

**FIC Organizational meeting notes  
November 4-6, 2016  
La Cite Ecologique  
Quebec, Canada**

<b>Budget review</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>GENNA Update</b>	<b>4</b>
<b>GEN Partnership Proposal</b>	<b>6</b>
<b>Guidelines to Staff for when to bring contracts and other stuff to Board</b>	<b>9</b>
<b>Conflict of Interest</b>	<b>10</b>
<b>CASH FLOW CRISIS DISCUSSION</b>	<b>11</b>
<b>BOARD JOB DESCRIPTION</b>	<b>15</b>
<b>REGIONAL NETWORKING</b>	<b>16</b>
<b>Board role in Financial Oversight</b>	<b>18</b>
<b>Board Role in Development</b>	<b>21</b>
<b>Board Organizing Session</b>	<b>23</b>
<b>Board &amp; Staff Responsibilities</b>	<b>26</b>
<b>STRATEGIC PLANNING</b>	<b>28</b>
<b>BUDGET APPROVAL</b>	<b>31</b>
<b>Community land Trust Conf report</b>	<b>33</b>
<b>NEXT Org MEETINGS</b>	<b>33</b>
<b>EVALUATIONS</b>	<b>34</b>
<b>Later Committee</b>	<b>35</b>
<b>Task List</b>	<b>35</b>

## Budget review

(Sky and Christopher presenting)

We had forecasted \$1,000 gain and are headed instead for a \$19K loss.

\$3-4K is due to how we are doing our accounting... delay in when \$ shows up.

We sold about \$4K less through Bookstore, mostly due to not doing as many promos through newsletters. Also deprioritized AdSense on site, \$1,300 less there. Nicer user experience but losing money. Classifieds ads system online is more buggy. Located other software, but meanwhile we've lost \$. Cost about \$3K more for refining online listing form than anticipated. \$2,500 in room and board expenses that we did not budget for from meetings. \$1K less in unrestricted donations plus not doing auctions. Had \$1K budgeted for website income, but did not do the special fundraiser we thought we'd do.

Unexpected staff expenses: Christopher has tried to reduce workload, but wasn't able to do as much of that as he expected. Unexpected \$1K to the old Development director that we didn't realize we'd paid.

Also some bright spots where we overperformed.

End result \$15-16K real loss, then with the accounting it looks more like \$19K. Most of this is fixable, and even with estimating income more modestly, we are budgeting for only a \$500 loss for 2017 right now. Biggest question mark is Development. Without knowing what our plan is or who is going to carry it out, there's a big Q. We bumped up unrestricted donations from \$5K to \$12K... big question for us is how we are going to pull that off. Bookstore doing well and Cmag doing a bit better. Seems like people aren't subscribing through the mail-- our mailer is really old. Budget was reorganized a bit.

Sky: highlighting that unrestricted donations is much higher than usual. That's reflective of what we really need to be bringing in-- and it even needs to be higher. Biz as usual is not tenable. We really need a Development Director. We really need to be moving the directory and website forward and we just don't have the staff to be able to move it forward. We need MORE funds to keep up than this 2017 budget reflects. I'd put in an additional \$10 for Development, additional \$6K each for Website and Directory. Sky doesn't even really think about things the staff could be doing because he knows the staff can't do it in their hours. So we need another \$22K, and that really needs to come from Development.

Christopher: given that we've already added \$7-8K to the Development Budget, really we need to be bringing in about \$30K more in Development.

Betsy: is there a way to see any of that expenditure to increase our income?

C: yes, in terms of functionality of our website, that would make a difference. Better web engagement opens the door for more monetizing. This budget does not reflect loans being repaid.

Sky: we don't have a cash loan payment, and that is where those loans will show up. It's in the balance sheet, but does not show up in the budget. There are no payments required. \$13,800 due in full next summer. We also owe \$16,900 in accounts payable and credit cards are \$8,500 for a total of . We are making min CC payments, and some of the interest is starting to accumulate. And... we don't have the kind of real time interest that we need.

Summary: we have big debts and not enough income.

Nick: Are any of the loans accumulating interest? 0% interest loans?

Sky: We have one, but were unable to transfer the balance on the old card because it is in a different name.

Maikwe: If we make our \$40K goal, where will we be?

Sky: Not sure. Part of why going to MO is to get more financial info and tools in place. It would be on top of reg income coming in. We can catch up with staff and CC debt, and still have a chunk left to hire DD, make payments on some other debt, or something else.

Christopher: someone wants to rent a desk space in Allium, which would be \$100/month.

Nick: So are Cmag and Bookstore cash positive?

Christopher: yes, but only if we are not counting a chunk of the admin expenses. This was part of why I wanted to reorganize the budget. I've realized that Allium is really a bookstore, Cmag expense-- they are still in the positive when they cover Allium. The area of the website we used to call website, we now are calling Directory, because 93-95% of our traffic is to the Directory. Also has the print Directory lumped in there. The rest of the traffic is scattered among Bookstore, wiki, classified, etc. 70K sessions per month from about 50K unique visits, so there's still a lot of traffic.

Raines: That's a big number to help with development. How did the print Directory launch go?

Cpher: we've sold 350, about 150 from Kickstarter.

Raines: my sense is that most people don't know there is a print version.

We have it as the main ad on the Directory, but need new graphics, etc to be more effective.

Sky: we have sent out communications, but it is clear that we are not effectively reaching communities. Less than 100 communities are members out of the 1,200 that are listed. We need to figure out how to reach them.

Cpher: maybe it needs a print mailing.

Linda: looking at the income side, where's the income that meets your IRS standard?

It's on the Development tab.

Betsy: Kickstarter was donations?

Sky: The amount that was covering the perk was not tax exempt, but the rest was. We count all of it as a donation.

## GENNA Update

Cynthia: We covered a lot of ground. Started with generating creative ideas about what GENNA could be. FIC's financial status and budget, and whether we wanted FIC to continue to be our Fiscal Sponsor. Concern raised about if the FIC is facing bankruptcy, how does that affect the funds that we are holding. There was a request to get some legal advice about how that works, which we are pursuing. GEN has recently put out a document re: the regional roles and responsibilities. We made a list of those, and then looked at how we are meeting them now (Sky doing most of the required stuff, and Linda also doing a chunk of work). Decided to pursue two jobs-- a Regional Coordinator within the region focused, and the International Coordinator focused on the work directly with GEN International.

Are we our own organization, or a collaborative of organizations. We are leaning more toward being a collaboration. We added Daniel in as an at-large member. We may pursue other partnerships.

We looked at the Merger Proposal, and decided to not pursue that further, but did re-up the Operating Agreement, with some changes.

Did not change the draft Mission Statement we did in Lost Valley. Put the budget for 2016 on hold until after we do the jobs on Saturday's breakout session. Budget 2017 and projects for 2017 will soon be agenda items. As people populate these two roles, we expect more things to emerge.

Sky: speaking as ED and one of the FIC reps: recognized that with Next GENNA and GEN-US, there is a little more of a linear relationship to GEN, but for FIC, it is a little more of a parallel. Ecovillages aren't the center of the universe for us. We have other partners who will not be

interested in joining GENNA (i.e. CohoUS and NASCO) we have multiple fields of partnership and collaboration. Everyone recognizes the risk of duplication of efforts, as well as doing new stuff when the orgs don't have their needs getting met. Want to see the new jobs supporting the current orgs work rather than pursuing a bunch of new stuff. Also feel that I should not be one of the reps-- I'm too much in the middle of FIC and it feels like I'm being pulled too much in too many directions.

Marty: did you talk re: collaborative efforts and projects?

Sky: we ID'ed a lot of stuff we are doing, but did not get to that conversation.

Nick: for me there's been a muddling of people who are wearing hats for orgs needing to put on another hat that isn't very defined. Moving from heads of orgs to people from orgs bringing info but are movement focused.

Sky: one possibility to to decrease the number of org reps to more at large so that it is more about the movement than the orgs.

Betsy: 4 members of the FIC Board/staff are on the Council and they were having to put a lot of energy into bringing this into existence. It's great that GEN is supporting us with travel budgets. One concern is that other FIC board members don't have that. Maybe needing to shrink to a coordinating council. Concerned that FIC needs to raise funds and now the council also has a set of tasks in the JD proposed. Think about ways to buffer our Board from being involved with GENNA council so much. How do we make sure we are not poaching energy.

Sky: share some of this concern. We are trying to get over a hump with GENNA to where things are more automated and set up. Ma'ikwe noted the sense of going around in circles, and if that continues it WILL be a problem.

Ma'ikwe: I've also questioned whether I should be a rep to this council. Maybe someone less active in FIC could step in.

Nick: There has been some frustration with FIC folks not feeling like they can keep up moving the ball that is GEN. Good to have someone with familiarity with GEN, but that might be shifting with the new staff positions coming up. FIC might be able to focus on just being an FIC voice.

Sky: I think there is also a piece around what is within the authority of the reps to do versus bringing things back to the FIC Board. Want to make sure that people on the Board feel that we are representing the org adequately. Want to make some space for that now.

Betsy: I would love to see a financial report that is more formally done from GENNA. Partly to understand our fiscal sponsor role, which is more complex and integrated with this one. This way we can track how many resources are going to GENNA.

Sky: we will have to submit one to GEN and we will share this. We also have shared the budget. There is also the line item in our budget for fiscal sponsorships.

Betsy: would like our rep or biz manager to share a basic report.

Sky: all the orgs would benefit from this.

Cassandra: just want to offer that I'm one of the newest Board members and don't really have ties yet. Doing a lot of listening and trying to understand the system that I'm getting involved with. Also taking in a lot of info for the crisis/opportunity... speaking right now to say that if any of you want to have a conversation with me that is deeply educational and also take advantage of the freshness of my perspective and that as a systems thinker I can offer reflections. Offering both listening and perspective.

## GEN Partnership Proposal

Sky: A lot of this is stuff we already have broad understanding of and general agreement on. [https://docs.google.com/document/d/1Z22\\_WBfVuvLDKNk5QYct7YiJQhuYh2kj4HdfpO9rF14/edit?ts=581cad19](https://docs.google.com/document/d/1Z22_WBfVuvLDKNk5QYct7YiJQhuYh2kj4HdfpO9rF14/edit?ts=581cad19)

GEN and FIC have a lot of overlap in our interests. How can we amplify each orgs unique strengths and resources. Directory, marketing and distribution. Wrote so that it can be used as a contract. GEN selling FIC stuff on its store. FIC is going to continue to sell GEN stuff. It might be cheaper for us to print some things via our printer instead of sending stuff from Europe.

Marketing: formalizing schedule for social media-- muuta sharing of content, about once a quarter. Both orgs retain rights to veto content. Ie. we might not always share each other's fundraising, if it will be competing. Exchange a newsletter twice a year. We have about the same folks on social media likes, FIC's email list is a bit bigger. Both recently cleaned up.

Partner logos, displayed on each other's websites, will feature each other prominently.

FIC will provide GEN with about \$2,500/year.

Directory: we've already agreed to combine directories as benefits to users, the two biggest in the world. Also for research data value. Part of the agreement is mapping GEN's data onto FIC's-- there were only some kinds of details that needed to get adjusted or added. Collaborate on making the form the best possible-- start with FIC's and then work together over time to improve it. Both can adjust it, but will confer on it because the more similar the better for data reasons. Directory enhancement... work together to continuously improve it. Matchmaking.

Sustainability assessment tools-- we might add something-- it can be a sustainability assessment that is in addition or it could be integrated right in.

Fundraising for Directory by either org, will consider each other as partners in that fundraising. There is money currently coming in via GEN for this.

FIC has a lot of skills and work flows around keeping the data good and quality control. Roshana has been really active with this, interacting with communities to make sure we have the best data possible. FIC can provide this service to GEN. It would cost about \$3K from GEN annually for us to provide this service. Multi-site license for the same software is less for both parties, plus a product import function. GEN would pay for the plug-ins for both groups, saving us money.

Pavan's great and he isn't always available, and skills not always as strong in design. The GEN guy has great user interface design: elegant, simple and modern.

FIC will provide about 2,200 pounds  
FIC will provide about 2,000 pounds in ads

A lot of this has been agreed to by GEN, but this is the first time the whole package is coming together.

Daniel: Who in GEN has been negotiating from GEN's side?

Cpher: Kosha, Meina and James have been the main people, Anna re: data.

Daniel: Does GEN have a direct regional interface? Or should it come through GENNA?

Cpher has been working directly with GEN and not talking to the region. There's protocol on GEN's side to keep the regions in the loop.

Raines: there are also other partners we've been sharing data with.

Laird: this is a really good direction and I'm pleased with what you've done. Key piece is continued access to someone with design skills on GEN's side.. Will that continue?

Cpher: Probably. They have the budget for it.

Laird: We have a certain way and frequency we interact with listings.

Cpher: It is detailed in here. Only contact listings that originated on your site. Could be a more nuanced way to handle this.

Laird: delicacy on feedback. Who is handling that and how?

Cpher: we'd have one directory manager and they would be handling all of that.

Sky: actually it is the ED.

Laird: just make sure it is covered. Sounds like it is.

Betsy: in calculating our costs for labor? Are we calculating overhead?

Cpher: yes. It's about \$18USD, and we pay Roshana about \$15.

Sky: imbalance in the exchange monetarily...?

Cpher: GEN is paying out more cash, so it seems like it balances out in that.

Nick: what does the data sharing look like?

Cpher: checkbox that people have to check for that. The box has "etc". Don't think we will have to re-do it. The GEN listing will have to go back through the form.

Maikwe: are we not making the mistake of underestimating costs of this new big initiative?

Cpher: they have a smaller number of listings? There would be 1K pounds coming to help with that. Won't take 12 hours/month. We should possibly put more money into cleaning up the listings.

Ma'ikwe: want us to be really conservative about budgeting this.

Cynthia: in english?

Cpher: most will be, but not all. We will need more collaboration with the regions for that part. Our translator might need to be looked at.

Marty: current listings need a lot of help.

Betsy: re-negotiation option around the budget if we discover a lot more time is needed.

Cpher: good idea

Betsy: someone from the new GENNA council might volunteer some time to help with this?

Sky: we do get people wanting to volunteer.

Raines: brings up the issue that came up with CohoUS partnership: what's the obligation to list communities that don't want to be listed or not. CohoUS lists groups that don't voluntarily list.



Laird: FIC captures everything we can, but only publishes listings we have permission to list.

Cpher: mostly groups want to be listed.

Leonie: all invited to dine at Michael's table for dinner.

## Guidelines to Staff for when to bring contracts and other stuff to Board

Sky reviewed guidelines. Now below in the form that is being curated in the discussion:

ML: Staff doesn't know the history, do we want to give them a hoop to jump through? Or just make it ok to make mistakes? Notes from Dancing Rabbit: expenses don't go up or down by more than 5%, net income doesn't go down, changes not a departure from board guidance, no legal issues, contract less than \$5K and doesn't require a board signature, partnership already established and going fine., doesn't represent change in org structure - new position. Maybe new partnerships.

Fiscal sponsorships brought to board? What's the history? Laird says we've done close to 20, ML says she's seen about 6. Partnership is different from fiscal sponsorships. Marty: history of board being concerned about values alignment and IRS problems and risking our exempt status.

Laird: We were a fiscal sponsor for a project that involved holding land for a particular project. So we had legal concerns. ML: That's "plowing new ground"

HB: is this a good start? Lee: lets go with it and review. ML: how often does it come up? CK: rarely, and I check in with Sky. SKY: would then bring to oversight and in the absence of issues, would move forward. Other eyes are good to confirm. ML: how does that feel to those not on oversight. SKY: if we have our email protocol in place, then it would be an FYI to board.

Nick: surprised that GEN contract not a trigger as it involves new staff use of time Sky and CK: clarified that it didn't raise any new policy issues. Decisions had already been made. Nick is new, and that's why he didn't know. NJ: staff time is money Sky: didn't change staff time by more than 5%. If staff had to give something up in order to do it, then it would make it a bigger change and warrant discussion/approval.

HB; We had a staff mistake at Mount Madonna that cost us \$18K. The person who signed off on it didn't believe that Mount Madonna would enforce a penalty clause, which unfortunately they did. That person left the organization.

Guidelines for Staff in whether or not to bring something to Oversight:

- Is it within our mission?
- Is it within existing policy, or does it introduce new policy questions?
- Are there legal issues?
- Does it affect the organizational structure?
- Is there history, background, or relationships involved staff might not be aware of?
- Does it establish a substantial new relationship with an organization or individual?
- Does it significantly alter or compromise the budget or does it involve a significant percentage of the budget? Not change by >5%, not net decrease in income, contracts >\$5K
- Does it alter or compromise the strategic plan (particularly, in use of staff time)?
- Is it for an extraordinary duration?

## Conflict of Interest

Lee presenting document (after multiple board revisions). Many in FIC wear multiple hats, so this is a way to maintain responsibility, laws and regulations, standards of conduct, and public expectations. Includes conflict of interest and conflict of loyalty.

Ma'ikwe said we should add that staff can also bring up potential conflicts.

Betsy asked if we can add in a statement that people can be recused from discussions (to leave the room) if necessary to have a frank discussion about the concerns with the board.

Christopher asked who can staff or board contact to voice potential conflicts?

Agreement to add Executive Team (Editor, Business Manager, Executive Director, and Development Director) as people who should also sign onto this agreement.

Add (paraphrase as needed) from May 2016 Org Mtg notes:

Agreed - "any perceived conflict of interest should be dealt with directly with the person in question without action taken to mitigate any perceived conflict of interest without their knowledge."

Add (paraphrase as needed) from Org Decision-Making and Communication Structure doc:

"Ministry is available to anyone in the organization who is having an interpersonal issue with another person in the organization. People are encouraged to be proactive and address interpersonal issues with others directly, however, they should not hesitate to engage Ministry if they do not feel comfortable or able to do so, and engaging Ministry would help diffuse the issue before it impacts the functioning of the organization or the well being of its personnel."

Limit board payment to be only used if necessary (can't source it elsewhere), the amount is deemed reasonable and not excessive, the person paid cannot make the decision about the amount, it is considered necessary. Also most of the board cannot be receiving remuneration.

Betsy: thinks it's a legal definition that the majority of the board cannot be paid.

Replace the word 'you' with 'the board' or 'the board and executive team' when necessary.

This is about transparency, not about limiting creative ideas and new projects.

In the case of GENNA, if FIC board or staff are being reimbursed for travel, is this a conflict? No, it's a separate entity.

What about the paid positions within GENNA? Does not need too much scrutiny, because it is a separately funded organization. GENNA is also unique, with a more robust relationship, so there is some additional scrutiny needed. Board has to disclose it if it is paid.

Comes down to being able to say you can function for FIC without compromise.

990 includes details that you should disclose these things. We have to make sure that Kim knows about these details/instructions so that forms are filed correctly.

Summary: if you're being paid by a sister organization, you have to disclose that.

Should we create a space or protocol around disclosing these things?

We could put it in a form that shows one column of potential conflicts, and one of potential remedies?

As we go through the agenda each meeting (or before each meeting) we have an expectation that we'll bring potential conflict of interests up. At the beginning of every agenda item the facilitator asks, "are there any potential conflict of interests?" Previous concerns will be mentioned again then, and any more discussed. We may adjust this over time.

## CASH FLOW CRISIS DISCUSSION

Sky: We need all hands on deck. Everyone needs to help raise \$40K by the end of the year. We need that \$ beyond the \$ we already expect to make. There is a portal for donations to happen, but that is not the only way we are going to do this. The \$40 addresses our short term needs in addition to a bit more to help us jump start development efforts. Basic website

infrastructure is in place for this through the call to action button. We have a cool widget that shows as you make contributions.

There have been a number of communications that have gone out via email to members, communities. Lots of back and forth with McCune to create the donor spreadsheet. So everyone can interact with that and sign up to connect with donors. E-news went out on Oct 15th. Sky has also reached out to allied organizations to amplify social media and help get word out - got a bunch of positive responses and this support will continue as we ramp up.

End of online fundraiser is January 1st, so there is some urgency.

There is some guesswork regarding

\$1,000-\$1,200 has been raised so far

\$1000 donor was found through Ma'ikwe

Harvey has several yes's but unknown amounts.

So about \$2,500 so far.

Would have been nice for a miraculous outpouring, but actually is great considering how much effort has been put into it.

There is the idea for an online auction, but Sky may not have bandwidth. Does someone have the bandwidth to solicit and maybe work with ebay non-profit auction software.

What is the strategy around lesser donors? Do we have an evening and do some phone banking?

Sky's email to listed communities was largely ignored. We haven't been successful at getting across to communities what we do. It is hard to get them to wake up.

Beth Raps (who we have a barter arrangement with) has increased her available time to 30 hours - wanting to support this effort. She would do some training with us on how to ask for money. She would do some development work to support us in working together.

Every board member needs to step up.

Sky can't just hear about people's great ideas that he should do, he needs us to share good ideas of what we are willing to do.

Ma'ikwe: 11 people are marked on the spreadsheet in her name. She is contacting them. She is also doing targeted fundraising for the climate issue - some of which will go into the cmag issue. And is part of a fundraising event in a couple weeks at a community. 6 hours doing grant research recently. Will also share on social media and then will also poke people personally.

Do we have a home for grant related information? Beth can coach around grant writing and Sky will also help create a hub of info for this.

Cynthia: Have shared the campaign through facebook. More can be done there, but maybe not so effective as her networks are also fundraising. Is willing to contact donors on list, but would like training from Beth. One on one training would be great. Sky will help set up. Did a bunch of grant research for NextGEN, can look through that for relevancy. Has some training and a

good eye for appropriate text when doing an ask, happy to help there. Regarding bookstore sales - could help with certain products. Is there a way that we could work with Numundo, given their strength in outreach? Help with managing volunteers. Sky notes how much work is involved in getting a volunteer program up and running. C asks about crowdfunding? M and S reply that our climate based one is coming up in February.

Nick: Can talk with someone for donation. Interested in an affiliate link - Ctopher explains that affiliate link can set up motivation for others to sell our books and get financial motivation. N asks if there is a blog article. Will send that out through his networks. 5M people!! Would be willing to send out some batch emails and stay on top of the personal relationship.

Marty: Thinking about people in his sphere who aren't on the list who he is going to ask. Would be interested in talking to Beth. Nick too.

Cassandra: Has asked the wealthiest person she knows, and she isn't interested right now, but I'll ask again! Also has written another potential donor. Would like to find someone who can partner with us, interested in seeing their money make a significant change, \$50k+ gift. Also willing to personally communicate with a bunch of people, to work on an FIC-provided list. Haven't shared the link on social media. With holidays, wants to highlight some of her favorite things (like Food Forest cards for permies). Shopping suggestions for friends, through FIC and consider making a donation to our fundraising campaign. Personal touch.

Lee: went through the list and doesn't recognize many names except Maya from here. Does it make sense to ask them for \$. Is will to make phone calls, but needs training. Is willing to also do Cassandra's idea of helping people buy things. His rich friends are stingy. He can help with some background research, but unfortunately Canadian contacts aren't too jazzed to give to US non-profit. Personal phone calls as well.

Sky - "we acknowledge that there are lots of things to give your money to. We want you to be giving and also to know that we are part of that social movement." Got a super positive response from the person when he acknowledged this.

Harvey: When Cass and others set up a shopping list, share with the rest of the board. Call up your friends, have a great chat and have them write a check to the FIC. Make our needs known to those who support us. Let them know that any support they give us is helpful now. Was asked if a donor should give \$100 or buy 4 CMAG gift subscriptions. Intrigued by online auction, but no idea if he has time.

Betsy: Would love to meet with Beth. Looking at the issue of tithing. Surfaced questions about joining/member/subscribe? What to focus on? Would like to offer bullet points about why be excited about FIC. "100 years ago" history gives bullet points. Can contribute to the auction. Berkeley library is a member of the foundation center database - and is willing to do some research on family and regional foundations. Would like to help with kickstarter - to talk about

premiums, census of directory, etc. what are projects that people would be particularly interested in?

Auction question: soliciting auction items... would be helpful if we all could do this.

Items solicited and displayed through pictures and descriptions online

Decide online bidding system

Publicize the auction - when does it open, when doesn't it end?

Oversee verification of payments

And mailing out of items

Betsy: Soliciting of gifts is aligned with kickstarter.

Ma'ikwe: Time the ask relative to the election. Use the election to our advantage:

"Disappointed? We've been making a real difference on the things you care about for 30 years..."

Also did a graphic of funnels showing how our \$10 friends turn into bigger money over time. So get organizational loyalty built in over time. Think long term. Get a yes to \$5 and be stoked.

Marty brings up concern about web presence. Will help with that.

Sky: willing to coordinate but needs support. Cynthia said maybe connected to bringing in volunteers?

Betsy: maybe with the 30year anniversary gathering. Maybe we do an in person auction then? May event?

Ma'ikwe: Auction is fun, big, sexy, maybe better for us to build our not so sexy but productive skills.

Sky: our blog is open. If you want to write something personal, then that would be great. Maybe each of us do that. Why am I putting my time and energy into this? That content is super valuable.

Cynthia: regarding communities that aren't members. Targeted paper mailing? Laird, take on a personal connection with communities - go there and make a pitch.

Laird: to Betsy, pump out a cool factoid a day. Reminding them of historical facts that help show our value. Bigger idea, put together a calendar that educated us on days of the year.

Harvey: he called Douglas Stevenson at the Farm - he's the moderator for a couple farm lists, and he was going to put it out on their mailing list.

Cassandra: can we create a list that shows the communities we are contacting for what.

Ma'ikwe: easy to make a google doc that we alpha sort. Laird: Put the name of the person you contacted - or who to contact in that list.

Sky to follow up with Beth and set up conference calls for training board members.  
Development team break out to keep this going?

Harvey: if he could get a list of contact people from the communities we have had our board meetings at, he would call.

## BOARD JOB DESCRIPTION

Sky: What does the FIC really need from its board especially at this point in the organization's evolution? Context question: Sky put forth a draft job description and Ma'ikwe worked on it - part of a cultural shift in the organization in which we ask board members to be more involved than in the past.

Refer to document: proposed changes:

Betsy: concern about keeping up with emails. Would like our committee work to count toward the goals of the 5 or 10 hours.

Ma'ikwe: We've been thinking of this and also we are in crisis mode for next 6 months, it's going to be more than normal. If we can get enough funds to hire a development director, then the load could go down.

Betsy: maybe this isn't well seasoned and ready to expect/send to new board members.

Sky: Over the last 6 months, the email load to board has lessened/improved. There is still a significant amount of stuff and Sky is not getting responsiveness in the time that he needs it. We do need a better protocol when he does need response. The other thing we are spotty on is doing our homework. Reading materials and being prepared. Expectation that people will read docs ahead of time. Interested in board members being on at least one committee and not just attending meetings, but also taking on tasks.

Marty: this needs to be added to the JD doc. (part about reading preparatory and being prepared for meetings)

Sky: Also, keep current on the financial health of the organization.

Maikwe: we need easier to digest materials from staff. "The Board Managing its own Affairs" the more we do, the more that frees up Sky. For example: I would like there to be someone on

the board that reminds/sets up monthly conference calls - and also facilitates. Board takes on the logistics of the board meetings. It was on Sky to keep the ball rolling for the letter to ENC, conflict resolution. Wants the board to be more active in managing its own affairs!!

Ctopher: protocol where staff provides reports or quickbooks online where the reports are generated monthly. Email protocol code words need to be used to alert board members to the nature of emails.

Lee: This is good, I am concerned with the number of hours. There is a limit. What are the hours per month? For the other bullet points.

Marty: What do you think would be a reasonable request? Lee: expectation 10 hours/month.

Ma'ikwe: This is already an org with a heavy board meeting responsibility and yes, we are asking for more as we professionalize the process for the next year.

Marty: it's also putting limits on things. Helping people define and judge

Laird: In the past, we haven't found it easy to find people to be on the board. Now we are making it harder. Do we have a robust committee structure? Are we having dynamic people serving on committees? Marty: this is also retroactive - so we have to figure out how to relate with that.

Ma'ikwe: since we are changing board expectations, it is fine to bow out. We could find other ways to be involved so being on board isn't the only way to be vital

Cassandra: board members write blog posts - this is a big time for us organizationally so our outer world is mirrored by our internal world.

Cynthia: How accessible is support going to be? Do we need board development

Betsy: When will we discuss this again? Sunday morning.

Sky initiated this because his job is untenable.

## REGIONAL NETWORKING

We initiated this because we wanted to have an intermediary that was between your local community scene and the FIC. It would also be a place that we could nurture leadership that would trend toward the board. What other shifts could we have that would give people an active role to play that are already part of the board or board members of the past.



Regional events can be low key. This is a lower carbon way of being together in person. More of human scale. If we had several viable regions, then they could even be there to host us. Not yet a polished presentation, but getting this started. Like GENNA has a regional coordinator, what if we had regional coordinators? Could be like that. Helped M be a leader in her area and helped grow her competency toward greater leadership. Are others excited about this?

Cassandra loves the idea and will help. Also would be helpful for ????

Lee there is a sense of people wanting things closer to themselves, and close is more meaningful. How do you generate energy to make the network work?

Cynthia is excited about this. Doing something in the NE. Numundo is doing bioregional work. New Seed Gatherings. Idea of connecting centers in regions. Possibilities for collaboration.

Nick: the answer is to collaborate and cross pollinate on activities regionally. Curious about what had happened in the past and what we can learn about why that didn't work? M- because we didn't have a way to work with the fact that regions needed different things. Needs between regions were incompatible. Regional autonomy. How do we be peer support? Things have changed a lot in the past decade, the internet is giving us more access to partners and allies. We were trying to force something that was hard to get off the ground.

Raines: it was hard as he was losing fellow committee members and trying for one size fits all. In the directory search, if "not found" then invite people to create that listing. How do we nurture people on the ground.

Sky: this needs to come from the bottom up. We can't just come from FIC. Go for dry tinder and fan the flame. But if it's just not coming together, then we don't need to force anything. We are probably all doing this on some level, right? What is the need or purpose to benefit the FIC. Make sure we are doing something on the ground that is relevant to the people. Fantasy of office in every region!!

Laird: been doing this for 37 years and there are things that don't last. It's hard to maintain them. It has to come from the regions. It's great to support the passion of our board, but we also need a lot done and don't want to spread ourselves too thin. He's jaded, as there isn't a model of generating leadership, so it is dependent on the personalities of the people. Who burn out or die or get sucked up to the national level.

Betsy: It is about the individuals. So without a new committee and bunch of staff, just set it up online so people can connect with us. Board meetings could allow more time for showcasing or sharing what is happening in the region we are meeting in. We already have resources that we aren't using. Building partnerships with GENNA - how can we collaborate?

Ctopher: If people want to become regional organizers. Here's what it takes - have a job description- not paid but like an internship. Maybe we pay for a meetup group. Maybe GENNA could also.

Harvey: slightly different emphasis on what Laird said. The regional networks are there. They are unpredictable. They can do a lot of good and you never know what you are going to get out of them. Promote them doing it for themselves...

## Board role in Financial Oversight

This is very important because staff needs attention by the Board to this and the connection between board and staff

- We need to clarify what is job of financial oversight
- What does the Board do to learn about the topic?

The Board needs to state what information they need to do their financial oversight role.

The staff need to provide clear monthly information (reports) and there should be notes for the items that are outliers and what happened.

There are different perspectives as the board comes from different places. One of the things in play is we don't screen for financial literacy so we need training on this; for example, how to read the statements. Need a familiarization with it – what are the lever points

We need to know what staff needs from the Board.

The culture of the board has been an issue in the past as the financial reports were produced but often not given enough attention or were not produced in the best format but the culture was not conducive to examining these details. Kimi did reports - Looked at the financial reports – 7 spread sheets but people weren't looking at them.

Board needs to define what we want to see in a financial report. Questions from staff are important and we need a plan as to how do we define so we know that the budget lines aren't working.

There was a key thing Tony started doing but is not being done now.

A report needs to show if we are on target or not and a report from staff about why we are on target or not. That is, we need to have staff highlight the numbers that are most significant. We should have a link to the narrative of our goals.

Some Board members were surprised that the new Board members and ED were not aware of the financial situation as it has been happening for a number of years.

Points out that Board orientation is required and the board ought to do this – hold the responsibility for training and for explaining the financial situation.

There were questions with the cash flow statement and requests for how to make the financial statements simpler.

We need to trust staff but find a balance; not so much trust that the Board loses control of what is occurring.

We need a Treasurer or finance committee. Kim is the Treasurer but Kim, Chris and Sky are all doing aspects of finance. Ideally there would be a financial manager

Board is responsible for debt in most boards but in this board, we have the Treasurer holding debt on a personal credit card.

Sky showed an image of a report which is closer to our needs but we ought to have highlights for each segment of the business each month.

Chris showed another example which looked useful.

The Board needs to do more in this area as ED has not enough time with the hours we can pay for.

#### Summary

1. Board needs to ensure we do our role in finances.
2. Training is a Board responsibility
3. We need simplified monthly reports with indicators on targets and explanatory words

The question arose of how we got here and an understanding of cultural drivers – what led to accepting the red ink. We need to honour the past but move forward to the future. Need to get educated on what happened and how to move forward.

Oversight Committee had a lengthy discussion about reasons why we are here and the suggestion was to send out the notes on that discussion.

Chris indicated it was surprise to him and he was thrown off by what was going on in the cultural past

It was noted that FIC as a business non-profit has been able to do wonderful things and to attract resources from people. We have these important income lines and should be proud of that.

Somehow there was an ignoring of the systemic problem happening and not enough realization it was accumulative.

There was tremendous pride in resourcefulness – good to crack open the challenge.

We are a leaking ship this year but also 11 out of the last 14 years, so it has been a slow, steady leak.

When we took the loan of \$15,000, we should have sounded the alarm then but didn't really raise enough concern.

A number of particular things didn't work out despite the optimism, especially Mount Madonna – lost about \$18000. Also the development director didn't work out and print directories didn't make as much

FIC always had reason for optimism and the purchase of Allium was very optimistic. Suggestion was how best to use this resource now – rental or sell as potential options.

Example from LA Cite of the Respecterre situation. Need to acknowledge what is happening, have a meeting to analyze and to solve. Use the expertise of others to resolve the challenges.

Brief history - we operate from a sense of optimism and doing work that needs to be done - important things. We do a budget with a plan and trust the income will be there. Once in a while expenses are out of control and we can adjust this year's against next year's. Many of the years, we've been in the red but often only a little bit. But now adjusting the budget to break even for the year is not adequate. We need to be significantly in the black. History of FIC is that we do important work and we will make the finances work. FIC as a young organization with optimism needs now to be an organization that has strategies for sustainability.

FIC started from nothing where everything was done on a volunteer basis. We had trust we would be successful. We then set up very baseline pay for staff. We have never gone back from paying little amounts and depend on voluntary time. Nobody works for FIC for the money!

Relying on programs to make enough to carry us is changing as we need development. FIC has never been strong in fundraising – never completely clear who was to do development; that is, who had the responsibility. We need development to come up with about 30% and income 70%. Development has been volatile while membership income was more steady. Development seemed to fall on Laird as part-time ED. Also tried the Development Director who didn't work out.

We do need development to provide 30%. Our programs are good; we do good work in the world and there are people who should help us. Money should be there and we need work to get the money fed back to us.

There was an apology if new people did not know about the FIC financial situation. .

Most of success to date has been from those committed supporters. People contribute beyond membership in every year. We have been too passive – we need to go out not hat in hand but with the message we are delivering critical services and products and we need to use that to get what we need to keep doing our work.

FIC has been in this need for stronger development for 30 years. We are often delicate in this area related to the values of cooperative living and a distaste for working with money. These are part of our particular challenge. Let's be ok with money.

Optimism is a good thing usually. We have been unerringly optimistic and this has led to delusion. We would look at the budget, move numbers around and make it work. We have been influenced by the fact we are doing good things. We don't question enough the financial judgements and we are deluding ourselves. Different things that happened e.g. Mount Madonna led us to our current financial situation. The Board was never involved in the development side – Laird's job and the rest of the Board was not putting effort in. We did not have the people or the culture to expect it. It is now positive to democratize that effort and get everyone working on development. We need to acknowledge the delusion from the optimism (which we need as it is good) and get working on development. Leave any old patterns that were counterproductive behind.

Maikwe noted that there were people pushing and often there was an arrogance in holding people back from pushing. We did not respond enough in the past to this need. Maikwe is holding anger around this. She is pissed but will get over it as we now move with the Board commitment to development.

Board needs to own the financial oversight role and indicate what they need. The need to get appropriate training and hold that responsibility too.

## Board Role in Development

Sky: Continuing board job description conversation from yesterday. The clear call is for training around development. We don't want to limit the board pool. Everybody can plug in somewhere. We need a development director. I can't chair the development committee and coordinate with Beth and ... I don't want to hear about what I should be doing.

Betsy: can a subset of the board provide a focused oversight, volunteer coordinator/committee making progress while we work towards getting the role funded.

Sky: We have 30 hours with Beth, she can provide training.

Betsy: Who's on that committee, and who will activate the next conversation?

Cynthia: I'm on committee, willing to initiate next meeting \*\*task

Lee: I've been involved in getting dev dirs for many orgs. Don't know how to get the right person in that position.

Maikwe: Cultural mismatch: progressives excited about money? A rare bird. Fundraising "asking people for money" is a small part of Development (building a following, getting people excited). Doing the asks is one task of many. Use the D-word.

Cassandra: Charge Dev Cmtee with having conversation about what is development, fleshing it out, bringing that conversation to the board at large. Get the "eagle's-eye view": zoom out. Find the meta-narrative that is compelling people to want to be part of our organization. We're a clearinghouse of information. Unrestricted donations make 30% of our budget -- what kind of assumptions are driving that? That longer arc, what makes sense, where do we want to challenge ourselves to do better? How can we be having those conversations with each other as a board?

Betsy: Each board member should be able to give a high-energy grounded historical importance 5-minute talk. The new-money unrestricted asks are important, but lots of work has gone into strengthening the 70% of core business, and staff input could help us find board role in increasing income/reducing expenses.

Cassandra: We're delicately, respectfully needing to orchestrate a paradigm shift in the org. I really appreciated hearing the stories. Optimism drove us. Poverty consciousness - we have higher ideals than talking about making a lot of money. We are learning that we need to have money flow in a much more regenerative and energizing way into the organization. We need to bridge the gap between older/newer on board. I feel like a Millennial now in this context. How do we get to having abundance and are doing great things with it.

Cynthia: Collaboration, building partnerships with other orgs. Ex NuMundo - fresh exposure.

Cynthia: We're not hiring DD because we don't have funds right now. Think differently about "hiring" someone - percentage? And what orgs do have money that we're already partnering with? Could they do something and share?

Christopher: Appreciate your thinking creatively. Have read up on commission structure - it's frowned on. Could be many months/years before funds come in. If they are getting a budget line item for doing some work (or developing a project), that can be OK.

Christopher: GENNA partnership - maybe too much on GENNA's plate right now. There is a line item for fundraising.

Sky: All slow to get started.

Maikwe: Undermines trust relationship for individual contribution to be shared. Maybe less so for grants. Sales commissions are an acceptable practice.

Christopher: Wholesale program under development w/Kim K.

Betsy: The F-word: Fundraising and Board role: Together w/staff understand budget, strategies. New board members understand policies around Directory/website charging. Board talk about what it can do, not what it can ask staff to do.

Marty: Re collaboration: Sister orgs typically nonprofit. How work w/for-profits? Board/staff have expressed hesitancy/confusion around how that would work.

Nick: NuMundo has nonprofit arm and is public benefit corp. Part of leading edge of innovation. Re commissioned fundraising, there are other creative ways, onboarding a volunteer, and offer bonuses when doing well.

Maikwe: Like the book contract. Commitment to raise money for upfront costs, potential profit way down the road.

Sky: Come to me with a specific opportunity and commitment vs. general idea. First apply criteria for evaluating projects.

Nick: Cultural view on collaboration - tension points in asking for ability to collaborate, on freely available public data. 6 months+ for NuMundo.

Sky: This is very case-specific, in part relating to this being a for-profit. I'm not worried about data skimmers, they won't get updates.

Harvey: Lets remember we need to put or find energy behind ideas.

Maikwe: Let's look at Proposed board job description section on Development

Harvey: Somebody needs to be organizing this whole broader concept of Development and what needs to be done.

Maikwe: Committee will deal with one part of it - getting org more acclimated to what development is.

Sky: Beth 30 hours available for training AND coordination with us.

Nick is volunteering to join the development committee.

Maikwe: Draft Dev Cmtee job description never got passed, pretty good, could be tweaked.

Betsy: Training & financial reports/metrics came up. I'm willing to work w/1-2 others to speak w/Christopher to refine what could be most helpful for board oversight. Willing to be part of training, sharing history. Board needs to train new board members.

Lee: interested in reporting, talked to Christopher already some.

Maikwe: Willing to hold that through the next org meeting.

Harvey: We need somebody to make sure this happens, to organize it, and make sure this happens. Maikwe based on her history, with specific ideas about what is helpful to see.

Maikwe: Universal "here's structure for what all new board members would get" create board-onboarding checklist document \*\*

Harvey: Include what to expect from financial reports once developed.

Betsy: Offering more individual 1:1. For Cassandra - get in touch w/one of us.

## Board Organizing Session

The 8 Board Members

Harvey, Marty, Ma'ikwe, Lee, Betsy, Cynthia, Nick, Cassandra

Graphic Facilitator: Cynthia

Notes: Cassandra

90 minutes, Sunday, Nov 6th

### **Current Standing Committees - may also include non-board members**

Ministry- Marty and Harvey and \_\_\_\_\_

Personnel - Harvey and Sky and whoever else is needed

Oversight - The big kahuna - Harvey, Ma'ikwe, Marty, Sky and Christopher

?How do people get on and off oversight?

Nominating Committee - Marty and Harvey and \_\_\_\_\_

Development - Ma'ikwe, Cassandra, Cynthia, Nick and Sky

ERB - Editorial Review Board - Marty, Valerie, Parke Burgess Marty is liaison with CMag. ERB

is mostly connected to CMag. Values questions come to the board this way. Not so much related to web copy or directory. One of the committees we are most careful about.

Awards Committee - Laird, Deborah Altus, Betty Didcoct, Oz Ragland

GENNA representation - is this a committee? That was not voted YES, so is this a role of representation

Proposed committee for FINANCE: moving forward on simplified reports. Kimi is our treasurer/bookkeeper.

### **Past/Project Committees**

Regional Networking

Sustainability Education and Outreach

In Reach - internal organizational development

Events team

### **Ideas for new committees/functions**

Training and Orientation

Finance

Do we need new committees or just tasks/functions that need to be handled?

Organizing board calls - Sky has asked for this.

Logistics for board meetings - finding and negotiating host.

Onsite coordinator and host liaison

Agenda Planning for board meetings, gathering reports

What's our process for forming committees as a board?



Betsy acknowledges that she isn't currently on a committee but has been on many project committees and desires to be functional on a committee. Has energy for finance and agenda and maybe NomCom. Into regional networking, and sustainability education.

Lee sees the need for succession planning and new board members to step on committees. He has personal interest in personnel, finance and awards. Regional networking and sustainability education.

How does the oversight committee agenda get set? Supportive committee originally for Laird, who kept a list. Betsy suggests that we could have a liaison for the rest of the board. Ma'ikwe suggests that Sky needs logistical support but also psychic support in surfacing conflicts.

Harvey doesn't need to get off anything today, but eventually personnel and nomcom.

Cassandra is interested in ministry, regional networking, sustainability education and outreach and happy to be involved in development.

Ma'ikwe interested in new board member training, interested in agenda setting, but maybe one point person, vs. a committee. Would like to get off GENNA council, but so does Sky, so one needs to stay. Has a full FIC plate.

Cynthia is interested in events, regional networking, and sustainability education. Interest in ministry, but would need further conversation.

### **JOB DESCRIPTION** conversation

Who is going to chair calls? If you have an agenda, send it to the chair, meeting planning function. Ma'ikwe volunteering. Call goes for 90 minutes.

Oversight is sorting what goes to the full board. So do we need an agenda holder for the board meetings?

Harvey - the oversight committee was historically there because the board was not very active between board meetings.

### **ACTION STEP:**

Ask Sky if it is working for Kassia to negotiate our board meeting logistics, or if we need to take this on.

Betsy is going to convene events, regional networking, and sustainability education and outreach "committees" to clarify what we are talking about. That's Betsy, Ma'ikwe, Lee, Cynthia, and Cassandra

Everyone review the job description and Ma'ikwe will put it on the agenda and we will review it then.

We all need to review the 5 hour commitment.

## Board & Staff Responsibilities

Harvey: It's overwhelming if you have more than you can do already to then hear new ideas.

Sky: Satisfied from discussions so far, getting more clarity on this. Board managing its own affairs, getting more clarity around this. Continuing yesterday's conversation on more general parameters of delegation, for example who gets to approve a contract.

Betsy: I would love for us as a board to talk about what our responsibilities are, not just about supporting Sky. Committees, officers - are they defined? How do we take responsibility in a structured way? Hard for me to know how to step up. Not a regular way for following up on volunteer opportunities at org meetings. Things get lost in terms of committees - those of us not in personal, frequent contact, it's hard to track what's going on. Is Oversight a support structure for ED vs. Exec Cmtee? I'd love for us to have a little more structure - functional roles, periods of service.

Harvey: Appendix to job description, w/ cmtees, etc.?

Cassandra: What's currently existing vs. what's desired? Half the board is new! Let's reboot together, look at what's been working, how we can self-organize moving forward.

Betsy: We need to have these conversations, separate from staff-led urgent issues.

Maikwe: Please look at what's there before assuming that it's not.

Nick: Where's space for just the board to sit together? And all issues should not be just staff or board. Volunteer positions?

Sky: Vol Coord job description exists, work is happening to put the program in place.

Parameters that staff should use to determine whether to bring a contract to board for approval?

Lee: Some financial cap? \$2k? \$5k? \$10k?

Harvey: Some small, obvious clean exchanges as biz mgr, like ad/marketing exchanges. Adding products.

Christopher: The key question for routine operations is: Is there a reason this raises concern? Is there a good values match? (or perception of it)

Sky: Most GEN contracts are not board level. As long as it is w/in the mission, doesn't compromise budget or strategic plan, no problem. There were issues like data sharing, but the board already addressed those. Policies on listing communities, frequency of communication -- we have policies, so long as it is not going outside of those. If making a new policy, could be a board issue. Board Consultation vs approval - advisory role for board, more eyes on it.

Laird: issues where there is depth of history that the staff isn't aware of. Maybe OS does this.

Christopher: Check w/Sky, he may say check w/OS as to whether it goes to Board.

Laird example: Emissaries article was based on recanted - political issues, Editor had no clue about delicate conversations/relationship question.

Sky: Guidance for Questions staff can ask itself:

Is it within our mission?

New policy Q's?

History/background/relationships?

Alter strategic plan/significant percentage of budget?

Christopher: Multifacetedness, Duration? (ex GEN 3 years)

Laird: Centrality to our mission (Dir is core so more tender) and how it impacts time of staff to implement.

Sky: That's wrapped up in strategic plan

Harvey: Significant event contract has significant financial implications

Guidelines for evaluating whether Staff should bring something to OS/Board:

Is it within our mission?

Is it within existing policy, or does it introduce new policy questions?

Are there legal issues?

Is there history, background, or relationships involved staff might not be aware of?

Does it establish a substantial new relationship with an organization or individual?

Does it significantly alter or compromise the budget or does it involve a significant percentage of the budget? Not change by >5%, not net decrease in income,

Does it alter or compromise the strategic plan (particularly, in use of staff time)?

Is it for an extraordinary duration?

# STRATEGIC PLANNING

5 year plan spreadsheet:

[https://docs.google.com/spreadsheets/d/1tV\\_7k\\_j6SX2L3kcPgLZ9MGAdpTFyIKcnco76\\_J8e3lq/edit](https://docs.google.com/spreadsheets/d/1tV_7k_j6SX2L3kcPgLZ9MGAdpTFyIKcnco76_J8e3lq/edit)

Report back from Board Gathering: Cynthia reported back on our past, present and future board committee analysis. Including ideas about functionality, succession planning, on-boarding, Let us know that Ma'ikwe will be organizing our monthly calls and that we will keep them to one a month, and extend them to 90 minutes. We are staying in process on our job description, and keeping it high level. Other questions we are sitting with are what is development, how much time does the board need to contribute, etc. We really think the Finance Committee is a good idea and need to sort out the relationship between board, oversight and finance. Lee is taking the lead on sorting out the needs of the board and staff and what info.

Focus on Strategic Planning:

Sky: We've done some work on our identity, but we need to make a plan and there are ideas about maintaining what we have and evolving. What is the long term plan? In 5 years, what do we want our range of programs and services to look like? Then we can work from there. On an oversight committee call, Ma'ikwe was suggesting that Sky and staff as a whole figure out the two way street between board and staff. Sky took it on to give suggestions about a complete robust idea of what the FIC should be offering. This is the place where we can bring our ideas together about that.

Christopher: Cynthia is creating a graph with rows for different aspects of business and columns for the years going 5 years out.

ADMIN, DEV, BOOKSTORE, MAG and DIRECTORY (includes website). OTHER for other aspects.

Conversation about appropriateness of website under the directory. For now it's there. And membership is under development .

Graphic facilitation - refer to picture - for brainstorm

Conversation about the magazine and what does "break even" mean? Relative to admin costs being included or left out.

Idea about cmag online like the the HUFF POST. Rebrand the blog and open it up into reporters/writers across the world?

Brainstorm.

5 year Plan	2017	2018	2019	2020	2021
ADMIN	In the black! Consistent stats to measure internal and external success. Cloud based accounting. Solid finance team. Clear org chart.	Allium income generating, solid volunteer program, integrity around debts, clear GENNA relationship, racial.econ justice central to msg. Regular board member training. Integrity around debts.	Expenses covered by development		Pay Allium off Staff regional hubs across country
DEV	Development director, 30 year anniversary messaging CRM system	1st two grants. More robust Canadian involvement. Visibility on aligned networks, member engagement program Clarity on target audience. Strategic partnership approach. Ambassador package.	2x cmtly members \$50K income from development	3 public figure allies	
BOOKSTORE	M's book tour System in place for affiliate,	Inventory below \$6K, robust affiliate relationships	Repackage best of communities, 3X digital sales		
MAG	Revamp	Break even		Back to	

	renewal series, 1,000 subscription	2 sponsors/yr lined up Cmag online launched		recycled paper.	
DIRECTORY	Data merging with GEN, user interface and website overhaul. rebranding.	Additional functionality to the web. Revamped income model, community census	NEW EDITION community census!! Actual interviews	INFOGRAPH ICS.	

OTHER:

2017

30th event/celebration w.coast event

2021 regional events every year.

Partner with cooperative culture events.

2018

wiki/toolkit/solutions library

Process consultants list into community consultants program

Finessing back end of the directory to be easier for researching. More robust relationships with researchers. Research partners program

Do a real census. So we have real data. Make info-graphs.

Communities eco-footprint analysis.

Media partners program.

National Intentional Communities Day. Open House Day. Like National CoHousing Day - is that a partnership?

Online video education

2020 festival-type event celebrating cooperative culture.

We went through our objectives in our identity statement to see how our intentions aligned.

That helped to flesh out ideas.

Staff will integrate and see what's feasible and work together with the development committee to put this into a plan!

# BUDGET APPROVAL

1:30 Sunday afternoon - everyone here except Betsy

Sky: Given the situation, I think this budget is good for now. As we have our upcoming calls, we will have worked out more flows of financial info, results of fundraising, info from development. These things may shift our budget in the near future as we revisit it in a substantive way. But good for now. Sky and CK made adjustments.

The book project isn't in the budget, but that should be all positive. There were some assumptions around development. That is the biggest variation.

Discussion about whether different areas should be assigned administrative expenses. Business manager, accountant, McCune, Social Media and ED are in this ADMIN category. Overarching support for everything. Sky says rather than parsing it and tucking it into various places, he'd rather see those costs. However, we can do a distributed analysis for the sake of thinking about it. Laird reminds us that this is an old conversation, and it would be great if we could pick a way of doing finances and get used to it. Maybe we choose it based on which way is clearest for the board to understand. Kimi has strong ideas about it based on professional ideas. Also noted that we can get rid of too much detail.

It is suggested by many that the finance committee take this on and preferences be sent to Lee so he can be a clearinghouse for the info and help work out how

Lee: When you don't put administrative costs into areas of business, then it's hard to know if they are successful. Sky: Business manager costs make sense. HB: do a percentage of distributed costs. But how do we get that percentage without them spending a lot of time sorting it out.

Back to committee. Let finance hold this.

HB: so back to the point, is this a good enough working document for us to move forward?

Ma'ikwe: why are we thinking that the numbers are going to be better for cmag?

CK: because of lowered printing costs and a small increase (same increase as last year) CK has been working on getting rid of back inventory. Doing better in our wholesale through contacting bookstores to carry us (she's doing that by commission) We are looking at bringing on an ad manager - by commission too. And then development - budgeted more for sponsorships. The other thing is \$500 of restricted donations to Cmag. No crowdfunding or book project stuff is in here.

ML: this is sensible, but it's a big gap.

Sky: There is a global thing about this budget. Going through and trying to decide whether each line item is accurate or not isn't really worth our time. Options are to show a loss or increase development.

HB: option to fire staff. Sky: that's not an option. HB: We have hired staff with the intent that numbers would be reached. And that's part of the reason we are in the hole right now. We haven't chosen the option of "we can't do this right now" If we don't get finances together we will discover we can't do anything. We may have to prune something in order for the tree to survive. We could not do cmag, we could not do social media. I'm not saying go for that option, I am optimistic. Sky: that's an option in theory, but not really. CK: social media is \$3K and that's a reduction from \$13K - CK's original- now he's getting \$10K. HB: if we can't afford to do something, then we shouldn't do it. SKY: This is why the board needs to take responsibility for fundraising. It's not an option, we can't do less, the future depends on us scaling up - not down. HB: I'll do more, but some of our less experienced board members don't know yet how to ask for money.

Ma'ikwe: What about the campaign? CK: there is no line item for the current campaign - and he doesn't want to be responsible for it. Ma'ikwe: cool, then lets see the \$ in here. SKY: says it makes sense for him to do it.

SKY: 2017 budget is basically business as usual. Doesn't include development director or website changes. SKY: if we lose people now, we won't have a fundable organization.

CK: could save on cmag if we hired a different person for layout vs. a salary. But we have a good, reliable person.

Lee: I'm not comfortable with not paying staff what they are owed. Wanting to pay staff. Lee is willing to trust the sense that people have that there are folks that will give. I'll approve the budget but I'm uncomfortable until we bring our optimism into realism.

Sky: it's a framing thing. I don't think I'm being optimistic to have a \$40K fundraising goal. Realistically, we need it to keep it going.

ML: a few years ago, we had the if-then statements. Like if we haven't raised X, by X, then we let cmag go. But what we really need to do is raise the money. Hit the pavement!!

Marty: why shouldn't we put the money in if we plan on raising it. SKY: nitpicking the 2016 budget isn't worth our time. Our financial situation is a moving target! It doesn't make a lot of sense to keep going right now. Can we approve it for now with a review built in? ML: can we wait to approve after we have more data? We aren't in a position to make those decisions right now.



ML: what about new board members? CF: waiting for the financial and development committee to both educate and align so we can speak more clearly to the issues. Cynthia recording notes for our development call. Nick: agreed. Let's see if we need to take time for exit strategy when we need to be fundraising.

December 28th meeting or sooner?

## Community land Trust Conf report

Cassandra: On a working group in Sebastopol with cooperative stewardship. All housing cooperatives. She went to CLT conference in Utah. National Cmty Land Trust people recently did a merger with majorly funded (by banks even) and the conference was really big. Hardcore activists inside who weren't happy with the big banks. Arc of Justice movie shown. Keynote speaker Dr. Mark Joseph from Chicago-- researcher who studies mixed housing developments and socioeconomically mixed groups. Point of his talk was that we can get the money for these things, get them built, and what we are missing is post-occupancy community building. CF talked to him about FIC and he was super open and wanted to see a bridge built between us and his work. CF plans to go again next year in Oakland.

Ma'ikwe: let's get us on the program for next year!

Laird: years ago I went to a National Association of Housing Cooperatives, and my work seemed to be too intense. And yet they are a MUCH bigger group than us.

CF: did get to know some of the organizers and can help make those connections. Definitely got a feel for what we can offer. They could also probably fund a Cmag issue if it was connected to their conference.

Laird: any mention of Institute for Community Economics?

CF: Yes, and can connect it. John \_\_\_\_\_ longtime community advocate. ICE was a big part of one of the convos I had with some real movers and shakers.

## NEXT Org MEETINGS

Harvey: proposed Dunmire Hollow for us, as it would be cheap for us. Could meet in Harvey's living room, there's a motel a few miles away. There's unlimited camping. There are 4 beds. It's likely to be good weather. Sky is OK with camping. Ma'ikwe is a maybe. Cynthia and Nick are maybe's. HB has a tent. We'd do our own food for breakfast and lunch and would use our communitiy center. There are showers in there. One of his community mates has suggested

that we contribute \$50 for utilities. Harvey says we donate that. One night would be potluck with neighbors. Another would be Dunmire Hollow community potluck. Maybe go out on the third night. There's no internet at the community center. Verizon is there, but doesn't work very well. Nice time of year, fresh garden produce.

Sky: The Farm is a possibility, but a lot more expensive. Cohousing community in Nashville. Nick says The Farm is amenable to trades. They've been being cool with NuMundo. Nick thinks this may be a good time for FICers to meet the NuMundistas.

ML: The Farm is the place to do a bigger party for 30th anniversary.

Sky: it's been on his task list to contact The Farm..

HB: confused about 30th anniversary. SKY: Douglas is open to possible collaboration.

SKY: Douglas does his thing on Memorial Day weekend which is the weekend after COHO conference. Betsy has some energy to work on this. Nick says he'd help too as he is already in touch.

One hell of an event if it's The Farm, FIC and NuMundo.

If we are going to have an event, then we should do it before the board meeting. Or have someone else organize it!

SKY: Next fall: if we are looking at general rotation, then southwest is a good next place. At the conference, there were burblings of community uprising there. Other idea is to flip back up to Canada and go to BC and go to OUR Ecovillage or something like that. Cynthia, planning Youth ecovillage summit, looking at OUR so there is collaboration there. Flexibility on time.

2019 Mexico?

Marty, got in touch with the folks in Athens OHIO and they have a coalition of folks who are working on a carbon neutral city. He asked them if they wanted to contribute to the issue on climate change. One of the people sent an idea to Chris.

## EVALUATIONS

### **Loved:**

Board only time

Ceremony dinner with the award

Showing off Canada and La Cite

Amazing host

Pulling together energy of the team  
Walking from dorms to meeting room  
Enjoyed having lots of people from different orgs in the conversations  
Facilities: dorm, food, chalkboard, big screen  
Call with Zach  
Brainstorm session good  
Ceremony and tradition  
More movement  
More graphic facilitation and recording  
Sky's clarity and the board stepping up  
Board participation with call to invite people in  
Good that we did one check in  
Navigated through emergency response and pivotal convos

**Would like to change:**

Genna piece - worried about collaboration  
Stress around budget  
Going off schedule and not acknowledging it  
Conflict resolution help  
Process logistics done ahead  
FIC have liaison  
Task follow through on brainstorm/chaotic  
More honoring of spaces and how we open and close them  
More chances to get in our bodies  
More graphic facilitation and recording  
More check ins  
Team building!  
Order of session - maybe a meta architecture for agenda - brainstorming earlier

## Later Committee

## Task List

**Cynthia:**

Compile strategic plan info into a spreadsheet

**Ma'ikwe:**

Check in with Kimi about 990 requirements

**Lee:**

Finalize conflict of interest policy

**Sky:**

Update Cynthia on volunteer program progress

Follow up with Betsy, Harvey, and Nick about May Org Mtg location and dates in Tennessee

Contact Alice Coho US about our role in their national conference and about open house day

Talk with Kimi about Quickbooks online, cashflow spreadsheet, how to enact better flow of financial information, cleaning up balance sheet (can we find out who donors to funds to directory endowment were?), being on finance committee,

~~Update Beth on development and connect her to committee~~

Ask Laird to introduce me to Rodney after the campaign

Work on strategic plan

Take over dev and admin tabs of budget

Follow up with Laird about bookstore at cohousing conference