

Board Meeting Minutes  
Fellowship for Intentional Community  
Sept. 19-20, 1987, at East Wind Community

Board Members present: Suzanne Riordan, Dan Christenberry, Charles Betterton, Allen Butcher, Al Barberg, Laird Schaub, Bob Brown.

Others present: George Johnson (lately from Oakwood Farm), Harvey Baker (Dunmire Hollow), David Baker (Dunmire Hollow), Elke Lerman (Sandhill Farm).

1. Report on networking since May. Suzanne spent much of the summer traveling among communities on the West Coast, including Trillium, Aprovecho, Sunrise Ranch, Harbin Hot Springs, Breitenbush, Mount Madonna, Numia Institute, and others. She reported encountering some resistance to considering joining the FIC after the disappointment of the Earth Communities Network. Also, there was concern about the organization being dominated by East Coast communities and organizations.

Bob closed down the Clairemont Project in San Diego for lack of support from others to share the work needed to keep it going. He had been in touch with several West Coast communities, including Glen Ivy, Stardance, Ojai Foundation, and Kerista. While at Glen Ivy he learned that Sandy Brown there is interested in assisting with Communities, even to the point of considering assuming the publishing role. Bob approached Kerista about the possibility of helping with publishing but had not received a response.

Laird reported contact with Alpha Farm and Bobbi Corcoran of Community Referral Service during a West Coast trip in June. Caroline Estes at Alpha Farm was particularly interested in FIC development. Bobbi was interested but had no personal energy for involvement at this time. Still, she intends to see that her referral service continues and wants to keep in contact.

Dan traveled through the Southeast during the summer, stopping at several communities. At Microssukee Land Coop they are interested in contact with other groups and having visits, but they are full up with members (and have a waiting list) and do not wish to be listed in a community directory. Koinonia Partners are interested in being in a directory, yet are fully engaged with handling visitors already (more than most communities, Koinonia encourages volunteer help from visitors and makes good use of it). Jubilee Partners is also interested in a directory listing, but wish to limit their FIC involvement to that for the time being. Celo was surprised to learn they were listed in the last version of the directory. They are willing to continue being listed and are open to new members, but Celo is not actively seeking growth or greater involvement with other communities. The Farm is interested in the directory, but networking energy appears to be limited largely to Stephen Gaskin right now. For now the community seems absorbed with making the adjustment to a coop-style community from the income-sharing model they were founded on. Dan also stopped in at Dunmire Hollow, which resulted in Harvey and David's attendance at the meeting.

Dan was discouraged not to discover more interest in the FIC. He uncovered considerable suspicion among communities for ties with other communities. Also, people expressed serious reservation about involvement with any organization which did not model democratic process substantially different from traditional organizations. Still, there was strong support for the directory

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as an FIC project, if not for active membership in the organization.

Allen attended Shannon Farm's mortgage burning party this summer and a wedding party at Gesundheit (West Virginia). He recently became a ~~board member~~ of Coop America. He has been an active correspondent with the Movement for a New Society in Philadelphia. He had plans to attend the Fourth World International Conference in San Francisco immediately following the FIC Board meeting. He was just completing editing an upcoming issue of Communities which focuses on children.

George spent the past year at Oakwood Farm, and has been associated with the Emissaries for several years. He attended the meeting representing David Thatcher and Rick Lathrop, though he had no authority to speak for them.

Harvey reported contact with communities local to Dunmire Hollow, including Flatrock, Sundance, Short Mountain, and The Farm.

2. Review of the Minutes. Decision: The Board approved two changes to the minutes of the May 23-24, 1987, Board meeting:

- i) On page one, item 7), the following phrase will begin the first sentence: "If we decide to include member names, ..."
- ii) On page two, item 8), change "Communities" in the first sentence to "Community".

The Secretary will type up a corrected copy of the minutes and distribute it to the Board Members.

3. Federation of Egalitarian Communities membership in FIC. Laird spoke about why the Federation was willing to join FIC as an organization, the first to do so. Although it remains to be seen how strong the Federation support will be, Laird related that the Federation is committed to reaching out to communities outside its membership, and has joined FIC largely as an act of good faith. They see the FIC as a natural extension of the cooperative principles which have worked to make itself an ongoing, vital organization. Laird observed that in his view the Federation's early FIC membership demonstrates an important point about inter-community organizations: that well-organized and funded groups can act quickly, they are geared to do so. Loose-knit, diverse groups have more difficulty in this regard.

4. Dan's report on the state of the Fellowship. As a result of correspondence with Board members over the summer, Dan sat down prior to the meeting prepared the following summary:

Strengths

- A. Our history as a force for social change.
- B. NHCSA and the Center for Communal Studies.
- C. Communities magazine.
- D. Decision-making skills and experience with peaceful conflict resolution.
- E. GESCI loan fund.
- F. Our sense of the Harmonic Convergence of many New Age missions and lifestyles.
- G. Our connections with community networks -- FEC, EFI, New England Network of Light, ICNV, SoL

Weaknesses

- A. Lack of communication among communities, with resultant knowledge gap.
- B. Lack of trust in and respect for communities built on different values than our own.
- C. Lack of a sense of common interests and shared goals.
- D. Geographic dispersion.
- E. Time demands at home competing with energy for FIC.

What we can do to strengthen the community movement nationally

- A. Maintain and update the directory, improving the value of the listings for those seeking compatible communities.
- B. Provide personal contacts for communitarians interested in networking with other communities.
- C. Focus information flow through designated resource centers, which we will help develop, stock, and staff.

Project emphasis points

- A. Developing networking relationships, specifically promoting personal contacts among the larger, older, and network oriented communities and support groups. (Continue to overlap board memberships among FEC, FIC, EFI, SoL, NHCSA, etc, and target additional activist communities for FIC involvement.)
- B. Assisting Communities in the updating of the community directory, which is the single, high-profile, common reference point among North American communities, a reference that bridges the spiritual, economic, and organizational differences among communities.
- C. Refining our image and objectives by further editing the brochure, defining membership, clarifying the status of affiliated organizations, and delineating members' decision-making responsibilities.
- D. Marketing CESCO resources to community businesses and facilitating expansion of those resources.
- E. Developing an annual awards program, recognizing those who have made major, long-term contributions to the movement.
- F. Publishing a national calendar of events of interest to communitarians, including community open houses, and the major meetings of affiliated organizations.

Reactions to Dan's summary. George expressed uneasiness with the orientation of "selling the dream." He preferred that we think in terms of "sharing the dream." He wondered if this approach (of "selling") wasn't a source of past failures in networking. He felt what we offer should come from our experiences and be an outgrowth of reality, not just ideas from the head.

David concurred. For him and many others the first years in community were inner-focused, somewhat at the expense of sharing with those outside our particular home. Now, however, the vision is expanding as a natural consequence of maturity.

Harvey advised that we resist a buyer/seller dynamic in doing FIC work and wherever we encounter it.

David observed that it is a common phenomenon among small communities to be suspicious about publicity. They often prefer to maintain a low profile for fear of negative attention. Dan

acknowledged this tendency, yet expressed the hope that FIC can act as a buffer between communities and the media or general public, screening for positive contacts or exposure.

The correspondence which sparked this discussion generated considerable input on membership process and selectors, though there was not a common focus to the comments. Also, there was strong interest among Board members for receiving reimbursement for travel costs to attend meetings.

5. Treasurer's report. Faith Morgan mailed a financial summary to Board members prior to the meeting. In the account she has established for FIC in California, there was a balance of \$435. In addition, it was reported that approximately \$900 remains on the original \$2,000 CESCO grant made a couple years ago to revitalize the organization. These latter funds are deposited with the Stelle Foundation and are currently being used to assist Communities. Charles reported that \$300 of the \$900 could be made immediately available, with the remaining \$600 recoverable on short notice.

Decision: it was agreed to reimburse Dan and Laird for postage and office costs incurred in conducting FIC business.

Including what had already been spent and what was projected through the end of the year, this amount was estimated at \$410, which included the cost of printing an introductory brochure. Despite general interest expressed for a policy of reimbursing travel costs, no one asked for reimbursement for this meeting.

This left a projected cash surplus at the end of the year of \$325, with \$600 remaining with the Stelle Foundation for use by Communities.

Decision: it was agreed to consider the \$600 as a no-interest loan to Communities, as a 30-day demand note.

6. 1988 budget. Decision: the fiscal year of the Fellowship will be the calendar year, with all memberships running out at the end of the year.

Decision: following is the FIC 1988 budget:

Correspondence	\$350
Telephone	200
Mass mailing & responses	600
Supplies, brochures (2,000)	200
Stationery & misc.	<u>150</u>
Total	\$1,500

On the income side of the 1988 budget, it was uncertain how the necessary revenues would be generated. Charles observed that the FIC attracted \$450 in the four months prior to the meeting; he suggested it would be reasonable to extrapolate this trend to about \$1300 of income for 1988.

Others pointed out that this means we must attract at least three times the membership we now have. This seemed doable to most. Bob felt this was not much money and unlikely to be a problem. In fact, if the FIC did have income shortfalls, Bob said he'd be willing to help out personally with making up the difference.

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Dan presented a proposal he had worked up with a few others between sessions for a \$110K staffing grant. It broke down as follows:

East Coast coordinator	\$25,000
West Coast coordinator	25,000
Office manager	18,000
Magazine editor	20,000
Office supplies	2,000
Travel expenses	12,000
Per diem (@ \$15/day)	6,000
Miscellaneous	2,000
Total	\$110,000

It was agreed that this proposal demonstrated considerable vision and positive thinking, yet there was insufficient time to thoroughly explore it and the Board decided to defer any decision about it to the Executive Committee. Before it was tabled, however, a cautionary note was raised that even if we succeeded in getting a grant for this, that it would be difficult to continue in future years. That is, foundations tend to prefer seeding efforts and new items to continued funding of ongoing efforts.

7. Funding sources. Dan presented the following list of sources after receiving input from several places:

- A. CESCO, which provided the original \$2,000 grant to FIC.
- B. National Endowment for the Humanities, which has provided \$35K to the Center for Communal Studies. Also, they have asked Don Pitzer, Executive Director of NHCSA, to make recommendations on grant awards.
- C. Eli Lilly Endowment, which has provided \$10 million in the last 15 years for renovation and operation of New Harmony, the historic communal site in Indiana.
- D. Institute for Community Economics, which is working to bring together land coops, Native American tribes, producer coops, and credit unions to package big ticket grant proposals for coop development projects.
- E. Turtle Island Fund (a subgroup of the Tides Foundation), which was recommended by David Thatcher. They are operating in British Columbia.
- F. National Endowment for the Arts, which has financed data base development concerning intentional communities through the Ecumenical Association for Housing in San Rafael.
- G. School of Living, which has \$100K available for investment in community land trusts, and another \$50K for other community development projects.

Charles observed that Community services in Yellow Springs has about \$100K in trusts, and recommended that the FIC give them another opportunity to invest in the community movement (through making a grant to FIC).

David reported having access to a fundraising group connected with Vanderbilt University which might be a source for additional funding sources.

Charles suggested that the Federation of Egalitarian Communities and Shannon Farm both write something up about why they decided to join FIC, to be circulated to other potential organizational members, and shown to funding sources as evidence of movement support for FIC efforts.

Decision: the Board decided to create a standing Fundraising Committee to review and approve grant proposals. Anyone can submit proposals. The procedure will be to submit drafts of grant proposals to the entire Board, with comments from any member solicited. Decisions, however, will be made by the committee. Charles, Dan, Suzanne, and Laird were appointed to this committee, with room left for either Rick Lathrop or David Thatcher to join if they chose to.

8. Tax status report. Bob Watzke, as a member of the committee handling this, recommended delaying an application for 501(c)(3) status until the FIC defines itself better and has established something of a track record. At the same time, Herb Goldstein, an adviser to the committee, recommended the opposite course: applying as early as possible, before a track record could serve as a basis for objection by IRS examiners.

Decision: it was agreed to proceed at once with applying for 501(c)(3) status. The standing committee (Charles, Dan, and Bob Watzke) were directed to carry this out.

In discussion, Laird raised the question of whether the FIC is willing to forego certain kinds of activities which are precluded 501(c)(3) organizations. Suzanne advocated not worrying about possible challenges until they arose. David agreed to look into the question of actual distinctions (from the IRS viewpoint) between 501(c)(3) and other statuses.

David reported that meanwhile, the FIC could get funds funneled through other exempt organizations which have already been granted 501(c)(3) status, for about a 5% pass-through fee.

Suzanne advised us to work with a lawyer or accountant on questions relating to funneling donations through other exempt organizations while the FIC's application is pending.

9. Bylaws review. Laird reported that Caroline Estes offered feedback about the FIC bylaws approved at the May Board meeting. She objected to the use of the word "consensus" to refer to a decision-making process which allowed voting.

Decision: the Board agreed to change the word "consensus" to "unanimous" wherever it appears in the bylaws. The Secretary was given the task of revising the bylaws accordingly and distributing revised copies to all Board members, for consideration of formal adoption at the next Board meeting, as per the bylaws' specifications for effecting changes.

10. Home office. Currently the FIC home office is Charles' address at Stelle. He expressed a willingness to let this go somewhere else, but wondered if we had a better place. Charles admitted that he's not comfortable accepting responsibility for answering all FIC mail. He's too busy with other obligations to guarantee this. Dan suggested the possibility of having no national address, but relying instead on personal responsibility

for anyone handing out FIC information to handle any correspondence this generates.

Decision: the Board agreed to have Board members get rubber stamps with their own addresses to be placed on brochures and other FIC information they hand out or distribute.

Laird raised the concern that occasionally people get overwhelmed by workload or other affairs and cannot respond promptly to correspondence.

Decision: the Board agreed to use the Secretary as a back-up correspondant who is given responsibility to handle any correspondence or requests for information which individual Board members pass along.

Laird further accepted the task of developing a list of what materials the FIC should have on hand to answer standard inquiries.

11. Letterhead. Dan proposed using the subtitle "A Coordinating Network for Community Development." Some people found the phrase "coordinating network" redundant. David Thatcher preferred the phrase, "A Network for Building the Spirit of Community." After much discussion there was no clear position on an appropriate subtitle, and it was agreed to drop its use all together.

Decision: it was agreed to include the statement of purpose (possibly condensed) from the Articles of Incorporation at the bottom of the page of the FIC stationery, in small print.

In general, the Board favored dropping from the stationery a listing of Board members from the left-hand sidebar. However, Bob raised the concern that doing so would eliminate mention of any West Coast involvement, which presence he and Suzanne currently supply. The Board agreed that West Coast involvement is desirable.

Decision: until West Coast communities or organizations are attracted to membership, it was agreed to continue listing individuals. It is nonetheless the intention of the Board that individual names be dropped in future printings of the letterhead, as West Coast groups become affiliated with FIC.

12. Membership process. Allen introduced a proposal that membership be two-tiered. The first level, associate member, would be open to anyone, upon payment of the appropriate dues. This would entitle the associate member to regular information about Fellowship activities and decisions, and the opportunity to be considered for the second tier, voting member. Before being accepted for the second level, an associate member must submit a profile about themselves [see item 13. below].

Allen proposed that each class of membership (currently there are four: individual, community, network, affiliated organization) would decide on its own whether to approve applicants for voting membership in its class. There would be no additional dues for joining the second level.. Only voting members would be eligible to select Board members, and only voting members would decide those to be accepted as new voting members.

Laird wondered why the selection process needed to be so complicated, especially when membership is so small. He advocated having all voting members decide on all applications for voting membership, regardless of class. Charles was concerned about

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denying input from one class about applicants to another.

Dan explained that one reason for a two-tiered system (and hence, some degree of complication) is the desire to be, on some level, open to all, and the simultaneous need to screen those who have access to decision-making.

This proposal was brought up at this meeting because Article VI. Paragraph D of the bylaws requires that the Board devise a direct election system to represent each type of membership. This paragraph also specifies that a set number of seats be assigned representatives of each type of membership.

David didn't see the need for two tiers, and worried about the possibility of the double level discouraging membership. He questioned how much attention need to be paid to protecting the organization from disagreeable members.

Bob proposed a single tier membership, with protection supplied by an explicit expulsion procedure.

After spending some time refining this proposal in committee, the Board agreed to the following:

Decision: there will be two tiers of membership: associate member and voting member. Associate membership will be available to all who seek it, once the appropriate dues have been paid. Voting membership is available to associate members who have submitted profiles to the Membership Committee and been accepted by the body of voting members as a whole. The duties of the standing Membership Committee will be:

1. To review applications for voting membership and make recommendations about their acceptance.
2. Decide what class of membership an applicant belongs in.
3. Propose criteria for judging candidates for voting membership, which will be considered by the Board at the spring meeting.

The members of the Membership Committee were selected to be Al, Suzanne, Dan, with a slot left open for David Thatcher if he is willing to serve in this capacity.

Duty 3. above was perceived as an alteration of the bylaws, and thus required advanced notice to be effected. Hence, this decision will be considered tentative, pending confirmation at the next Board meeting.

Allen asked that the Membership Committee specifically address issues of a) whether the FIC needs to maintain separate membership categories for communities and community networks; b) whether there needs to be a bylaws change to adopt the two-tiered membership and specifically mention "associate member" and "voting member"; and c) whether there needs to be modification of bylaws Article VI. Paragraph D regarding "a specific number of seats on the Board shall be assigned for representatives of each type of membership."

13. Membership profile. Dan advocated adopting the profile system as part of the FIC membership process. In addition to serving as a basis for making membership decisions, profiles would yield a data base useful in describing the membership and in evaluation. The profiles will further serve as a basis for

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review in the event there are questions about a member's activities in light of FIC principles.

In reviewing Dan's draft profile, Suzanne suggested that information on income-producing work be requested. Also, what is the community policy regarding work exchange (is there any distinction made for people coming from other communities)? How about dietary restrictions or preferences? Are you looking for more members? And if so, are there particular ages or skills you prefer?

Laird asked that question #20 be divided into three separate questions on common values, the role of spirituality (if any), and unifying economic values.

Elke suggested that the term, "network" is overused in the profile (and other FIC materials, such as the introductory brochure).

Charles requested that, at the end, the phrase, "with input from community process" be added to the section on authorization, implying that that is way filling out the profile should be approached.

Decision: it was agreed to require the filling out of a profile before an applicant can be considered for voting membership, with the understanding that every question need not be answered to be acceptable. Further, the Board accepted for membership the four communities which had already filled out profiles: Oakwood Farm, 100 Mile House, Twin Oaks, and Shannon Farm.

14. Team Board membership. The question considered by the Board was whether individuals need to be specified if a team membership on the Board is allowed, or can the people involved with the team decide entirely at their discretion who will represent them through issuing a proxy. Could a seat on the Board simply be held by a network or an organization, to be filled at any given meeting by that body's choice of the moment?

On the one hand people liked the flexibility that the team concept allowed, while on the other there was concern expressed for a possible lack of continuity if the representative is changed frequently.

It was agreed that the team concept is inappropriate for individuals, and that the Board would specify which class of membership was represented where teams are allowed.

Decision: it was decided to allow organizational Board members to delegate proxies to other members of their organization when the regular Board member is unable to attend FIC meetings.

15. Why Are We Here? There was a special go-around where delegates related what hopes and concerns they brought with them to the meeting and the organization.

Dan: for the wonderment of exchange with others wanting to connect.

Bob: came with a recognition that the spiritual side of his life is growing the most. He is learning to let go of fear.

George: brought with him an extension of the trust which Rick Lathrop and David Thatcher brought with them in May. He has the orientation that all impulses have a spiritual basis and that we act best when we recognize and act in concert with that

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spiritual element. He cautioned that we not get too caught up in ideas and resolutions, but let the love come through as well. His special hope was that something new would emerge from our coming together.

Allen: has spent considerable time over the years trying to understand the development of Western civilization. In his view the rise of community makes sense from a historical perspective.

Charles: came out of a sense of commitment, and a lack of inspiration. He believes in the strength of cooperation. He sees more spirituality among us than we acknowledge. He gets personal strength from the networking group that is FIC. To his view community offers the most promising environment for spiritual unfoldment.

Suzanne: always had the dream of community, yet she has been discouraged by the relatively slow progress made by communards in transcending egos. For all of that, she still sees community as the best hope for finally succeeding in this effort.

Al: came as a self-described dreamer and optimist. He sees a grand plan for people to know more and be more god-like. He is convinced that FIC is a part of this plan and feels we're on the right track.

Harvey: came from a lifelong involvement with community, and an inability to focus on only one thing at a time. He is attracted to the multi-level essence of community. He has the concern that we not sell short our work or judge it only on the output of "official" projects. We have already been successful just by virtue of having come together.

Elke: has spent her life looking for candles with which to extinguish the dark. She believes FIC may help bring the light of cooperation to the world. She came from a coop background, more than from community. She's always been politically active. She has a personal need to feel she's contributing to world betterment, and has a drive to move forward.

David: became involved in community years ago and had the dream of his community being a node of movement energy. It developed that growth of both his community and the movement was disappointingly slow, but he's cautiously optimistic that FIC will yet help fulfill those old dreams. Enthusiasm for networking in his area has been dampened in the past by a lack of receptiveness by The Farm, but the dream is still alive. He has a strong interest in bioregionalism.

Laird: came looking to be stretched, to see how wide the circle of cooperation can be drawn; to see if we can let go of our attachments to differences and fragmentations in favor of building unity. He is unsure of his natural arena of activity and wants to explore whether he belongs among a group of national networkers. He believes FIC represents an important chance to pull together.

16. Membership selectors. Laird introduced this topic, speaking for the Federation. Some of the Federation's membership has reservations about association with non-member communities, based on the nature of the involvement and the extent of variance from Federation principles among participating communities or groups.

Basically, Laird stated a preference for the widest involvement possible, yet cautioned that Federation support is conditional, based on an analysis of each project. (For all of this caution, Laird reported that the Federation is solidly behind the attempt at pan-community cooperation that FIC represents.)

To be more specific, Laird explained that the Federation is less concerned about whether other participating communities are income-sharing, but more concerned about involvement with groups which do not practice democratic decision-making, which condone or promote violence, or are deliberately sexist or racist in practice.

Laird also explained that Federation concerns depended on the project. For instance, support for a new community directory would be solid and nearly independent of who wanted to be listed. Yet there would be considerable interest about the values of people conducting educational/promotional tours in the name of FIC and representing Federation communities.

Charles was glad to hear that the Federation was interested in extending its involvement to non-member communities and wanted to encourage this trend. Dan stated that Shannon Farm shares many of the federation's reservations.

In discussion, David wondered about where the line is properly drawn between tolerance and appeasement. Harvey suggested orienting more on what kind of relationship was wanted from members, and less on drawing the line on certain values. He advocated moving away from judging and being exclusive.

There was discussion of how open the FIC is or should be to groups controlled by charismatic leaders. In general, people did not favor excluding anyone out of hand; the Board wanted to give everyone a chance. Harvey pointed out that many of us at the table are leaders in some sense, yet none are the leader of our respective communities. Having such a person among the membership could create very different, and possibly difficult, dynamics.

17. Whom do we especially wish to contact? The Board brainstormed the following list of who to contact between this meeting and the next, along with who would take principal responsibility for doing it:

Corinne McLaughlin & Gordon Davidson: Dan  
Stephen Gaskin: Allen  
Kerista: Allen  
High Wind: Charles  
Breitenbush: Suzanne  
National Historic Communal Society Assn: Laird  
Caroline Estes: Laird  
Betty Didcoct: Laird  
Patch Adams: Charles  
Renaissance: Allen  
Camphill Village: Dan  
Mount Madonna: Suzanne  
Harbin Hot Springs: Suzanne  
Esalen: Dan  
Ananda: Charles

There was general agreement that personal contact was the most effective way to invite participation.

18. Internal fence mending. Laird spoke of communication he has had with David Thatcher and Caroline Estes in an effort to reduce or eliminate differences between them that have proven to be an obstacle in Caroline's willingness to be more active in FIC's development. Laird expressed concern that efforts to resolve internal conflicts be given the highest priority. (How can others be expected to take our program of cooperation seriously if people with proven devotion to community networking are not comfortable sitting down together?)

The Board encouraged Laird to continue with his efforts to assist in improving relations.

19. Conference telephone call with absent Board members. Sunday morning started with a conference call among the Board members at East Wind and Rick Lathrop, David Thatcher, Faith Morgan, and Don Pitzer, at their respective homes.

There were no objections raised among the callers about Board decisions to implement a two-tiered membership, substitute "unanimous" for "consensus" in the bylaws, and proceed immediately with an application for 501(c)(3) status with IRS.

Rick stressed the importance of staying within our means on projects. He liked Mildred Gordon's proposal for a Community Center especially, in that it represented action in line with FIC values, while not requiring resources.

Despite caution about not overcommitting, Rick also encouraged FIC to move forward now, and not delay action while waiting for a large grant or donation to allow more freedom of choice. In fact, it was his view that FIC's ability to attract grants will depend, in part, on how thrifty and ingenious the organization is in utilizing what resources it has.

David liked the idea of Suzanne's proposal for a video tour. He has been approached by both the BBC and the Australian Broadcasting Corporation to help secure footage of communities. His sense is that there is interest in creating television footage of communities and that this might be of help with the project, either as a funding source or with technical assistance. At this stage in the FIC's development, it was clear to David that such a project is beyond the organization's means without external funding.

On funding sources for FIC support, there was mention that Kerista has experience and might be approached for advice. Don felt that the National Endowment for the Humanities might look favorably on a grant request to host a national or congress of communities.

Don further mentioned that NHCSA is expanding its newsletter, Communique, and can offer FIC a regular column and use of space in its calendar section. At the annual NHCSA conference (every fall) Don said it would be possible to develop a full, regular track on contemporary communities, which the FIC could manage.

Finally, Don mentioned that he's contributing a chapter to a book on communities which could include a chapter on contemporary communities, if someone would be willing to put something together on behalf of FIC.

20. Projects. A. Support for Communities. Charles reported that the magazine loses about \$3,000 annually. This is not worse because of \$7-10K of yearly book sales. Gross revenues for the year ending June 30, 1987 were \$32K, with a loss of \$2K.

In the time since the publishing function passed from Twin Oaks to Stelle, the list of subscribers has been significantly bolstered, but increased revenues have been offset by increases in production costs. Charles is looking for assistance with the magazine. If this isn't forthcoming he may be willing to see the magazine go elsewhere. However, he'd prefer to keep it.

Charles explained that one way the Federation could help would be in taking on some of the correspondence load, and improving the organization of materials; there has been too little staff help to keep up with this. Stelle is willing to offer room and board to people who could come and do internships helping the magazine. Allen, Laird, David, and Suzanne all expressed interest in helping out in some capacity.

Charles expressed openness to the idea of sharing some of the profits of a directory issue with FIC in exchange for help in putting it together, but he cautioned that the magazine needs the income from the directory issue to offset the losses of regular issues.

Harvey preferred that the FIC consider insuring the magazine's survival as a top priority, with any possibility of Communities serving as an FIC funding source secondary. He recommended that the Board explore ways FIC could become a co-publisher of the magazine.

There was a discussion of how reasonable it was to divide up work among people not physically together. David wondered if it was realistic to decentralize the tasks in order to make use of the offers of help. Concerns here were partly allayed by a discussion of how much can now be accomplished via computer and modem.

Dan proposed that the FIC express formal interest in involving itself in Communities. Charles welcomed such a proposal, yet cautioned that he is unwilling to see compromised a commitment that the magazine remain open and accessible to all communities.

To the question, who will do the work if FIC takes over, Charles answered that this would be an easier problem to dispose of if we could pay staff reasonable compensation for what we want done. This is not happening now at Stelle, and did not when the work was done at Twin Oaks either.

Allen proposed that the Board consider a transfer of ownership of the magazine from the current umbrella group, Unschool Education (under the control of Paul Freundlich in New Haven), to FIC. Allen felt this would be an appropriate statement of concern and responsibility.

In discussing additional ways that FIC could support Communities, David committed himself to going home and asking his community and others he knows personally to consider buying or renewing subscriptions to bolster cash flow. He recommended that others do the same.

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Suzanne reported that David Thatcher had the notion of FIC members buying ten copies of each issue up front and accept personal responsibility for selling or otherwise distributing that amount. This would boost circulation and cash flow simultaneously. Harvey suggested that each FIC member could search out and approach likely distributors in their area about carrying the magazine.

Further defining what help is needed right now, Charles explained that there is enough editorial support to carry the magazine through the directory issue in the spring. However, there is a pressing need for promotional assistance. Also, Communities may need cash support to print the directory issue. Charles will also need help checking out and organizing the information to be included in the directory. Suzanne volunteered to help with this.

Charles agreed to send out to all a letter spelling out just what kind of help is needed and when it would be most useful.

Both Dan and Harvey advocated that people willing to assist the magazine, put their energy into their region first, working most with those one knows best.

Decision: the Board agrees to state intent to co-publish the directory issue of Communities, scheduled to come out in April, 1988. It is further agreed to use the FIC profile as the basis for soliciting information for the directory.

B. Calendar of community events. There are currently opportunities for announcing community events both in Communities and in the NHCSA newsletter. Charles will send to all a list of projected publication dates for Communities, along with deadlines for submission of materials for inclusion in the calendar section.

Concern was raised that these two publications only reach a fraction of the audience who might be interested in the information. This begged the question of whether FIC needs its own newsletter.

Charles mentioned that he has developed a 1,500-name list of groups who at one time or another have been included in contemporary listings of communities. Typically, though, only about 125 of these respond to inquiries and requests for information.

There was speculation about why most names on that mailing list do not respond. One thought was fear of negative exposure; another was a lack of networking energy, or lack of a vision that extended beyond the property lines. The idea was offered of creating an unpublished directory for such folks, where the FIC would screen inquiries for compatibility (the criteria for which the listee would specify) before releasing information. Naturally, it was hard to gauge what interest would exist for such a project. Its appeal would lay mainly in recruitment.

Charles offered the summer, 1988 issue of Communities as an editorial opportunity for the FIC to guest edit an issue and get out information about itself.

c. CESCI assistance. Allen proposed that FIC help promote the use and development of the loan fund. The FIC could solicit donations for the fund to grow, and at the same time spread the word of the fund's availability to those in need.

The fund is currently underused; CESCO has difficulty finding communities to loan all its money to. In light of this, Charles thinks there will be trouble getting grantors to look favorably on requests for more funds to work with. He suggested that the priority be on getting all the funds loaned out, then worry about generating more funds.

Dan would like to see the current loan ceiling of \$3K per applicant raised; such a sum just doesn't go far enough to meet community's serious money needs today.

Decision: the Board agreed that Dan would send a letter to CESCO suggesting that they look at internal policies and consider what might be done to make their loan fund more attractive to potential donors, and whether it's appropriate to raise the ceiling on individual loans to make the fund more attractive to potential users.

D. Video project. Suzanne presented a draft proposal which the board discussed. Her main idea is to accomplish person-to-person networking and produce outreach materials at the same time. She has already made contact with a video expert who is willing to spend the time on the effort if the dollars are there. And she has approached the School of Living about using their 501(c)(3) status to allow a pass through of funds for the project. Her vision is to spend 1-2 weeks at each place, taking time to get an in-depth feel.

Bob would like to see a caravan of interested people tagging along. This idea was met with caution by several others because of concern that too many visitors at a time would tend to overwhelm host communities. At the least, there would have to be clear prior arrangements for any caravan involvement.

Both Allen and Charles suggested that the need for better communication among communities is so great that we might more profitably focus on print media before video.

David offered that he may be willing to go along on a video tour of communities, supplying his services as a mechanic and possibly a vehicle.

Charles has hopes that this could lead into or contribute to a two-hour PBS special on communities, possibly in conjunction with NHCSA. Charles recommended that Suzanne contact Don Pitzer about the possibility of combining efforts with work already underway at NHCSA.

Suzanne emphasized that her project is equal parts video and networking. The personal contact allows the chance to discover who has outreach energy and for which projects. Mailing lists could be updated, and overall enthusiasm built up for FIC efforts. Suzanne specifically sought official FIC sponsorship for this project.

Decision: the Board resolved to support the intent of this project and will consider official sponsorship pending the refinement of the proposal. It was left for the Executive Committee to decide whether to sponsor this after a refined proposal had been circulated for comment among the Board members. It was understood that in exchange for sponsorship the FIC will gain control of the project's direction. Along with comments on sponsorship, Board members were asked to submit ideas about carrying it out.

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E. New York Community Center. (Laird had submitted Mildred Gordon's proposal for a New York City-based community center to all Board members about a month before the meeting.)

Bob said he had energy to stop in at the Foundation for Feedback Learning, where Mildred lives, while in New York in October. He is interested in lending a hand at getting this project going. Also, he has already approached Kerista (without receiving a response) about performing a similar function on the West Coast.

David Thatcher suggested that it might be a duplication of efforts already underway at a New York Emissary community. Laird agreed to contact David about this.

Charles liked the idea of community information centers being established regionally. He mentioned that last year two file drawers full of networking information was passed along to him from the now-defunct Cooperative Communities of America. He has had no time to go through this treasure trove of information, but is willing to turn this over to the FIC

Allen asked who would do the organizing and staffing? Bob responded that in his view information centers could pay their own way through charging for the information; he felt there was sufficient demand for the material.

Decision: the Board agreed to establish a standing committee to explore ways of accessing information and generating money to operate centers. Charles, Bob, and Laird agreed to serve on this committee.

F. Intercommunity visits. David expressed concern that there were no community members of FIC as of the meeting. He wondered what might attract communities, and answered his own question by suggesting that we assist members of one member community visiting another.

Harvey noted that there is a definite, profound difference in a visitor from another community, versus someone who arrives with no community background or connections. It is almost like speaking another language.

Laird suggested developing a position paper urging member communities to open their doors specifically to visitors from other member communities.

Charles offered that such a statement could be a part of a media package distributed to prospective member communities.

At this point, George emphasized the need for the highest degree of responsibility when representing the FIC. At this early stage especially, the first representatives will be projecting an image for everyone.

Time was spent discussing the particular problem of how to facilitate visits by members of income-sharing communities to communities which do not have central economies. Often the cooperative groups do not have work opportunities by which visitors could "earn" their keep, and yet the visitors have little or no money (by virtue of centralized economies) with which to pay visitor fees. Allen pointed out that personal contact through FIC involvement should help to reduce this problem. Perhaps the FIC membership process will help introduce potential visitors to each other.

Laird pointed out that the rotated hosting of FIC meetings will serve to promote intercommunity familiarity and visiting.

G. Media package. Charles came to the meeting with a definite idea about this. He would like to see the FIC offer a clearinghouse function, for people seeking information about North American communities. He has, through Communities, developed a 1,100-name mailing list of individuals throughout the continent interested in community. We could contact these folks and tell them what we have to offer, including:

- information about any community wishing to send literature about itself.
- access to both a published and unpublished directory of communities (if we do the latter).
- information about community services and products.

With help, Charles said he could get a letter out describing what we have now and intend to have, within 30 days. The Board agreed to have him do this.

H. Model community. Charles described a dream of his that Stelle be the site of several different styles of community, all in one physical setting. Stelle currently has excess facilities, with land, houses, and a large factory building all for sale.

This item was on the agenda for informational purposes, not action at this time. Charles intends to write an article describing his thoughts about this in more detail. Perhaps the FIC could play a role in promoting this concept.

I. National gathering. There was general interest in trying to do this, at least once. Don Pitzer liked this, and so did Caroline Estes. People were optimistic about getting outside funding to do it. It was suggested that the gathering be piggybacked with a regular Board meeting.

Of a more immediate nature, Charles mentioned an upcoming opportunity for a national gathering which the FIC could affiliate itself with. Stelle is expecting to sponsor a community gathering in Chicago in conjunction with the Institute for Cultural Affairs next April or May. There is a considerable facility in Chicago available for this. It is intended to be open to all people interested in community, and will include a press conference and media involvement.

Laird expressed concern about spreading ourselves too thin, about taking on too much too soon. He especially wanted people's first exposure to FIC to be a well-developed positive experience.

Charles agreed to send out more detailed information about the conference once the dates have been set. In this letter he will ask for commitments from Board members to participate. Based on responses to this, the Executive Committee will make a decision about whether it is appropriate to officially sponsor the event.

J. Brochure. Committee work was done on evaluating the draft of the introductory brochure which Dan brought to the meeting. There was considerable work done during the meeting and a final

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version was approved for Dan to print. The Board deferred any decision on a logo until prospective artwork could be distributed and reviewed. Laird agreed to have artists/at his community attempt versions based on a grove of trees motif.

There was specific agreement to include a statement about international involvement, at Allen's request.

Any comments or suggestions about a logo should be directed to Dan.

21. Site and dates for future meetings. In discussion about how FIC might be able to make hosting Board meetings more attractive to prospective communities, Allen suggested the possibility of Board members arriving early or staying late and contributing labor on community projects as partial compensation for room and board. If there is a large project suitable for this, it might offer a unique opportunity for fellowship. It was agreed to attempt<sup>this</sup>, and the Secretary was given the assignment of working with host communities to identify suitable projects and coordinate getting the word out.

In discussing when to have future meetings people wondered about the necessity or desirability of coordinating with the annual CESCO meeting in the spring. It was observed that CESCO business usually requires only one day, and that Saturday would be the most agreeable time to CESCO Board members. At the same time, Charles opined that the two organizations seem headed down somewhat different paths and that it wasn't necessary to overly complicate scheduling of meetings by considerations for CESCO. Allen (also a CESCO Board member with Charles) agreed.

A special effort was made to contact Corinne McLaughlin and get information about her availability to attend a spring meeting. It was agreed to try to find a host community in New England to further enhance this possibility. Both Green Pastures and Mettanokit in New Hampshire were mentioned as possible sites.

David Thatcher said (over the phone) that late April, early May was best for him. Faith (via phone) preferred any time in May.

Decision: the Board agreed to meet next in New England (if possible), during the weekend of May 7-8, 1988. Also, it was agreed to aim for a fall meeting in the West, preferably in late September.

For fall sites, Ananada, Sunrise Ranch, and Glen Ivy were all mentioned. Faith contributed that she knew of a community north of San Francisco which might be willing to host a meeting. The Board expressed a preference that one (but not both) of the projected 1988 Board meetings take place at an Emissary community. It was left to the Executive Committee to make final decisions about a site for the spring meeting, and explore possibilities for the fall. The Executive Committee was specifically directed to keep in mind the Board's preference that room and board be donated or exchanged for labor on a community project.

22. Evaluation of the meeting.

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1. Facilitation could have been stronger.
2. Members liked the ebb and flow of discussion and the agenda flexibility.
3. Preference for less-packed meetings, which might reduce tension.
4. Liked the energy of the new people (who were not present at the May meeting).
5. Strong appreciation for East Wind's gracious hospitality.

NOTE: All decisions reached during this Board meeting were unanimous.