization? Question about collaborative fundraising when we have partners and especially if we are working on the international level.

Beth:

It's all about fluidity and accountability. Crowdfunding isn't a magic bullet. It is a piece of a larger fundraising strategy.

Sat May 25, 2014

1:30-3:00 Session 3

Budget, round II

Presenter: Christopher and Kimi; Facil: Harvey; Notes: Ma'ikwe

Re: tax filing: we need someone new to do the filing and Bill Becker is willing to mentor someone to do the taxes. Bill is also the primary name on our credit card, and would like us to change that.

Kimi made an adjustment to the financials to separate out the Green Office funds, the loss last year was much higher (\$28,510) and we also show a higher expected loss this year (~\$8K). We've had \$6,600 that has come in this year for the GCC. This also means that when we looked at the budget the other day, we were counting \$6,600 more in general development than is true.

Changes from the other day:

office expense for moving to the new office?

Development Director?

DD mentoring with Beth?

Discussion items:

Increased events sales numbers based on more events

Possibility of exchanging lists with Yes! Magazine

Authorized raises for Kim K and June, if we have the money at the end of examining the full budget

Do we distribute the web expenses throughout the budget, with each area taking a piece of the expenses? We changed recently to NOT distributing the office expenses. We all acknowledge that the web is integral to the full functioning of the org, like the office. For now, keep it separated out.

Re: videos: should we be paying royalties on DVD rentals, or just sales? Just sales. Rental costs less than the royalty.

Christopher would like to look into what other DVD titles we could get streaming and rental rights to? Christopher can negotiate this.

Cmag: GEN has some interest in helping promote it internationally. GEN doesn't have a major publications promotions arm at this point, but wants to move toward that. We could ask GEN to give us a formal point person to handle this possibility.

What we have sunk into inventory has been reduced by about 30% in the last year.

The Cmag sponsorships line item is soft. We have one current prospect for next year, so having \$5K in the budget. On the other side, we think we could do better at digital sales than what is shown in the budget, but are leaving it alone.

Cmag overhaul? Christopher is looking into some of the ideas that came out of the GEN meetings, but we just don't know the scope of the project to be able to budget for it.

Add some small money to reprint Cmag postcards, but a larger project (in the 1-3 year range) that we will need to budget for is that we'll need to overhaul our printed materials to be better for development and promo purposes.

Celebrated an almost \$10K better bottom line for Cmag.

Website: There will be a big difference in contract labor, with it dropping now that the switch-over is done. The web is also moving in a very positive direction, even with relatively conservative numbers.

Development: we are expecting in 2014 a batch of donations based on the upcoming donations from listed groups. Need to check to see if the letter is going out asking for \$\$ when groups update their listings.

Task: Laird will provide some clarification on how the streams of income work within the development area (i.e. which asks go to which line items in the budget).

Membership: plans for a drive in the spring and fall. We also pitch membership after events that we've been a presence at. 10% off is the only benefit we give.

Future conversation: The post-events membership ask is tied to having a great experience... but is that just what all development should be tied to, instead of specifically tied to membership? We have a whole list of digital things now. Can we include that in new membership benefits?

More comfortable putting a 20% increase in income if we are putting a similar amount of money going into expenses, so that we have something happening to actively make this happen (i.e. spend more money on the DD).

Laird has recently expanded how many individual notes he is putting on ask letters. We could also bring those letters to Board meetings and have Board members doing individual notes.

CohoUS may not be doing an auction this year, though they are giving us the Bookstore space without having to pay a fee.

Development: Need to huddle and discuss and bring back a recommendation.

Administrative: need to have the conversation about travel reimbursements. Russ's input: question for ENA: GEN funds distribution often includes travel for meetings. ENC hopes to grow their organization in Canada, and might be able to create their own budget that could include travel subsidies. Costs are substantial for Canadians to travel to the US. This could be a big deal for the Canadian folks to be able to participate in FIC meetings. Can they provide a ballpark of costs for two people to travel to FIC meetings? Air travel would have been about \$1K/person (CAN\$) on the high end (such as BC, where Russ is from). Lee's input: if the Board is interested in having younger people (like NextGEN), it's really hard for them to come up with the travel funds for them to come to meetings.

Consideration of Christopher's hourly going up to \$18. Some preference to take care of the folks who are here now, not theoretical future people and folks not yet involved. Seems like Cmag editor, Biz manager and Dev'p Dir should be paid similarly. On the other hand, we are paying Laird way less than that, and part of why we can't afford more is that we haven't invested in development, which can start to bring in money to pay everyone. Christopher has made a huge difference and we really want to see him cared for. We have important things to move forward on: Development, partnerships and new office are all high priority. Maybe Beth's consultancy could help us put together an overall package of financial viability.

We don't have regular raises in place, and so the squeaky wheels get the oil, but what culture are we encouraging?

Office: Annual expenses would be about \$3,900: DR warren fee: \$33/mo; Electricity: \$10/mo; firewood: \$10/mo; repairs: \$1K/year; \$2,253 with \$10K down with 15 years at 5% (or ; \$1,250 to fix up initially. Laird poised to do targeted fundraising for this once we've approved it.

Sunday May 26, 2014

session 1

Twelve Tribes

OS composition

Budget

Facil: Harvey, Notes, Ma'ikwe

Twelve Tribes

When we get a complaint, we engage with the person with the complaint and ask them if they are willing to dialogue with the community. Usually complaints end there because they aren't. We've received the largest number of complaints historically about Twelve Tribes communities. We have someone who has now been willing to get into that dialogue. The German government has brought child abuse charges against them, and the WWOOF Canada organization has pulled their listing.

Two charges: They have a practice of regularly disciplining children by beating with a stick, and the claim is that it is biblically inspired. Does this constitute violence? Interpretation of the central leadership is that it is very patriarchal.

2) Are they misrepresenting themselves, claiming this isn't happening?

Laird has not had a conversation directly with anyone currently living in the community. Complaint was brought by a father whose ex-partner and kids are still in the community.

How do we define violence in this case? Laird is recommending that we go to them and ask directly if they are doing this, and if they say "no" then that is grounds for misrepresentation. If they say "yes" then we are requiring them to disclose this practice directly in their listing.

Discussion: I consider violence against children to be violence. We do not have the resources to check to see if all of our communities are allowing kids to be disciplined in this way. Would like to see us go to the community and say that we believe this is violence. If they don't admit to it, then we have to decide if they do it. If they know it is happening and aren't intervening, then we still think it is violence. Difference between occasional spanking by a parent and community-wide practice.

German case: quote from one of their people that they discipline children in this manner and they have the right to do it.

Are we headed for a new policy that says that we will pull the listing of groups who are condoning spanking children or other violence against children? I'm OK with that.

Support for Laird having a conversation with them to clarify their stance. Find out if they condone it or it is a widespread practice. If we are convinced this is happening in a condoned way, then what do we do?

12 Tribes.org/facts:

Do we spank our children? Yes.

So, yes, they admit to doing this. Would like to say something like, "If your community condones child abuse and neglect," and perhaps reference it to law. It may take a 10-20 year process of identifying who is crossing this line.

Community doctrine or condoning what we see as abuse or violence. Seems like hitting a child with a stick crosses that line.

Is Laird going to visit? Haven't gotten that far yet.

Some communities will say, "Disciplining children is a parental matter." Where does that leave us? We could say, "Hitting a child with a stick as official community doctrine is over our line."

Disagree that this is over our line. It sounds like this could be a community policy that prevents things from getting out of hand. Also, beating kids is a long-standing cultural thing. Doesn't make it right, but this feels very tricky.

MO definitions:

Seems like maybe we are required to report this if we know it is happening at a community. Excludes spanking, esp. if tied to a religious belief.

We are an organization that stands for cooperative, non-violent culture, which is different from that wider culture. We can take a stance that fosters the culture we want to create. Difference between respect for spiritual practice and having to toe a religious line that strongly influences the wider culture.

Would like the policy to be very explicit about what the practices are. Really value our listings giving people access to information about a wide range of groups, and don't want to cut that bridge off. Would be more interested in leaving the listing in, asking them to be explicit and putting a statement in that we do not condone this level of corporal punishment.

Tension between our commitment to freedom of information and non-violence. It seems that we are condoning this by having them in the listings. I wonder if we are making too much of our own importance. They can get the word out without us. Is there a greater value for us in listing them with our caveat alongside their listing? We can list them, then have our own caveats

added to their listing that is clearly from us that we don't condone this. Then they can decide if they want to leave it up.

Should we identify this as violence? Some of us are really clear that this is violence, and some not.

Seems like this is a question of whether our mission is about cooperative culture or intentional communities. We need to be clear about what violence means for us, and can flag that for future conversation. These questions are related to our organizational identity.

How to proceed: Is anyone not OK with the attempt to talk to them leading to their listing being pulled, or if they are misrepresenting themselves, then it leads to this particular being resolved? No. If they admit this and still want to be listed, then we have to come back to clarifying how we feel about it. Tell them we may still pull their listing, but we need to know what they are willing to do. At a minimum, we need to know if they own this. Laird will pursue this conversation and report back. OS will hold the task of having someone do more work on fleshing out what violence means.

Make-up of Oversight

Proposing to add Christopher. He's fine with that. General frustration that it is all men, appreciate the age diversity. Board members are encouraged to participate in the OS phone calls and attend interim meetings.

Budget Implications coming back from GEN

Betsy and Linda worked on this. Trying to figure out what funds ENA has that could be used for NA partners. There is a proposal for us to consider, and then it needs to go back to ENA, ENC & NextGEN.

ENA Council can approve in a few days, unsure of ENC and NextGEN timelines.

Monies are in hand:

\$1,600 in GEN IT. Could go to FIC Biz manager salary for Christopher to be able to participate in collaboration with the other partners. Money in hand now.

\$1K funding toward mediation between ENC and ENA.

Funds available starting 1st quarter of 2015, when next GEN distribution goes to regions:

\$1K to the education and research committee toward joint presence at AASHE conference for next Oct.

\$1K Fundraising joint strategy development.

\$1K toward a joint international meeting. (Could be our regular org meeting with an additional international day.)

All of these have agreements that go with them, and all partners need to buy in to these projects and initiatives, which may take some time. So it might be better for us to wait and not count on this money.

It is as if we have a foundation coming to us offering the chance to do these projects. We still need to have full buy-in from the partners.

This presentation feels problematic to Canada, as they weren't consulted before this proposal was put out to FIC. This also feels premature because we haven't seen the conflict resolution happen first. Gratitude for Linda and Betsy for trying to reach toward the north star of collaboration. The mediation seems like the first priority, and we can support that piece.

Budget finalizing

We left all the raises in. We moved Laird's development work into the ED line item. Added in \$2K for consulting on Development, something like 25 hrs, either with Beth or someone else. Added in \$6K for DD, \$17.50/hr 20hrs/wk for 12 mo. Increased Development Assistant to \$2000. This leaves the overall budget at a loss of \$478.

There was positive energy with Beth but we haven't discussed as a Board if we want to work with her. We are also considering the suggestion that there might be better ways to use what we've got. Not likely to have someone in as a DD by January. Lots we can do in the realm of Development regardless of which road we go down.

There's a lot unknown about development and unsure about how to allocate money in the budget. There's a desire to have a zero budget and not assume we're dipping into our line of credit.

Took out Ad salary and put it towards staff travel. Also reduced Board travel from \$1000 to \$500.

We need to figure out who will work with Beth if we approve working with her.

Concern about lowering DD cost could mean slimming down what they do, which could directly reduce FIC energy towards the GCC. Desire to invest in ourselves and our organization by putting money towards it.

Note that it's all so arbitrary. We don't really know what the whole development thing looks like yet. We can increase the budget later when we've got a clearer plan to invest in.

We can plot out phases so we don't spend all the money to figure out whether or not the plan we come up with works.

We're affirming that we expect the ED to be active in development. We've got on the table independent of ED compensation \$10K to go towards development. We don't need to get hung up on how it gets divided.

Harvey is recusing himself from the decision about the pre-release screening kit. We had an agreement that money from that would go to repay his loan to FIC, which for the last couple years hasn't been happening. Can't imagine asking for the money back with a deficit, but if there is a surplus he would like the group to consider paying him back with money made from those kits. Conflict of interest in making a decision to not pay him back when we have an agreement to pay him back. We don't need a decision right now.

It's not a great budget because we're out of integrity with various funds/debts. We'd like to follow through with our commitments and to institute a reasonable savings plan.

Sentiment that we shouldn't be passing a budget with a deficit when we have no reserves and outstanding debts, including to Board members in the room, that we're not making payments on.

We're going to go ahead and write a check for \$675 to Harvey for this year and put \$1625 in for next year as an expense to finish paying back Harvey.

Suggestion to increase unrestricted donations by \$1000 to compensate for these new expenses. Question about that, whether we should increase somewhere else because we're talking about doubling that projection over 2 years and that seems overly ambitious. Argument that it's reasonable because we are putting so much more money into development.

Board approved the budget!!!

Yay us for approving a budget that is balanced and is taking better care of ourselves, investing in ourselves, and coming into better integrity. We've also still got more work to do to fulfill commitments and to use this to spring ahead and keep moving forward.

Board Selection conversation

Concerns on the part of the Canadian folks about our self-selection process. Our official process is to include people on the Board who are active or have strong potential to be active. We had trouble sometimes with people coming with a lot of enthusiasm and then disappearing after being put on the Board. That led to the requirement for folks to have attended one previous Board meeting before being considered for a board position. We made an exception with Sky because we felt we had a very good sense of his commitment to the movement and ability to follow-through. Putting the cart before the horse, Russ and Lee attending electronically could count, since they have been present, contributing, hearing, etc.

We want people to have demonstrated interest to contribute to movement and FIC. We do understand the challenges that a self-selected board creates, so we added another mechanism, with the Committee to Select the Nominating Committee, and then NomCom handles screening potential folks. Nom Com should be people who know org, have strong emotional IQ, can help place people in the organization in a wise way. They were given the task of prospecting for new Board members, connecting with them and then bringing a slate to the Board. Board's only power is to approve or dis-approve those nominations. We enjoy a Board who works well together, but haven't always followed that. Sometimes we have taken in folks who are difficult but can contribute.

We have a set of criteria we use. People who can look at budgets and have some sense of what it means, strategic level thinking, etc.

Number of people on the Board: range of 6-15. Used to have two categories: Board and Associate Board members, and it got unmanageable when we had 22 total people.

Nom Com is not just Board members technically. Functionally it has been Board members for a long time, so we are functionally self-selecting. NomCom selected by the Committee to Select the Nominating Committee. Generally formed every two years (though this is theoretical right now). Back when there was a larger group, it included everyone in the room, which is bigger than the Board.

One of the benefits of having new energy come into the room is the possibility for a more robust selection process. Anyone can suggest possible Board members, and anyone in the org can explore that possibility with someone without making any promises. Have also solicited suggestions from the "all" list. (Side note: NA partners can be invited onto the all list.)

We are open to changing the whole system. Seems like it might be time to go through another round of selecting a new committee to select.

ENC appreciates Laird and Marty having shared the info about this with the Task Force. Russ is not really interested in titles, just wants to help. He wants to honor the in-person piece of the criteria.

Challenges FIC is Facing (Re Board Structure, presented by Ma'ikwe

- decreased volunteer energy over last decade
- low involvement by youth and women
- ineffective mechanisms for new recruitment/retention
- Board member overwhelm, especially as the work of Oversight Cmtee is huge
- Travel is expensive/unsustainable
- Items getting to board unformed (agenda items and communications)
- Board selection choosing from a limited pool = insularity
- Board Culture not integrated around development (fundraising)
- Staff at times on hold, waiting for board or other volunteer action, e.g. 2 months for a board decision needed by Biz Mgr.

Not a consensus list, but have been active topics of discussion. Other topics added by those present.

- Legacy and leadership transitions; structure functional for Laird... will it continue to serve?
- Doesn't think discussion of board selection helpful to understanding organizational challenges.
- Adding other diversity, increasing racial/ethnic/class representation.

Sunday 3rd Session, 1:30 - 3:00

Continued discussion of Board Structure.

Facilitator Harvey; notes Betsy (present sky, ma'ikwe, laird, lincoln, marty, alyson, linda, christopher).

Sunday, May 26, 2014

3:30 Sunday Afternoon Session

FIC Structure continued:

Marty facilitating; Betsy notes;

Ma'ikwe presenting on FIC Organizational structure.

Staff, volunteers, Board, Members, Constituents (communities, individual seekers) = FIC

Let's look at what each brings into FIC, and how each brings FIC back out into the world.

What are the most efficient and elegant ways to create some kind of internal synergy and direction? For internal and external communications and relationships. And, are the people in their current roles in the best place to give?

Currently we are a bit of a mishmash, mega volunteers, staff stepped in, board doing some staff functions.

A lot of what we are doing now is maintenance for current programs, rather than having a direction and goals we are moving toward. Direction is about strategic planning and envisioning how we are now and org structure that will work for our future direction and strategy. Ma'ikwe's

been picking at pieces, but would like us to step back and see the whole. Great moment in that we have other groups that want to step in and play with FIC in some form of collaboration.

Parts of the conversation to go forward:

- Role of board and executive director - questions to ask and answer (what's the leadership and direction-holding power balance between these 2).
- Board Selection
- Strategic planning - more discussion of this sort on a regular basis on our direction
- Membership structure - what does it mean to be a member? how do we relate to communities and individuals
- Leadership recruitment and grow our own

Questions/Comments

- Where does a development director fall?
- Relationship of inside and outside typically been part of development
- Unpack Strategic Plan - add long range financial strategy (we've added capacity for this over past years) and what does it mean to be part of a global network? How do we relate to the outside world?
- Let's start with Board/Leadership- already doing it.
- Lee - exciting to hear this; want to see us work with young energy, things need to be rolling, the direction is changing all the time.
- Different styles of strategic planning.
- Let us be more strategic thinkers, take advantage of opportunities, let staff be responsive rather than waiting on board input. Let's give them some freedom to operate.
- Ma'ikwe - Model of change --- Strategic Organization is one that looks continuously at its values and direction to adjust. "Nonprofit Strategy Revolution"
- Please send useful ways to proceed, books or methods to offer.
- "Business at the Speed of Thought" by Bill Gates. If an org is a living thing, the speed its parts read and respond to information determines how rapidly it can adjust to change; establish metrics and data points, and reference them.

Board/ED/Oversight Dynamic

Laird's role (seen by Laird)

- is the primary filter for what comes up to Board; drafts agendas for conf calls and meetings of board and oversight. based on refining values, risk, significant \$ implications.
- public spokesperson - handles press inquiries
- most frequently representing FIC at conferences, etc.
- lead on contacts with other orgs
- keeps pulse on morale of staff; when traveling works to lower isolation
- primary development person (board not active historically)
- active in identifying and recruiting board members and volunteers
- executes board directives; reviews what's on his plate with Board

- CFO function, negotiates fiscal sponsorships; negotiates most loans, major donors, reviews most financial docs and agreements, but hasn't always seen all contracts before someone signs them. Mostly signer of contracts;
- Consults with Oversight over what goes to the board.
- How much independent and how much in concert with Oversight - he uses his judgement to decide what comes to board or oversight.
- If an issue reflects on a value that's not clear, he consults the board
- If new budget items come up, he consults with board or Oversight
- Staff mgmt and budget mgmt - checks on staff as to where they are with the budget as set by the Board. How often? Usually around a particular question or project, OS looks at stuff quarterly. Otherwise, he orients new staff and meets with them more frequently onsite; or calls them.
- Laird maintains the voice of the org on the website, on magazine, likes to edit
- Writes a lot of proposals, reports, blogs, text for marketing, used to edit minutes.
- Facilitates, writes summations, and moves conversations along.
- runs bookshelf, travels
- Leads the site search for board meetings
- barter consulting time for reduced hosting fees.
- holds org history

Board Roles - (brainstorm)

- think about long term interest of org
- participate in governance
- fiduciary responsibility
- HR department, approves job descriptions
- personal support/coaching for ED
- look for contacts, connections, biz opportunities/partners/talent
- setting/defining/interpreting values
- represent FIC out and about
- read reports
- Board showing up energetically and focused at Board meetings
- Board committees - personnel, nomcom, research & education
- Bring experience, both professional and community
- Expect to operate collaboratively
- Liaison, info channel, coach/connect staff to board
- Alternate route for staff communication besides thru ED
- Ministry/ombudsman
- Oversight is kind of the executive committee and can be given board level powers to make decisions.
- Hiring and Firing the Executive Secretary
- Personnel interviews and evaluates ES.

We have gaps and holes in functions in our current structure
ED/Board Q's

1. Who leads, articulates, makes sure crafting is happening of the Org's Direction?
2. Who has authority for mid-level decisions/management
3. Is ED also the public face/visionary or primarily an Administrator?
4. How large a role does the ED play directly in Development/enrolling others in org in Development?
5. How active is ED as staff manager/organizing?
6. Who orients/mentors new board members and volunteers.

Next Meeting, April, front range Colorado in Boulder; will we meet an extra day?

Evaluation --

Pluses

<p>Glows</p> <p>Laird & Ma'ikwe didn't get into funky personal territory</p> <p>Thanks for logistics, snacks, meals - perfect!</p> <p>Really enjoyed ENA, ENC, NextGen presence</p> <p>Meeting at DR; drew people</p> <p>Really flexible; handled a lot</p> <p>Positive financial news</p> <p>Logistics between ENA and FIC was excellent both ways.</p> <p>Bar across the street; ultimate frisbee</p> <p>Cynthia's hand signals</p> <p>Alyson's facilitation on the fly of the conflict</p> <p>New frontiers; moving forward through issues</p> <p>Trying to proceed with a culture of cooperation</p> <p>Courage and emotional willingness of Gio and others to proceed</p> <p>Skype tech</p> <p>Thanks for being welcomed as an observer;</p>	<p>Grows</p> <p>Disappointed we didn't do more strategic planning stuff</p> <p>Clarify communication channels inter-organizationally to support conversations. 67 pages to read!!!! Take individual emails and put on a google drive</p> <p>Last minute financials</p> <p>Jumping in on topics and people; difficult for folks to complete thoughts.</p> <p>Have a vibe watcher or guidelines on wall</p> <p>Alyson's resignation</p> <p>Challenge figuring out how Christopher could get here.</p>
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