CHEA Board Meeting January 2nd, 2018 at 6pm at Sasona.

Agenda:

D&O Insurance

ARNL Update

Scholarship Framework

CDC ByLaw Amendments

Hiring Maintenance Staff

**In Attendance:**

**Indya Flanagan - Secretary**

**Matt “Trip” Maker - HR**

**Samuel Bean - Sasona Resident**

**Barak Bullock - Chair**

**Gatlin Johnson - Treasurer**

**Matt Dietrichson - CHEA’s NASCO Properties Rep**

Indya moved to approve the minutes from December 20th, 2017. Barak seconded. Minutes approved unanimously.

*D&O Insurance*

**Barak**: Got back in touch with Christine Walker who was the original person we reached out to for a quote. She told me that we were referred to her by NASCO. Presume that Navigator’s would know what insurance co ops need. Includes particular coverage that nonprofits need. With this application we can attain quotations from other insurance companies as well. Did not ask her about worker’s compensation but from August we have the list of things that we would need to fill in to acquire workers’ comp. We can pursue it as well, but maybe after we get D&O insurance. Waiting to hear back from Christine re: what types of coverages included.

**Trip**: Right now it seems like worker’s comp is not a priority, we only have one part-time employee who does not do a risky job.

**Barak**: A theme of our meetings and vision is how to acquire employees, maybe workers’ comp will be more relevant down the line.

*ARNL Update*

**Matt D:** Not much has happened, not many people responded during the past week and a half due to the holidays. Yesterday Matt ran into someone who was recently hired onto Greg Casar’s staff. She was a lawyer for Texas Rio Grande Legal Aid. Brainstormed with her but no concrete steps. She (Stephanie) still feels a bit strange about it because the residents don’t have the bandwidth to do a project like this, they would really need us to have an employee to help them. Only one other mobile home co op in Texas that formed under a CTAP that no longer exists.

**Barak**: Would we have to hire a CTAP that works elsewhere on behalf of CHEA or would we somehow become a CTAP with the assets we already have? What would their salary be?

**Matt D**: Either could happen but it’s still a daunting idea. Would be so cool. Someone would definitely need to be paid to do the work. ARNL has already organized but have no logistical experience with loans etc., managing a budget for a community of that size. Could probably pay someone fresh out of college $30k.

**Gatlin**: Getting to a point where we know what the actual resource costs will be has to happen before we even write grant applications. Happy to help.

**Indya**: Natalie San Luis threw out the ballpark figure of $50k a year for the staff salary and the training/CTAP certification costs.

**Matt D**: Don’t think we could outsource out of state because the person would have to be hands-on. Person would have to have really fantastic interpersonal skills AND business acumen to look over capital improvements. Someone who is savvy with contractors and finance. But, you don’t HAVE to have previous experience to do the job.

**Gatlin**: If we outsourced it it wouldn’t work because the person would have to fly in all the time.

**Barak**: Is it the case that ROC USA is putting restrictions on what we do?

**Matt D:** Whole purpose of the CTAP person is to make sure the loan gets paid back. The candidate would have to speak Spanish.

**Gatlin**: What would we require of the candidate? Bilingual? What would the candidate require of us? Salary range?

**Matt D**: Right now, Natalie isn’t working a lot of hours. We could hire a person to be the CTAP employee and CHEA’s admin person as well.

*Scholarship Framework*

**Trip**: Minimal amount of brainstorming, first step would be to reach out to college houses and ask them how they budget for the things they subsidize educationally. Curious what variables went into deciding what chunk of budget gets spent on it. Would be a line item on the budget and would be someone’s job to maintain.

**Sam:** A couple times received a scholarship from a source other than NASCO, seems like it would be more convenient to have a domestic source of scholarship funding.

**Trip**: There are grants out there for educational services being provided. There are sources of additional funding that we could channel through CHEA to its members.

**Barak**: Thinks it’s a good idea but since the board is currently tackling a lot of big projects (especially ARNL) we don’t have time for one of us to devote time to it. Invites Sam to provide research to us like Matt is doing for the ARNL project since he seems very interested in having a scholarship framework. Perhaps research how NASCO organizes their scholarship system and bring details to us at the next meeting. Thinks it will be a long process. With sustained effort and research we will get there. Right now our agenda is very ambitious, can’t take on this project now, but could later down the road.

**Trip**: We should keep this on our project list even if it’s not on our agenda in the near future.

*CDC ByLaw Amendments*

**Trip**: Much more work than we thought, will take at least 8 more hours of his time to straighten them out. Note that the people who gave us all of this guidance would have helped us more if they got back to us sooner. Since we were busy they couldn’t meet with us.

**Barak**: Would it be worth it to meet with them again to clarify some things that were confusing? Do you need help processing the revisions?

**Trip**: Maybe.

**Barak**: If you spot anything seriously wrong in the revisions we can prioritize those. If they are little managerial details they can wait. If they’ve uncovered some real weaknesses in our bylaws we should tackle those ASAP.

**Trip**: None of them seemed urgent, there’s just a lot of them. Bylaws in good shape just need to be clarified. For example, we should write down the requirements for the minutes as required by law even though we meet those requirements. Some additional policies they recommend that would be good to have. For example, no policy on document retention, conflicts of interest, or ethics.

**Barak**: If you want a goal for the next meeting, try to translate some of those revisions into motions that we can pass. Over the course of several meetings we can ratify the revisions.

**Trip**: Okay!

**Barak**: To make a house manual this has to be completed first. Wants to include a copy of the bylaws in the handbook every new member receives.

**Side-note**: We still need to track down the business accounts form. The first link on the page for new board members leads nowhere. Apparently it was hosted on someone’s private dropbox and now that dropbox is closed. No one knows where it is.

**Indya**: I will ask Velocity next time I go to the bank for Sasona treasury things if they have it and if they can help us get the old Chair off of the business accounts and get the new Chair on them. Have we asked Josh (former Chair) if he could go to the bank with us and switch the business accounts?

**Barak**: No, but he probably would help switch over control of the business accounts.

**Trip**: It would be useful to have a list of documents that DO exist since there are a lot of them.

**Indya**: If it’s just the form you get from the bank I can definitely get it from the bank and get a digital copy for our website.

*Hiring Maintenance Staff*

**Barak**: If we’re willing to seek out a person who will act as a CTAP on behalf of CHEA we could also hire someone who could do maintenance on La Reunion and Sasona. Arguably more pressing than the CTAP. The CTAP is really important, but we must also maintain and care for our own co ops. La Reunion has a huge back up of maintenance requests. There’s a pattern of maintenance officers burning out by the amount of maintenance that has to happen at La Reunion. If we could have the maintenance coordinators work alongside maintenance staff we could get stuff done.

**Trip**: Having someone on staff could create hierarchy in the co ops and go against the

**Indya**: Thinks we need to focus on the problem of La Reunion needing massive maintenance help. Sasona is pretty okay but La Reunion has so many more units it is much more overwhelming. We should come up with an action plan whether we hire contractors or an employee, focus on the problem.

**Sam**: thinks having non-hierarchical maintenance is best, face-to-face interaction at meetings is key.

**Gatlin**: Agrees, born out of a concern at La Reunion. Sasona is well-maintained because it does a lot of maintenance. La Reunion needs a lot more work. Look into what is it that causes burnout. Eventually we will want to be able to hire staff, that’s going to be a good idea at some point. Maybe officers burn out because they try to fix everything without delegating.

**Barak**: Reiterating that hiring maintenance staff is not the only solution but it is one that we ought to consider. It is a path that other co ops have gone down.

**Trip**: Having lived at 21st Street Co Op has experience with the pros and cons of a staff maintenance person. Important to set boundaries when dealing with a maintenance staff.

**Barak**: On behalf of current and former maintenance coordinators at La Reunion, the status quo is not enough to handle the volume of maintenance requests. Whether we hire someone on staff or through some other means, we need to take action. Not expecting that we devise a plan for fixing it right now but we need to get started and anticipate what La Reunion maintenance officers will have to say.

**Trip**: Wants to keep us humble as a Board, to the extent possible we should let the houses run themselves and empower themselves. Maybe there are solutions to the problem through other means than hiring staff. Anything that a tenant is entitled to something and we would be in trouble for not providing it is where the Board would step in.

**Barak**: Maintenance problems at La Reunion are escalating, an entire staircase is inaccessible because of fear that a step will cave in under someone’s foot. Projects shouldn’t be expected of a maintenance officer to complete on their own.

**Trip**: That’s the kind of thing that we should be responsive to.

**Gatlin**: Agrees that having the maintenance officers attend the next meeting would be great.

*New Business*

**Sam**: At Sasona we were brainstorming questions to ask potential members without treading on Fair Housing distinctions. Sam spearheading making adjustments to member acceptance procedure at Sasona. Would like to see opportunities for the new members to get to know the house both through meetings before membership and through orientation.

**Indya**: Thinks it’s okay to ask more questions but we need to keep in mind that we have open membership.

**Gatlin**: Thinks it’s a house-level thing. At La Reunion we prioritize associates, also helpful to have associates to get to know them before they move in.

**Barak**: Agrees that it’s a house-level thing. Probably more success enacting change through house meeting. If you want to get a better idea of who the person is, maybe get to know them rather than focus on asking more questions. House members should take opportunity to get to know prospects while they are there at dinner. It’s an opportunity for the house to understand the prospective.

**Indya**: going to use vacancy reserve soon, heads up Gatlin!

**Gatlin**: it’s easy, just send an email saying that you are taking the vacancy reserve and by how much.

**Barak**: has a question about how the mail works. Received the mail shortly before there was a minor emergency where a member was given a notice to vacate because they hadn’t paid rent in two months. Barak was in possession of both their checks that was in that bundle of mail that Indya gave to the La Reunion Steward at the last board meeting at the end of December.

**Indya**: mail at Sasona is very casual, I check the CHEA mail every so often. Can volunteer to bring the mail to each meeting so it gets done twice a month.

**Gatlin**: communicating to the board if there’s mail would solve most of the problems.

**Trip**: mail system not as secure as we would like at either houses for mail.There are virtual services that scan mail for you and you choose to have it forwarded, instantly accessible to either physical location.

**Barak**: Why is a La Reunion member’s checks being delivered to Sasona? The member in question is paid for by the VA through a program called Front Steps, delivering mail to CHEA via Sasona. La Reunion’s treasurer never had access to them. At the very least, should make them aware that Sasona is not the preferred address for that check.

At the very least the mail should be brought to every board meeting and glanced at.

Meeting adjourned at 7:35 pm.

**The next meeting of the CHEA Board will take place at La Reunion on Wednesday January 17th at 6pm.**