**Tonight’s Board Meeting took place at 7:30pm at La Reunion on June 5th, 2018.**

**In Attendance:**

Natalie San Luis, *Staff*

Indya Flanagan, *Secretary of the Board*

Gatlin Johnson, *Treasurer of the Board*

Barak Bullock, *Chair of the Board*

Matt Dietrichson, *NASCO Board Representative*

Joshua Sabik, *Resident at La Reunion*

Brian, *Resident at La Reunion*

Ryan Nill, *Resident at La Reunion*

*\*underlined members are voting members of the Board.*

**On the Agenda:**

CHEA's Budget for Fiscal Year 2018-19

Scheduling the General Membership Meeting

ARNL Work

Maintenance at La Reunion

**Indya moves to approve the minutes from May 17th, 2018. Barak seconds.**

***CHEA's Budget for Fiscal Year 2018-19***

**Gatlin:** looked through QB for line items that were not used. 4.6% increase over the year before. The numbers are roughly the same, slight increase. Added a hosting cost section.

**Joshua**: thinks that we spent too much on our paid bookkeepers last year, thinks they are milking us. We are spending much more on them than we budgeted for last year.

**Gatlin**: agrees it’s worth scrutinizing, but given that this has been the status quo, budgets like we aren’t going to decrease our bookkeeping costs. They have been extremely helpful, has definitely relied on them.

**Joshua**: the ACBA did ask us for money, we thought they weren’t going to charge us. Not sure if we paid and it didn’t go in correctly, or if we just didn’t pay them.

**Gatlin**: trying to keep costs down minus what we owe to NASCO for this year.

**Barak**: if we decide to re-engage with ACBA would we have to delay ratifying this budget

**Indya**: thinks we should focus on the ARNL project, if we decide to join ACBA we can pay for it out of the surplus that is in the CHEA account now, roughly $10,000.

**Gatlin**: reiterates that most of our budget is dictated by NASCO’s figures. Key Figures our bookkeepers rate has gone up.

**Indya**: notes that the Sasona Bookkeeper position has had a lot of trouble, has spent significant time with Key Figures.

**Barak**: is there a breakdown of which house is using Key Figures?

**Gatlin**: if we ask them they will provide.

**Matt**: does the budget here translate directly into a rent increase at the houses? Was the NASCO event portion of the budget used?

**Indya**: notes that yes it would translate to rent increase BUT houses can utilize last year’s surplus to avoid charging members increase in rent.

**Gatlin**: not sure if we spent money on NASCO travel last year.

**Indya**: thinks that we should not use the surplus in the CHEA account for ARNL unless we get the explicit consent of both houses. The surplus could be used to lower rent or mitigate rent increase at both houses.

**Barak moves to approve Gatlin’s CHEA budget for fiscal year 2018-2019. Indya seconds. 3 in favor. The budget is passed.**

***Scheduling the General Membership Meeting***

**Matt**: Thinks the timing of this is fantastic and would go along with our CTAP dreams. If it all comes to fruition in the way that it could, we could use the resources of the Texas Rural Cooperative Center to do a strategic planning process. Could include a lot of the membership.

**Gatlin**: thinks that we should ask the membership about ARNL during the GMM. Becoming a CTAP would be a radical extension of our organization and feels we need explicit consent from both houses.

**Matt**: agrees, one potential way to do this would two mini “board” retreats (not just board members), maybe GMM happens in-between? To explain where we’re going and elicit feedback.

**Barak**: thinks that’s a good reason. Before this process completed we should alert the members as what we’re trying to do. The only concern is that scheduling a GMM right in the middle of our application process makes more work for us.

**Natalie**: we were very pressed for the May 31st deadline, but depending on when the next deadline is then the GMM would not be too much of a heavy lift. The last GMM was early April 2017, we should get it done as it’s supposed to happen annually.

**Barak**: thinks that at the very latest it should be the last day of July.

**Gatlin**: aside from setting the agenda for what we do there, unless there’s a special project, it’s buy party supplies, announce a day, time, and place, and hold a vote sometime during the day. Thinks we have the chance to schedule it tonight.

**Matt**: definitely agrees with Gatlin and Barak, from previous co op experiences our GMMs were pretty rich with more than just a party - a lot of engagement and feedback. Can be a good opportunity to re-engage the members. There’s room for more engagement. Let’s do it, and make it a little more than just a party.

**Barak**: yes, there’s a deeper motivation. The Board wants to solicit feedback from the members on its activities. Is there a forum where we discuss agenda items?

**Gatlin**: yes, it’s just a meeting, but we would have agenda items etc.

**Barak**: if the general membership express skepticism at what we are doing, how would that alter our course?

**Matt**: if at that point we were able to present it in a clear way people would be onboard. Sasona seems good with it as long as their rent doesn’t go up.

**Barak**: doesn’t think there’s huge urgency to schedule GMM in between the two board retreats. May be easier to schedule GMM after the process is completed, so we can report back to the membership.

**Gatlin**: thinks we should have a GMM as soon as possible and inform them further about the CTAP process. Thinks we have been keeping the houses in the loop, but probably not everyone or even most people read the minutes. Thinks it’s vital we give the membership a chance to veto this. While we could legally railroad this through, thinks it’s more ethical to give them a say.

**Matt**: agrees, but wants to reframe it a bit. There was a meeting in this very room where that was my exact speech (May 17th, 2018). Was reminded that what we are doing is not committing to anything - we are submitting a proposal, and to give them a truly informed decision on what they would or would not be vetoing we should have it laid out as clearly as possible. As for the strategic planning process, that should happen no matter what, for any good co op organization.

**Barak**: disagrees that it’s just a proposal, thinks it’s a rubicon that once we cross we can’t go back.

**Gatlin**: thinks that we should get it scheduled.

**Matt**: wants to make sure the board is on board for the strategic planning sessions, and thinks that we should schedule the GMM after we know when we’re doing the first strategic planning session.

**Indya**: notes that we could put the ARNL project up to a vote, possibly not at the GMM but through the same avenue that we vote on NASCO Board Reps (i.e., ballots at each house).

**Brian**: notes that for maximum turnout, we should have a party.

**Gatlin**: discussing the ARNL project will be one of many activities.

**Ryan**: in past years, we’ve done the income verification/surveys at GMM. It doesn’t have to happen at GMM, but it does need to happen every year. Just need it on record.

**Gatlin**: agrees that it should be on the agenda for GMM. Our nonprofit status does rely on our membership’s low income status.

Board discusses blackout dates for GMM and for strategic planning session.

**Gatlin moves that we have the GMM on Sunday July 8th at 1pm La Reunion, pending approval at La Reunion. Indya seconds. 3 in favor, motion passes.**

The GMM Agenda will be on the next CHEA meeting.

**ARNL Work**

**Barak**: the first order of business is that we have to create a comprehensive summary of our progress on this application. Whenever we schedule a meeting with Mary, that’s the information that we have to share with her. We might as well get this information out in the open. Natalie has a document keeping track of our progress on the application - as long as that information is accurate, everyone should make sure to know how far along we are so that everyone is on the same page.

The Board members review Natalie’s document together.

**Natalie** thinks we need to assign hard tasks to individual people. Assigns Board members tasks in our document on the Google Drive.

**Barak**: commits to having a first draft of a strategic plan before our first planning meeting with Annalies.

**Indya**: commits to editing cover letter by **June 12th**, and starting on plan for staffing.

**Natalie**: will be out of town several weeks this summer, but when not out of town can spend 10-15 hours per week on the ARNL project.

**Gatlin**: agrees to write the piece in the business plan around funding. Happy to hammer out something there.

**Matt**: down the line we could create an advisory board of other co ops.

All Board members need to send in a resume as well. All Board members will work on the strategic plan as a group with Annalies, Matt’s contact.

**Barak**: the most important thing we need to do is get on the phone with Mary and get some hard deadlines. She told us that we can submit individual components of the application as soon as they are ready. The more that we finish and send in, the less we have to focus on.

**Natalie**: I know she said that, but it’s probably better to send it over as an organized PDF.

**Matt**: agrees that once we finish something we should set it aside and not look at it again, but not send it off right away.

**Barak**: we can send in individual components separately, and compile them and send them in all together.

**Matt**: when we get Mary on the phone, we’re asking for hard deadlines, and ask if we should send in stuff as we’re finished with it or just wait until the whole thing is complete.

**Barak**: sending things in as we complete them proves to Mary that it’s happening. Even though it seems like a sprawling mess, we can put everything in one document at the end and send in everything all together. We should also tell her that we have dates for strategic planning set. Taking the lead on scheduling a all with Mary.

**Maintenance at La Reunion**

**Brian**: has had co op experience, Chris has had commercial experience.

**Barak**: a few things that we need to show to make him aware. Barak walked through the documents from previous maintenance coordinator detailing issues that are at La Reunion. If at any point you feel overwhelmed, you can bring it to the CHEA Board, we will put it on our agenda to help you execute maintenance at La Reunion. You can also delegate tasks to other members on the maintenance team.

**Next Time’s Agenda**

GMM Agenda

ARNL Project

Maintenance at La Reunion

**The next meeting of the CHEA Board will take place at Sasona at 6pm on Wednesday June 20th.**

CHEA will meet to do a strategic planning meeting on Saturday June 23rd at the WeWork at the Domain and also on Saturday July 7th, both times from 9am to 1pm.