



**NORTHEAST COALITION
OF NEIGHBORHOODS**

**NECN Emergency General Board Meeting
Tuesday, August 19, 2014
NECN Office – Conference Room
Approved Minutes**

Meeting Attendees

Board

Paul Anthony, Humboldt, 1st Vice President
Robert Bowles, At-Large, NECN Treasurer
Jaime McGeathy, Concordia, NECN Recorder
Carol Gossett, Sullivan's Gulch, NECN
Parliamentarian
Lupin Morgan, Boise Representative
Katie Ugolini, Concordia Representative
Joan Ivan, Eliot Representative
Ken Peterson, Grant Park Representative
John Prell, Grant Park Representative

Micah Meskel, Humboldt Representative
Peter O'Neil, Irvington Representative
Margo Dobbertin, King Representative
Diego Gioseffi, King Representative
Luke Groser, Woodlawn Representative
Shirley Minor, Woodlawn Representative
Loulie Brown, At-Large Representative
Jordan Davis, At-Large Representative
Damon Isiah Turner, At-Large Representative
Alan Silver, At-Large Representative

Staff

Katy Asher, Neighborhoods Program Director
Fran Ayarbil, Project Coordinator: Special Projects and Initiatives
Randi Razalenti, Administrative Coordinator

Guests

Chris Lopez, neighbor

Meeting called to order by Paul Anthony at 6:39 pm

Transition Leadership

Search committee recommends doing any assessment quickly so we are not looking for ED candidates during the holidays. Also recommends that any assessment happens before we start looking for candidates so we know exactly what we are looking for.

Request for schedule details. Margo has a draft of 14 meetings to set a schedule for the search with the goal of finding a candidate before the holidays. To get the assessment done before the schedule it would have had to been done last week.

Micah notes the process tends to take longer than expected. NAO has services available: 1. Interim ED 2. Executive Search and 3. Organizational Development. Estimated cost \$75-\$185/hr. depending on scope. We can scale the services to what we need. Also recommends staff involvement in the search committee, which we currently have.

Paul notes NECN is well covered with staff that can run independently.

Margo has an estimate of roughly 20 hours for just an assessment in the ball park of \$3700. For an Interim ED, 20 hr. a week would be about \$6k a month. We would likely need less time.

Loulie discussed some of her previous experience in the role of Interim ED and 15-20 hrs. A week seems about minimum.

Fran concerned that fiscal sponsorship projects may require more support than other staff roles from an ED role for dealing with insurance issues and making decisions to take on fiscal projects. There will be other times when decisions need to be made and they need a go to person to make those decisions, someone designated to make decisions. Certain expertise is needed to make those decisions, an interim would need to be able to hit the ground running on these types of things. It's hard to predict when these

things will come up. But there are weekly and regular activities like time/pay/administrative duties. Someone who sees the whole picture of the organization is needed.

Katy mentioned that staff needs clarity on who is doing what. Right now there is a lot of grey and they are unsure who has the authority to make decisions.

Ken asked about what was done the last time we had a vacancy. Last time Shoshana was brought in quickly though that was a special circumstance and not usual, previous time was NAO with an interim director.

Margo is trying to locate the assessment records from the last one we had done.

Carol wonders if multiple people can have the responsibilities spread out. Staff would prefer a single point of contact. Mostly it's important to have identified resources with the authority to make decisions for specific areas.

Paul notes that the Executive Committee named Steve Cole as the go to person for the staff. Also notes that the search committee was tasked to get a handle on the scope of staff responsibilities to help us figure out what we need.

Katy requests that any assessment in the organization be done with a third party and not run internally. There was general agreement that any assessment should be done externally.

Paul requests information on what is the scope of an assessment. From conversations, Margo says NAO has indicated that assessments are extremely customized but would cover multiple aspects of the organization. Paul is concerned the size and diversity of the board would likely take more than 20 hours to assess and work with. Discussion about what we would want to assess: Culture, structure, interactions, communication styles... organizational issues.

Damon asks about how much of the ED work is required in the role vs. how much extra work was actually taken on by the former ED. We don't believe we can do the work that was actually being done for the part time budget we have. Margo is looking into ED salaries for other coalitions.

Discussion on if we have enough budget to even attract an ED. Paul noted the search committee is looking at options both on budget and scope. Damon suggests adding AD responsibilities to an existing staff role to decrease scope of ED role as something to explore. That proposal was suggested the last time we did a search but it did not materialize.

Margo notes that an assessment could help us to clarify how all these different options might work for us and which way we should go. Also recommends having a transition committee for the new ED to get them up and running quickly.

Micah notes that the assessment could be very important to show options, but paying for the assessment might decrease budget and limit options. Lupin notes we have a reserve fund for emergencies. This may be a good time to tap into that. Discussion on the pros and cons of that.

Carol notes that a top priority is to clarify the single point of contact.

Motion: Ken Peterson moves that he board appoint Steve Cole as the interim executive director of NECN pending replacement of that position permanently. Peter O'Neil seconds the motion.

Discussion

Micah asks to add an amendment that he cannot hire and fire or change budgets without clearing it with the executive committee.

Fran notes that the staff would like to see Katy in the position as the point of contact and would be a comfortable arrangement for them. Paul has been concerned about asking Katy to take on those

responsibilities as it is rare for someone on the staff to step into that kind of role in a nonprofit and then step back into their old role. He thinks they tend to leave the organization and he would hate to see her leave. Katy states she is not interested in becoming the permanent executive director at NECN. Damon asks if anyone has asked Katy if she would want the role. Diego agrees that Katy would be a very good associate interim director and then bring in someone from NAO and have them in combination.

Damon notes he is uncomfortable with a board president serving as interim director purely due to the potential confusion between the roles, not due to any person in the role. That person should be in one role or the other. Margo notes that when the roles are staffed by the same person that a buffer between the staff and the board is taken away and things can get very grey.

Chris Lopez discusses his previous experience with ED transitions and searches and that the roles of president and interim ED should be separate. NAO can also offer executive director mentoring services if we have someone in the roles that is new to ED experience.

Carol notes that according to ONI rules, the staff works for the NECN organization and the board is in the position of overseeing staff so she does not think there is conflict. Katy notes that normally the key point person for the staff is a staff role and not a board role.

Jaime notes that we need two things: 1. Who wants the role and has time and 2. Who is a comfortable person to have in the role for staff.

Paul Anthony called Executive Session at 7:59

Regular session returned at 8:48

Ken withdraws his motion.

Motion: Margo Dobbertin makes a motion to empower the personnel committee to negotiate with Katy for the temp ED position with boundaries:

- **No changing of staff roles aside from her own**
- **Hire a temp to take on some existing duties or suspend duties**
- **Negotiation is at the discretion of the personnel committee**
- **We do this as a temp measure and reevaluate in one month at the next board meeting**
- **Negotiations to commence immediately.**

Loulie Brown seconds the motion.

Vote called. Pass unanimous.

Peter notes that Steve currently has the responsibilities of the ED, so what is the current status of that at this point? Diego doesn't think we need an interim ED right now as we're in negotiations. Carol mentions that the board has these responsibilities. Chris says that whatever is in the emergency Executive Committee minutes is what stands [no official motion and vote] and Steve has represented himself as ED to the staff so we should clarify exactly what that looks like.

Motion: Ken Peterson makes a motion that pending appointment of an interim executive director that Steve Cole shall serve in that capacity and upon appointment of an interim ED will collaborate with that interim ED as necessary. Peter O'Neil seconds the motion.

Carol wonders why we are changing what we decided at the executive committee. It's been noted that this is a confirmation of that decision and that clarity is obviously needed. Margo notes that it is still a conflict of interest with any board member stepping into that role and would it be possible for Damon to step down from the board to work the staff role. Margo thinks if we have to go with a board member that it cannot be the president as he already has a large leadership role.

Diego notes that the staff is not at most ease with Steve in the role due to his role as president.

Vote:

Yes

Carol Gossett, Ken Peterson, John Prell, Luke Groser, Peter O'Neil, Joan Nan

Opposed

Jaime McGeathy, Micah Meskel, Loulie Brown, Robert Bowles, Alan Silver, Katie Ugolini, Shirley Minor, Jordan Davis, Margo Dobbertin, Damon Isiah Turner, Diego Gioseffi

Paul Anthony abstains.

The motion fails.

Katie Ugolini motion: Damon Isiah Turner be appointed the liaison to the staff but needs to step down from the board. Margo Dobbertin seconds the motion.

Discussion

Amendment:

Alan Silver would like to amend that we drop the part about dropping from the board

Luke Groser seconds the amendment

Vote:

Opposed: Carol Gossett, Peter O'Neil

Abstain: Ken Peterson, John Prell and Paul Anthony

Yes:

Luke Groser, Joan Nan, Jaime McGeathy, Micah Meskel, Loulie Brown, Robert Bowles, Alan Silver, Katie Ugolini, Shirley Minor, Jordan Davis, Margo Dobbertin, Damon Isiah Turner, Diego Gioseffi

Amendment to the motion passes.

Current motion: Damon Isiah Turner be appointed the liaison to the staff.

Discussion

Carol would like to know what the business is that Damon runs in the NECN office that he rents. He provides project management consulting, grant writing, and political campaign consulting. Carol wonders if there is any conflict between his political campaigns and taking on this role. Damon does not see a conflict and he serves on several boards and does not work for particular politicians. Carol wonders if his desire to have the ED job permanently would make this appointment inappropriate or not optimal for him if he decides to apply for the role.

Margo asks if he is currently being paid for political campaign work. He is not. He is willing to avoid any of that kind of work while he is in this liaison role.

Chris notes that Damon is a long time member of this board and has done a lot of good work for us and the community.

Robert wants to clarify that this does not reflect any opinion on the job Steve was doing in role. Jaime and others agree. The only issue is confusion of his role of president and ED responsibilities and having those roles separated just in case. Damon wants to also reiterate this has nothing to do with individuals, just the role. Everyone here cares about NECN, including Steve. This is purely a role confusion issue.

Peter wants clarity on if this motion is just until we get an interim ED or a permanent ED. The position is only until we find an Interim ED.

Ken wonders if someone would have the full authority to do things while we look for an interim ED. Robert can sign checks.

Amendment:

Peter O'Neil motion to amend: add "until an interim ED is hired or appointed". Loulie Brown seconds the motion.

Discussion

Alan – we need to decide about the assessment. We need to have someone handle this conflict between ONI and members of the board. At this moment, since Damon is here every day and the staff knows him that anyone on staff that has questions can go to Damon to find the resolution and pull in people from the board if needed.

Katie withdraws the motion.

Ken notes we can create a motion to adjourn until a date certain and maybe we should do that due to exhaustion.

Chris agrees and notes that the staff wants a collaborative contact with the board and they like working with Damon and we should respect that. Also since Steve isn't here should we just go with the wishes of people around the table? Carol feels that decisions are being made and discussion are happening outside of the board and that is inappropriate and that will not be ok.

Motion: Ken Peterson motions to adjourn to a certain date after Steve is back from vacation. John Prell seconds the motion.

Does anyone know when Steve is back from vacation? We think it's the 28th. With the holiday and evening meetings scheduled all week, the first free date is Sept 5. Robert wonders if we can schedule the meeting through online collaboration after we know Steve is back and suggests we can use the Kennedy School to meet.

Vote

Passes unanimously.

Meeting adjourned at 9:59 p.m.

Minutes taken by Jaime McGeathy, NECN Board Recorder.