

# FIC Org Meeting Minutes

## April 22-24, 2012

### Arcadia Cohousing

### Carrboro, NC

Happy Earth Day!

Present: Tony, Harvey, Laird, Oz, Marty, Chris, Susan Sloan, Jenny, Betsy, Raines, Alyson, Pat Boyd (visitor, DC), Jonah Goldwag(visitor, Asheville), Bill Isely (visitor, Durham)

**OPENING CARD:** Susan Sloan drew GroupWorks card: Letting Go - release preconceived notions, ego, and fears to be fully open without attachment to outcome...As a clear channel you can be open to receive (what's best) for yourself, your group, and the world.

Alyson drew hidden card - to be revealed.

## HOUSEKEEPING

### Agenda Review

Add an item on Art of Community to Sunday morning's discussion of events.

Facilitators: Raines, Alyson, Marty, Betsy, Harvey.

Notetakers: Chris, Betsy, Dan; meta management Chris/Betsy.

**Hosting meals (Jenny)**- we'll make salad for tonight's potluck; **\$30/day made out to FIC.**

**Opening** - Jenny prepared notes for the 64 beads and years. Much reminiscing. The most recent face-to face was at Frog Song after the Art of Community 2011. Spring 2007 - at Shannon Farm, Geoph's last Org Mtg; Spring 2002 - Waterloo, Ontario, Canada at Conrad Grable College- Mennonite ; Spring 1997 at Edenvale, an Emissary Community in British Columbia, Canada. Marty's first FIC meeting, Ben Lipman's last. 1992 - Celo, NC. Preparing for big event in 1993; had to refile nonprofit status. 1987 - Stelle, Illinois, FIC's first meeting, 30 people; Laird and DanQ were there, older generation had fallen away; core energy were the 30 year olds. Harvey lurking in the wings.

## EVENTS

**Art of Community (Oz presenting in Susan's absence)** - Susan Frank excellent organizer, sophisticated thinker, really taking in and using input. Frustrated by low level of board involvement, and sense that events are on the side in

comparison to Coho/US board involvement in the Nat. Coho Conference, based on Oz's experience.

Q - What sort of expectations does she have?

A- It's the single largest source of income for Coho US. It's \$10,000 to \$60,000 of annual income. Susan is very effective at handling interpersonal challenges in team, but desires more help from board members.

Q-How is the flow between Susan and Harvey?

A-Harvey missed a request to talk and email during a very busy time. Not a chronic problem. Overall Susan feels good about Harvey. Harvey missed a conference call; and then the calls were canceled. Oz doesn't know how to solve the situation, because he doesn't see a lot more board energy. Coho US board has fewer other projects. Lincoln is the other liaison - Harvey hasn't started to build that relationship. Lincoln's been less involved; less reliable.

Oz's assessment of Susan's issues with lack of support.

- Susan Frank's frustration based on not getting good email response from Board members.
- Needs to convince Cmag to support the event fully with ads
- Coho/US conf organizer was the Exec Director or part of board, mostly volunteers, not an independent person who can't make it to board meetings.
- Laird's input overwhelming - rewrite of whole documents.
- Susan has seen board responding to Oz quicker than they respond to her.
- Chris - she submitted an idea for ecovillage issues, and she wrote an article early at his suggestion, but needed editing. On diversity issue, she wrote a letter. Oz - suspect its ad sales response.
- The AoC team has a profit sharing relationship; as a volunteer how much time do I put in (Raines)?
- How can we address this?
- Oz - 2 things coho board members did was support fundraising and bringing people to the conference, personal invitations. And active fundraising at the conference. That's why people come to the conference is to connect with the heartbeat players.
- FIC has seen AoC as its service to bringing people together regionally.

Comment - concerned that the channel of communication was Oz not Harvey - that's off. Let's revisit what role the board plays.

Comment - I don't go, but I write a check to each AoC. We could invite her to the Oversight conference calls, have an event section, and she would be more directly involve.

Comment - Encourage her to talk more by phone not emails. We were involved informally last year a lot, and this year, not so much.

Comment - Helped connect her with video possibilities, John Z. Didn't feel

board has made commitments that we're not fulfilling. Has Coho comparison created extra frustration and false hopes.

Comment - One factor is not scheduling adjacent to board meetings. I don't have energy to get folks to come; responsiveness as tech manager - it's been spotty but across the board these days, not specific to Susan. But half my energy is to AoC, Susan may not realize what her requests involve.

Oz writes short email requests, clear call to action. Susan embeds her requests in long emails. If she can be more clear and direct.

Comment - The email he missed was that way, looked long, involved, too much time to read and flagged to deal with later.

So, no board support...

There is support - Harvey, Jenny, Lincoln, and Betsy - but I can't focus until after Coho/US.

Support not landed well, or not obvious to her.

Her writing wasn't as compelling, so I rewrote it.

Bring her onto calls, there is some board support.

She has more autonomy than typical cohoh conference team and staff.

Doesn't want to undercut board liaison, feels he has been putting energy in to AoC, but not the only thing he's doing.

Suggests more phone calls between Susan and Laird

Needs to be cc'd and in sync with what's happening between Laird and Susan.

Website not effective, too small, no info.

Informal feedback, communications coaching, find ways... Specific request to discuss Social Change Summit after break.

**Social Change Summit** - Last year we discussed adding pre/ post calendar events; participants wanted more time to talk about the movement, collaborative planning. Susan looking for Monday and Tuesday events. Idea of a summit: putting out a call with established groups with members (seekers could observe). Invitations gone out to participants and known groups in the region.

Susan sent out 100 letters of inquiry; 18 responses, most positive, at least 15 people interested.

Need 50 post-conference attendees to make happen, including summit participants.

Do we want to do it? It will cost \$600-\$1000 more in deposit. Good deal from Westminster. It will be \$150 per person for 2 days to cover expenses. Purpose is not to make money.

So if less than 50 would we cancel?

Can FIC make more than break even? How would we benefit?

When is deposit refundable? Don't know.

Needs follow up if there's action items; Coho/US did an international summit, but failed to take any follow up, action items. FIC will be expected to do same

follow up.

Coho/US has preconference trainings, very successful. Can see more people plugging into summit than the core conference.

Like the idea of bringing movers and shakers together, create their own coalition/collaborative action steps, not be looking to be FIC projects. It would be a conference we put together and let it create its own dynamic.

We're creating a container but not committing to shepherding the results.

Not an FIC strategic planning session.

Is there a strategy-geography focus?

No workshop leaders requested this time to talk.

It's about the doers at the conference itself. What are the risks?

Susan, Laird, and other folks already committed?

Tracks have helped diversity conferences, some are \$20 to \$200, but it's a profit center, not just break even.

3 tracks, not just Social Change summit, Laird can do 1; Transition Towns for example might be another as a skill building.

Susan doesn't see this as a burden; she's interested. She's looking for a yes.

Risk is to FIC.

Ask Susan for clarity on how it relates to profit-sharing.

Bigger than Sonoma County; Transition Town would be concurrent track.

Anyone can stay over.

Westminster best place; feeling positive; will delegate to Events Team/Harvey and Laird would provide most of energy, maybe some find out what energy expected from FIC Board.

**AGREED: Board approves going forward on the Social Change Summit and post-conference 2-days.**

## **2013 Colorado Event**

A 2 day Art of Community event proposed for spring or fall 2013.

Event team busy until end of September 2012. Susan willing to support/mentoring for someone in Colorado, but can't start in time for spring 2013.

Lincoln looking for someone in Colorado, not doing it himself.

Oversight also looking at a Canada event/board meeting. Is talking with GEN Canada, very active. That group likes the idea of coupling with FIC event in summer 2013, BC or Ontario, but no date or location yet.

Board meeting and 1 day event possible for Fall 2013.

Laird will wait on plans for Art of Cmty until we have a local team in Colorado.

Fall of '13, contingent on Canadian event happening in June.

Could Canada GEN come to Colorado and mentor; to do their own event?

Is Future of Community event a model?

**Put on agenda to evaluate.**

**Summary –**

We are talking about coupling Colorado meeting in fall 2013 or spring 2014.

We are talking about coupling Canada Gen if in June 2013.

Date and location are unknown. BC preferred to Ontario if they do it in June because previous meeting will be in Ann Arbor (October/2013).

Harvey will talk with Lincoln about Colorado, pending date.

## **STRATEGIC PLANNING**

Incorporating video and youth were major inputs from earlier discussion Friday. John Zielinski is a resource person.

We now have a website where people can post videos about John Zelinski, a videographer who attended our most recent Art of Community. He wants to help FIC incorporate video into the website, which might create a potential income stream by offering educational fees for varying levels of access. This is what John Z does professionally. He's expecting to be at Sept. 2012 Art of Cmty, but asked Susan to find another videographer there. He taped the Kevin Danaher, keynote speaker. Also offering his software.

He was at Chicago org meeting in the spring of 2011.

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Video is the way to go.

We could talk about online and feature length videos. Lets stick with online.

John Z sees it as a revenue stream, but don't know how. Most interested in helping FIC create a revenue stream.

Can he provide an example of what's thinking of from his own work? Can he take snippets from last conference?

He's not offered to edit anything.

Helpful to have an example of his work.

Raines – how can we learn where the levers are, the partners, get more education on how to communicate a story? We could use existing assets. We could use magazine – ration access? What if Communities brand, what if every article, every photo had deeper story behind it, online Communities mag, taking people on a tour or going deeper on an issue.

Harvey – we need help to know how to do this

Jenny – lots of her friends googled Oz's Anniversary video on youtube who didn't know what FIC was; we could use a FIC video.

Laird – we could create a Video Manager position to coordinate, edit, and produce content, manage this, doing what we have. Creating 3 minute clips; working with workshop leaders to figure out what's most useful.

Tony – it's very easy to take video; hard part of editing. Cautious. The magic of editing is the costly part of things. \$1000 a minute. Who's going to edit; make it professional? Where's the budget for this. How to leverage low-quality work, or work with existing videographers to leverage off what they're already doing.

It would be great to get the high quality 3 minute what is IC and a bunch of low-

quality.

Alison - could get someone a shorter time to edit/curate what's already out there.

Bill - teaching company - low-cost alternative - they get a good presenter and he brings in clips of already taped good examples, rather than taping new.

Oz - audience is crucial. Distance learning is huge, many colleges is doing this. Good quality presenter, much better prepared. Reach students vs. the masses.

Harvey - if we're doing video, pay attention to the audience.

Betsy - so we could start the Manager curating what's already available, use last year's conference if any is useable. Then as money raised, think about a high quality piece.

Bill - could use a commentator to tie together what you are seeing.

Tony - several people could be asked if interested in curating already you-tube videos. Ask folks professionals.

Harvey - Look for manager, information, advice;

Discussion -

Add to job description, with augmenting magazine online focus;

Tony - ask for advice, which areas do you think we should go in before creating a job description. curating video.

Harvey - Rather than a job description, solicit advice and input.

Chris- asking general input and feedback on specific ideas we've brought up here.

Betsy [will send around name of student coop videographer]

Laird - offers to write a letter to folks we know in the video world, Have them help us with strategy, and respond to ideas generated today.

Marty will receive responses and take back to Oversight. Betsy can support him. He will ask John to provide a sample from his work.

Jenny - this could land back on website administration team eventually.

### **Sunday 2-3:30pm (Harvey facilitating, Marty notes)**

#### **Review of local event (Raines and Betsy presenting)**

Raines and Betsy created an event.

The details were worked out shortly before the event and there was help from local folks and FIC people.

They are still recovering from the effort.

It took them a few weeks to get the venue nailed down and experienced a loss of time as their original choice backed out when they realized the extent of the effort needed.

When they realized that the Coho communities couldn't support the effort they were able to focus on the details including venue that made the event successful. They made valuable contact with local groups and then made a lot of personal contacts and through FIC efforts and through Laird's personal contacts.

The event day was exhausting.

Oz made the lunch happen and there was a lot of volunteer help from the participants.

There was some tension before the event around the less than totally detailed planning, but it came together on the day of the event.

The event was run by Betsy and Raines and used very little FIC energy in the planning.

The energy of the event was good.

It was difficult and awkward to deal with slow response from Betsy and Raines as the event was being planned and FIC was trying to work around it.

Evaluations from the participants was not captured on site.

The financial gain for the org was fine.

We did a little fund raising energy that worked out fine, got a few memberships and cmag subs - all in all about \$1000.

The relationship of FIC to the event wasn't clear.

There was an element of chaos throughout the day, but everything worked out well and no one seemed to be turned off by it.

The report to the org meeting the night before the event would have benefited from more direction from the organizers.

One result of the late planning was losing the opportunity for PR.

(Note from organizers did not intend to seek press)

Contributions at door and lunch reached \$1200. The organizers covered direct event expenses with \$500 left over to cover personal expenses connected to their travel.

Better driving directions would have been helpful.

Even though the event was rough around the edges we would welcome having another similar event.

Evaluations online were solicited and some have been sent in electronically on Meetup.

There is a lesson to be learned about more prep and more clarity about what help is needed being secured earlier.

It would make it more likely that burnout by the organizers would be avoided.

## **Review of Finances** (Tony presenting)

The good news is that bookshelf mail order sales are good.

None of the events we will attend are reflected at this point.

Cmag subs are doing well. Its about the same as last year to this point.

Back issue sales are down, but a lot of that happens at events.

Advertising revenue is down at this point, but its hard to know what that means.

Its not clear if Tanya has maintained the spreadsheet report we created.

**TASK:** Marty will check on it.

Expenses are as expected.

We are not, at this point, expecting the bottom line to change.

(We have a prospect to sponsor an issue next year.)

Development has started slowly.

In recent years we have not been hitting the target of 12k unrestricted donations.

Laird doesn't focus on unrestricted donations.

Directory sales are slower than last year, but that is expected.

The first print run is sold out so the cost of goods sold on the directory is much less.

Videos continue to sell well with the expected drop off.

Website ad sales are done through user on-line classifieds from which we make 2-3k. We could do more if there was energy for it. We also made about 7k from google ads. We've used other ad networks, but they are more difficult to deal with and need more overview than Tony has energy for.

Tanya has been selling some on-line ads which takes space that could be used by google ads.

There is potential for more, but it would take more attention than has been available.

Tony didn't invoice for q4 last year because he didn't do any work, but expects to bill for all quarters this year.

"Other" income is a catchall including auction income and fiscal sponsorships.

Our income level is looking ok at this point.

Expenses:

Art of Community numbers are for site deposit and some money for staff.

We generally predict our expenses accurately.

To date we have an 11k loss, much of which is AoC and expect to be in the black

by end of year.

We don't know of a way to take advantage of micro payments as paypal takes a % and a set fee.

**College Sustainability Initiative** (Tony facilitating; Harvey presenting)

Many colleges have a relationship to sustainability.

Association for the Advancement of sustainability in Higher Education

The next conference is in LA in mid October.

We think we can offer assistance in improving their overall curricula by introducing ideas for sustainable communication, community, and cooperation.

Harvey and Chris have connections to Oberlin College. We also have a connection at Goddard College through Karen Stupski.

Ma'ikwe and Daniel Greenberg have expressed interest in the committee that Harvey is convening.

Harvey wrote a letter to send to academics involved in programs last year offering our services, but it has not been sent.

We need more energy to move the project forward.

Harvey has not been able to manifest the time necessary to work on this, and cannot be sure that he will be able to manifest it in the future, so is looking for someone else to convene the committee.

Betsy is interested in the committee and can convene a conversation that will see where to take this project next. Alyson and Chris are also interested.

We suspect that there are a variety of communities that have connections to colleges/universities.

Chris, Betsy, Alyson, Harvey, Marty will participate in the conversation.

**Office Capital Campaign** (Harvey facilitating; Laird presenting)

We have made a commitment to participate in the DR new community center for an FIC office.

Therefore, we need to raise 80-90k.

We need to raise half the money by the end of this year and the rest by 01-01-15.

This is tricky because it involves approaching our standard donors, so affects our other development efforts.

Also our donor list has overlaps with DR's list.

Laird and Alyson (the DR coordinator) are working together to figure out the most efficient way to approach this.

Laird has talked to Mandy who has experience with crowd fund raising which is an on-line effort.

He is anticipating starting that in the fall.

It's possible to raise significant portions of the total through this effort.

We have a back up safety net in Jorge who has offered to loan the org any shortfall for the initial payment.

It could be advantageous to us to frame our fundraising in terms of it being for education.

DR is trying to raise \$1M - half by loan, half by grant and they feel like they are making good progress.

Costs to FIC could involve hiring Mandy, producing a video, and a transfer of cost within the org as Laird changes his priorities.

Any leads to donors would be greatly appreciated.

There are studies that indicate that a successful capital campaign can produce long term positive results.

It would be helpful to the general effort to have a statement that the org can use for fundraising that anyone in the org can utilize.

### **Monday • April 23**

Facilitator: Alyson

Note-taker: Betsy

Present: Alyson, Laird, Tony, Raines, Jonah, Jenny, Marty, Oz, Harvey, Susan, Chris, Betsy.

#### **Personal Ads from Prisoners -**

Someone in prison for child pornography requested a personal ad seeking a correspondance partner in C-magazine. Marty wrote a letter saying we're developing a policy. No other requests in past.

Not many ads;

How do personal ads serve our movement? - they're minimal to the Cmag.

How does they help people get their needs met? - don't add value, might be more negative.

Can we know whether a correspondance comes from prison? Yes.

Can we be aware of needs of prisoners to find community?

Don't want to judge guilt or innocence.

With compassion, but to protect our larger constituency, prefer to exclude.

Have a boiler plate sentence stating their conviction and letting people know we do not endorse. Don't pick crimes. Information, disclosure, due diligence.

*Group agreed to have a moratorium on prisoner personal ads until policy in place.*

There should be full disclosure.

Should we have personal ads at all?

Currently we have personal ads on directory and magazine.

Personal ads used to be called people looking (for community).

Earth First used to offer free listings for prisoners.

What are the benefits for having classifieds at all?

Online has a personals AND a seeking community, AND communities forming categories.

It's a dance marrying transparency, chance for redemption, rather than an judging folks. Only have ads for people seeking community, not the other. To qualify you'd have to be available, which means you are not in prison.

Fortunity had someone contact them through REACHing for community ads.

There are a few communities that receive prisoners, one in Durham area that serves re-entering prisoners. A prisoner seeking community could still post. Prefer to keep the personals – because it's the perfect place for someone single in community to find someone with shared values (ditto).

### **Directory Listings**

Laird knows of a person who posted a listing misrepresenting the numbers of people, 5-6 people and it's really just him, in a remote location. Several people men and women have told Laird they felt uncomfortable. (several women noted he was convicted of rape in comments section), said they felt unsafe and misrepresentation. Laird wrote him, he acknowledged ups and downs of #s, and was a registered sex offender. They talked about disclosure and safety; Laird told him he would suspend the listing.

Laird suggests limiting suspension of listing to sex offenses and violence offences if anyone in the community has that. What should we offer. Is there a line we can make without saying you can't list.

Our current policy with complaints about listing, we encourage direct dialog, but don't have a policy of flagging listings with complaints or further action. Complaints rarely used; and people can post comments and communities can choose which comments are shown. Limit to specifics.

**Board affirmed Laird's decision to pull that directory listing until policy established.** Susan noted a comment from 2007 or 2009 gave a very fair judgement saying single women should not go there alone, and he did not post that comment.

One standard for a policy is getting a number of complaints.

Add financial fraud, one community in Oregon people lost of money.

Some individuals have defrauded communities.

Consider providing another place where complaints and comments are posted.

How about publish all comments and let communities respond.

Don't want all info on site, not a garbage dump.

Sometimes people post info on something illegal like composting toilets.

Other approaches:

Propose: Print directory has statement on validity/disclaimer; make it more visible on the online directory; Note when we've received a complaint, publish the complaint, and take down if cleared, and have a privacy policy. Make clear that "today's featured community" is not vetted by us; Buyer Beware.

Use thumbs up and thumbs.

- We should disclose safety and misrepresentation.

Make current disclaimer more prominent. Tell people to do their due diligence. Either we publish every single complaint and comment, or we have to judge. We should tell people to investigate. If a community does not disclose, and someone complains and we would still have to verify. We should take a listing down with a combination of nondisclosure and complaints.

Laird encourages

Had some people in our community with differences and emailed to a small group about complaining to FIC, works both ways, people coming and communities. Can we just flag on the listing that they are on file. Not much of a volume, or a fee for a validation that community can pay. 1 a year?

Think it would be wrong to not provide information about unsafe and misrepresented communities, complaints as vetted by Laird; If we want the movement to grow, we should make information available, not simply pull listing.

Don't want bad and good community judgements online.

How can we make judgements? Don't want negative flags. How can we verify? What is our standard. IF sex offender present, how do we deal with it?

Communities deal with it differently at different times.

We can't do much, proposals not garnered agreement. No matter what, there's judgement calls. So let's create a process for those.

Short of removing it entirely, we can flag. If we think there's some credibility if you want to continue your listing you have to own it or we will pull. 12 Tribes groups communities have a lot of complaints, coercion,

Laird - very few complaints, but when they come in, the complaint is: this group is dangerous, you should not list them. Maybe sex offender, violent crime, maybe economic fraud, I could investigate. If we get ownership of the complaint. He would handle the one complaint - you should say you are a registered sex offender in your listing.

*Agreed: If Laird sees/hears a complaint about a community listed, it involves a trigger situation of sex offense, violence, or fraud, he will discuss with oversight committee for final decision. FIC reserves the right to remove a listing. Where not a trigger event, there is a point where if we get enough complaints and community denies; we would pull that listing after consultation with oversight review.*

*Laird will write up his intended process for final decision Tuesday morning.*

## **BREAK**

### **Kozeny Award Selections**

Candidates: Starhawk, Chant Thomas, Caroline Estes, Bob Mann, Kriyananda,

Criteria:

- a. Networker; b. Media Relations; c. Good Neighbor; d. Community Builder, e. Community place. f. cooperative leadership; g Historian preservationist
- b. North America, lifetime of achievement, broad concept of community. Contributions should impact significantly beyond their home community.

Additional Information presented on Chant and Starhawk.

Discussion of relative merits of candidates.

Caroline the grandmother of facilitators on the west coast -- Earth communities network and bio-regional congresses she helped create and set culture; and Facilitator Waldorf Schools and Green Parties, and pioneered training for Waldorf School teachers.

**Board Agreed to honor Caroline Estes of Alpha Farm for the 2013 Kozeny Award to be presented at the AoC in 2012. FIC will pay Caroline's travel costs (not AoC). Harvey and Jenny will create plaque and award. Laird will talk to Caroline; Laird will talk with Sooz to confirm award at AoC. Starhawk and Bob Mann will be rolled over for future consideration. Award Committee will follow up on all the nominators.**

**Board Member Selection - Nominating committee report (Harvey)**

Current board members continuing: Tony, Harvey, Betsy, Marty, Jenny, Lincoln, Jorge. Jenny's term over, is stepping down. Nominated - Alyson. Approved. Jenny has offered to continue on oversight. Jorge has missed 2 in a row; Board affirmed keeping Jorge; Harvey will speak with him.

Board often makes choices due to lack of management/implementation capacity. We should consider increasing board members to build capacity for liaison/management, or raising money for staff. Minimum is 6, max = 15.

Larry has not responded to information about board; may have own considerations. Alyson is likely to need travel reimbursement and may have some travel complications with her child.

We need younger people on board. Look toward Twin Oaks and Acorn.

Consider a FEC, NASCO nominations/representative spot with financial support.

**Composition of Oversight**

In past, 3 board members, E.S. Treasurer and Human Resources Committee rep.

Current members: Jenny (HR), Laird (ES), Harvey, Bill (Treas.) Mai'kwe (unaffiliated), Marty (board).

Board would like to suggest, pending discussion with Bill by Harvey, that Tony be appointed to oversight either as treasurer depending on Bill's response.

Is there too much separation from Board?

Tony can't make more meetings; too busy.

Cannot fulfill ideal of 3 board members and 3 others given limits on Bill and Ma'ikwe's recent limits. Discussion of Oversight capacities, need for clarity, roles. Harvey will speak with Bill. Will check in on

Report Back: Oversight proposed: Jenny (personnel), Laird, Harvey (board) Tony (board and finance manager - but will not come to all interim mtgs), Marty (board), Ma'ikwe (unaffiliated). Bill to be Oversight emeritus and remain on email list and participate as can.

Concern noted: encourage full board to cultivate future board members and consider allowing former board members or staff to serve on oversight.

**LUNCH**

**Categories for Listings**

Collaboration with Sister Organizations

## Closed Sessions (board and staff only)

### Committees

#### I. Reports from Board on Closed Sessions:

- 1) Kozeney award – Board reviewed candidates nominated by Awards Nomination Committee, decided on Caroline Estes for 2013 award, will explore possibility of presenting it to her at 2012 Art of Community.
- 2) Jenny has elected to step down from Board (term expires at this meeting). Board nominated Alyson to become Board member; Alyson accepted. Jorge will be retained on the Board, although he has missed two consecutive meetings.
- 3) Oversight Committee composition: Marty and Harvey as Board members, Tony as Financial Manager (also Board), Jenny as Personnel, Laird as Executive Secretary, Ma'ikwe (this new configuration replaces Bill with Tony).

#### II. Collaboration with Sister Organizations:

These are all organizations with a core commitment to community. In some cases, annual events are involved, some not—sometimes we have regular presence, sometimes not. Laird holds this as a significant part of his job—relationships with sister organizations.

- 1) Coho/US. We've had history with them since 2001, and involved in annual events since 2008. Susan Frank will join Laird to run bookstore at this year's Oakland event in June. We have multiple contacts with them. Laird works with a number of cohousing groups. Rebecca Lane is Director.
- 2) FEC (Federation of Egalitarian Communities). Some of early FIC work grew out of FEC, and they're our biggest donor. Now we participate significantly in program and bookstore at annual Twin Oaks conference. They also contribute to benefit auctions. Laird and Tony both live in FEC communities. Paul Blondel (treasurer) lives at Acorn and may be primary contact. Laird also filters PEACH traffic to FEC people.
- 3) CSA and ICSA (Communal Studies Association and International Communal Studies Association). Harvey and Deborah go almost every year to CSA conferences; Chris and Laird have gone a few times. Lanny Holde (sp?) is office manager. Tim Miller is regular resource. Cathy Fernandez is Executive Director. We've asked them for help with archiving materials from contemporary communities—but that conversation has never borne fruit. (There are political turf wars involving Center for Communal Studies at University of Southern Indiana and other places that archive...CCS has helped more with FIC archiving outreach efforts. (?)) There are good reasons to be connected both ways with CSA. Personal connections to bookstore people at historic intentional community sites have sometimes been fruitful in placing our materials in bookstores. If anyone has personal connections. Oct. 24 conference is in Oneida NY on Women in Community. ICSA has triennial event; next is June 28-30 2013 at Findhorn. Ruth Lambach, Bill Metcalf, Graham Meltzer, others at Findhorn are all contacts.
- 4) CSI (Community Solutions)—used to be Community Service. Faith Morgan...grew out of work of Arthur Morgan. They're trying to give their organization to Antioch in Yellow Springs. (Antioch itself is restarting; not clear

what the outcome will be.) They're currently not active. They have legacy and mailing list. Focus has been on small community (small town and village life) Now also interested in sustainability; Pat Murphy's work, etc. FIC has expressed interest in taking over CSI, if Antioch chooses not to take it on.

- 5) Global Ecovillage Network. Ties have grown stronger through cooperating with them on this summer's Ecovillage Education course at DR—blessed by GEN. ENA is US version—not much activity. Ecovillage Network of Canada (subset of ENA) is most vibrant Canadian ecovillage network. FIC meeting next year could be in conjunction with their meeting. Much more vibrancy in Latin American segment of ENA. Likely that will split into two groups, along language lines. We have some good contacts: Bea Briggs, Giovanni Carlo (sp?) south of border; Lois Arkin, Dan Greenberg, Jeff Clearwater in US; Canadian contact (Russ Purvis). Tony asks if FIC could take on ENA US role (with permission from GEN). We could ask our contacts what they think.
- 6) NICA (Northwest Intentional Communities Association). Biggest vibrancy is in western Washington State. Strongest part has been in cohousing groups. Larry Rider is current head of NICA. Jonathan Betzal is past president and another contact. Larry has expressed interest in more FIC involvement. Raines mentions other regional organizations that FIC could be involved with. Mid-Atlantic Cohousing is one. School of Living is another.
- 7) NASCO (North American Students of Cooperation). We've been regular participant in their institute; Board meeting this year is scheduled just before that. Mostly late teens, early twenties, student coop people. We participate in bookstore there. Ties with Tom Pearson and Lincoln; also Jim Jones (not the famous one).
- 8) Bioregional Congress. Has been in disarray; cancelled event last year, hoping for 2013.
- 9) Transition Towns. We've made contact with some people involved in more centralized organization; Scott McCowan and another woman in Bay Area—hoping for some kind of participation with AoC in fall.

Diggers and Dreamers; Topia Britannica; Eurotopia—Alyson asks if we've talked with them about collaboration on directory. Tony has been in touch with some of them. Alyson mentions Anastasia movement in Russia, with online directory. Tony says our directory has foreign language capabilities.

III. Proposal for Fiscal Sponsorship for Living Earth Farm. Group started by Alexis Ziegler near Charlottesville VA—small income-sharing group focused on responsible energy use, homesteading, self-reliance. We've known these people for a long time. They've asked us to be fiscal sponsor. Already have multiple donations in hand, totaling \$20,000—need a 501c3 to receive donations. FIC has always taken 5 percent as fee. Tony asks if we've been getting reports from our sponsors on what they're doing. Tony says he's never seen any reports—would like to see them. Also has concerns about where this money would be going, if it's funding a residence. Alyson has similar concerns—would like to see how it's being used for education. Wants to see FIC practice due diligence as nonprofit. Also says it's not easy to get 501c3 status; doesn't want to substitute for that process. Chris says Alexis is very service-oriented and he has no doubt that the building

would be used for public service. Further documentation of how building would serve public good could allay fears. Laird says this project is very aligned with our mission. They are trying to model a low-impact sustainable lifestyle with this money. Harvey's summary: some people on Board want to see more documentation about how this project would serve public good. Board needs clarity for how this meets criteria for being fiscal sponsor. Betsy asks who would own building. Harvey asks: How could reservations be resolved? Tony says LEF is forming 501d and 501c3. If project is part of 501c3 activities, then could imagine FIC saying yes. Believes some of LEF activities are tax-exempt, but if we're sponsoring something that becomes part of 501d, then it could be inappropriate. Laird says he has no problem with this. Very few communities have such a core educational commitment. Harvey says we as 501c3 can easily give money to 501c3s, but are not limited to that. If we decide that something LEF is doing within 501d part is aligned with our mission, we could do that. Does this serve a function consistent with our mission? Board members cannot materially benefit. Alyson says she needs to sit on it—would like to see clearer information about how building will be used in 501c3 kind of way.

We're out of time.

Committee Meetings are next.

### **Tuesday • April 24, 2012**

Morning Session - Present: Laird, Marty, Oz, Raines, Jonah, Tony, Jenny, Susan, Chris, Harvey, Dan, Alyson, Betsy (note-taker).

Announcements: Mark from Red Earth, showed his graphic design portfolio while working for Public Media Advocates in SF. He is the designer of FIC's log (with help from Laird's sister.)

Jonah Goldswag asked for feedback on his Fortunity community, during lunch.

Kent Kessenger is coming at 4pm to show his film Idiosyncracy about East Wind. Joe Cole from Pacifica, part of NC facilitation training is visiting.

Facilitator: Marty

**Directory Listing** - Susan reported out useful discussions on directory, with Tony, Oz, Raines. Remaining question: How does the Board wishes to define the category of intentional residential community?

She has questions about specific listings: A Beautiful Life – appears to be a help wanted ad. Susan flags listings on fair housing and talks with those communities. She does not contact people posting because she does not have authorization to do that around the definition of community.

*At a minimum encourage folks to explain the community part of their goals and not just the physical aspects.*

There will be a set of categories for postings to go into in the future (non-res community,

What in our mind is a residential intentional community?

***Lead with People coming together around explicit values.***

Looking for more than a family household.

Recruiting workers per se is not community

Nebraska you're glad there are 3; in California

Could have categories of communities, like cohousing.

Ask comments to use as the community seekers guide, establish criteria.

Tony indicated that this is a community listing in his previous criteria, but poorly written.

*If you are less than a year and or have fewer than 4 people you are always considered a forming community.*

***Use definition from directory (can't prevent folks from leaving), you are non-violent; and other criteria from Cmag.***

Under development are a series of check-boxes for types of listings, including temporary and umbrella groups, non-residential communities.

Is there any question about leadership – if the owner owns, sets rent, and

Board can provide a more explicit list (Own land in common; make decisions democratic way; do things together, eat together, but some combination of that.)

But let's be cautious about excluding anyone.

Develop guidelines to help people create their written listing.

Down the road Susan will have a different questionnaire for forming vs. vision information, so current status information is accurate.

### **Personal Ads -Personal ads will continue in CMAG.**

**Personal Ads by prisoners: --- The Board agrees to have a standard disclaimer for those rare letters from prison. CMAG will note if a letter is from a prison address with a comment that we have not verified the details of the incarceration."**

### **Personnel Committee (Jenny)**

Tony stepping down as Web Manager. **Thank you Tony – It's been an amazing ride and its only going to get better and better. It's a huge tool for our organization.**

The site is a significant part of our work, we wouldn't be anywhere near where we are without the quality of vibrancy of your work as webmaster. I am happy to work with you as someone who cares deeply about communities.

I appreciate all the development work, and we know you wanted to get out for a long time and you had the patience to wait rather than leave. It's been heroic the way you've hung on.

At the Ecovillages Gathering, Michael McIntyre and I drove in and he and you were creating the cohousing section, and... I was suddenly aware that you had coded the whole thing while I was.

I worked with you on behalf of Coho/US and NICA, sharing what's happening and volunteering to help, and a paying client to your private business. It's always been exceptional. Anyone in those organizations have had nothing but praise.

Your generosity in sharing what you've created is amazing to me. Your low drama, steady, seasoned approach appreciated.  
I deeply want to help you, I really value your friendship, your dedication. It helps me. Most people don't understand how a web site works especially with databases; we're really lucky to have this. You've created magic - we really can do almost anything! Thank you, I really appreciate that for all the work on the magazine site you've wanted to step down.

Personnel recommends Susan Sloan, current only directory manager, for consideration to fill the website manager. More of the directory hours and work will go some of the budget allocated to Web manager and Directory will be combined into her position. Personnel will be looking for a online directory manager; and someone else will do the technical aspects of the website. Susan has created an operators manual for managing the director. Intent is to transition online directory manager to someone else. She has family in Colorado and a home in Virginia. Susan didn't get Biz Manager position on Cmag but asked what else she could do.

*Susan will be building on what Tony's built. She is a community seeker and sees the directory from that viewpoint. It is the face of FIC into the world and needs to be attractive, functional and fund. She wants to encourage coordination with the CMAG, Tonya, the Bookshelf. How to give folks a better experience working with the directory, sort factors, here's your vision, here's where you are now. Separate out community where you are/not a residential. I'm a puzzler, problem solver, organizer - that's what you're going to get!*

Personnel maintains connection with staff through phone calls, produces evaluations, and budget recommendations. At this time, Harvey and Jenny are the members.

#### **NEW Policy on Handling Directory Listing Complaints on Communities (Laird report back)**

Laird reviewed detailed notes on his current and process for a proposed policy. [INSERT HERE].

Actions we will take when we have received a complaint related to sex offence, violence, or fraud in a community we list. The purpose is to know when and what kind of due diligence Laird/FIC will take, and what kinds of actions may be taken. It does not require us to take a given action.

*Board agreed in principle to this policy. Wording may be further refined.*

Suggestions on further refinements may be addressed at future agenda.  
Laird read an email from Alexis. \$80,000 total for building; \$20,000 asking to go through FIC's tax-exempt.

Responses -

Alyson - most people can't get tax deductible grants, they would have to get loans or non-tax deductible gifts. Would stand aside if others choose to support this.

Nothing heard from Alexis changes things. Where would we draw the line. I fear that a broad policy of fiscal sponsorship helping to fund any community endeavor in general commitment to outreach and education would basically benefit individuals.

We could a lawyer to help us figure that out. DR struggles with same question. Are we a good demo project to fund people's private needs with tax deductible gifts.

Betsy - this isn't a yes or no thing, it's how to make it work. I would like him to talk with Liz Walker or Lois Arkin to find out how he will set up legal and financial structures. We are being good sponsors if we can ask him to think ahead on these things. Some communities have gotten grants for common house if it is used for more then a private residential use.

Laird - are we willing to be a fiscal sponsor for \$20,000 portion of the building?

Jonah - the house could be an FIC promotion device, have a room that is devoted to the educational purposes. Bank would not lend for a house.

Laird can ask him to identify how much of the house can legitimately be educational and outreach purposes.

Tony - DR 5% to 95% eventually 37% percent. We are here to change the world - true at Living Energy Farm and at DR. 2 rooms for guests, visitors, interns, meeting spaces available workshops and this many a year. Ask him be clearer.

Laird asked to pursue the questions and bring this up at the next Oversight Call.

Marty -ok with it.

Chris - percentage of times used class and prep time.

Tony - Ask him to document functions and time.

Betsy - comfortable with moving ahead if he can report on his consults with lawyer, IRS, someone who has founded a similar place.

## **CLOSING**

### **EVALUATION - harvey**

- + repeated contact with home community members
- + excellent hosting applause for Becky
- + food compatibility
- + location and facilities
  - short pre-committee time
- + finding a website administer
- + barraging Tony with praise
  - use paper/visuals more;
- + drop in event that
- + using minutes/notes to capture proposals
  - more formal about evening activities to give host more time with us
  - more agreement/ clarityabout task

- + clarity new board member
- better communication about process with new board member
- + thanks to minute-takers, Betsy, Marty, Chris
- brainstormed on strategy, reflected back on video - didn't get back to discussing youth
- + hugely informative and relationship building
- + helpful to have staff in circle; helps recharge staff, do more often
- + unraveled some longstanding web related and sister org/CohoUS
- do a reunion every year!!!!
- + clear fast work by Laird to bring more info to further discussions
  - thought I'd meet new people at the reunion on Friday; dwindled #s.
- + FIC members willingness to meet seekers at Future of Community event; generosity and help Saturday.
- + liked unstructured music and sharing Sunday night

### **CLOSING - Jenny**

Alyson read the hidden GroupWorks card. Presence - bring your whole being to this moment, from this ground of place, love and service flows.

One bead chosen by Betsy & Raines - clear with bubbles surround core, smallish to represent Future of Community -chaos of Brownian motion surrounding core of order and clear vision.

Bead for host - chosen by Becky Laskody of Arcadia Cohousing - turquoise thread on a barrel shaped spindle, very light, representing textiles history of the piedmont region of North Carolina, and the color of the sky and sea. Much thanks to host personally and to community.

Singing and hand holding ensued. Applause. End.