

Foothills Community Alliance Minutes, March 10, 2021

6:05 call to order

Attendance: Lisa McComber (Interim Co-Chair, FCA), Dawna Drum (Interim Treasurer, FCA and substitute secretary), Rebecca Cayen, Carl McDaniel, Jessica Bee, Julie Johansen (MBF), Kristi Slette (WFCN), Debbie Ahl (MBF), Richard Whitson, Rona Galanti, Scott Wallace (MBF), Shorty Bjornstad, Tabitha Frolander, Wa'Lynn Sheridan, Linda Kerth (Interim board, FCA)

Note: WFCN-Whatcom Family and Community Network, FCA=Foothills Community Alliance, MBF=Mount Baker Foundation

Interim Board cochair – Melonie Ancheta was voted in as FCA co-chair, but she has since rescinded as she is no longer able to be cochair. **Rochelle Hollowell** has volunteered. **Lisa** asked for other nominations, and there were none. The attending members voted. **Rochelle** received 6 votes in her favor, 2 were not, all others abstained.

Discussion of Contracts in process:

Kristi Slette: explained the WFCN and FCA fiscal agent relationship, and how it is similar to adoption. – **Linda Kerth:** emphasized the term “collaborative” used in the documents and she’s wondering who works for whom? Are WFCN working for FCA or us for them?

Kristi: neither, we work together. FCA will work independently to figure out what to do with the amounts we receive from MBF or our own fundraising, then we request funds to be released from WFCN. Kristi’s job is to say that it is or is not within the scope of our agreement. She can say it’s not in scope and we adjust or we talk to MBF then we come to agreement to release the funds. We work independently but there is a level of oversight.

Linda: It’s our function is to make that assessment, she understands oversight, but doesn’t MBF do that? We wouldn’t issue money that MBF doesn’t approve of.

Debbie Ahl (MBF): This agreement between FCA and WFCN is not the same as the three-way agreement between MBF, WFCN and FCA. This establishes fiscal agency, transparency, and relationships, and what we pay WFCN for. The three-way agreement is to provide stewardship, they release funds at our request **Kristi:** Because FCA isn’t ready to be a regular 501c3 on our own, we are choosing to working with MBF and WFCN who holds funds for us for the benefit of the Columbia Valley community

Linda: reading from agreement that WFCN has complete control, what happens if Linda wants to have a coffee house and WFCN doesn’t agree? What is our function?

Kristi: FCA chooses project within our scope and limit and as long as that is within the scope they will release it. Technically WFCN controls funds and they are doing it on our behalf. We need a lot of transparency and clarity

Linda: Not reflected that way in the document. Legal language says we have no control over the funds. It turns out Linda was looking at the 3-way agreement which the interim board was set to discuss the following day

Lisa: our scope is something we set, WFCN works with us as a partnership, taking the risks and providing umbrella coverage

Kristi: these agreements can feel very uncomfortable without trust. They aren't going to spend the funds on anything else

Debbie: will revisit that, it's subject to Kristi as executive director to her approval. She reports to her executive board and they would have ultimate say

Wa'Lynn: She works under Kristi with program in WFCN, she gave a vote of confidence for WFCN, it's more of a formality

Linda agreed to set it aside for now

No other questions for Kristi

Status of 3-way contract (WFCN, FCA, and MBF):

Debbie sent a copy of contract to interim board members who will meet tomorrow at 7, hope to be prepared to sign Friday afternoon. If we can get her questions in advance she would appreciate it. **Lisa** will send her an invitation to the Zoom meeting.

Carl moved that interim chair be able to sign fiscal agreements with MBF and WFCN **Richard** seconded, vote passed

Carl said we need formal motion for Rochelle as co-chair, **Rebecca** seconded, vote passed

Lisa: Bylaws and Articles of Incorporation are ready to send to attorney before we file for anything,

Parks and Rec update:

Debbie: funds will be released directly to P&R, working with **Carl**. The other \$35,000 will be released to WFCN with their fees as well

Carl: properties around here are selling and being resold quickly so there is very limited ground available. He is keeping an eye out. General areas are in the comprehensive plan, but can't make an offer until funds are there. As soon as P&R has funds they will lock something down

Richard: no way to have equipment and everything else ready to go without knowing how much land will cost; they have to know what is left over

Jessica: The comprehensive plan doesn't decide things for the community, it shares the community's input. If they want a more elaborate option requiring more funding, that's the community's decision. Community members might contribute individually (time, expertise, materials, etc.)

Carl: this gives community ownership

Jessica: that is what our community excels at, resulting in the EWRCC, North Fork Library

Lisa: Interim Board needs to promote these ideas once we have plans

501(c)3 status: Dawna: nothing to report until we get the Bylaws and Articles of Incorporation back from the attorney

Recruitment/selection status:

The Interim Board created a role for and **Linda** has taken it on. She's wondering if it's a conflict for her to be recruiting for the board when she has an interest herself. General discussion agreed that it was not. Her first goal is to gather material and get a small committee, she wants to get a volunteer coordinator in place, which will be interesting because we have such a range of types of volunteers. She's educating herself, she had some training in this before (Red Cross), and she has a process outline going. It will be a standing committee, and the goal is to meet the desires of volunteers while meeting the needs of the FCA.

Carl: misunderstanding? FCA won't oversee someone with shovel, that will be done by whomever receives the funds. The FCA won't do projects on their own, so we should only be working on how we choose volunteers and get them assigned

Lisa: The goal is to form a 9 member board, and find out what people are good at. **Linda** will be getting people to the meetings and then screening people to retain them for projects. **Rochelle** will help, and recommended not getting hung up on word "Volunteer" because it's more of a referral process

Jessica: FCA will become a hub to support other projects. She's noticed a difference in volunteerism based on paperwork required

Lisa: This is our biggest challenge, outreach

Carl agrees with **Jessica**, keep the requirements low, don't require resume

Linda states that's why we need someone like her to make those assessments

Rochelle agreed to deliver fliers, **Lisa** will get them to her. **Dawna** found student for Spanish translation. **Rochelle** knows someone for Russian, **Jessica** recommended putting their names on flier if they are OK with that

Kristi: they have a bulk stamp we can use to get a lower rate, also have a professional interpreter for review. This would incur a cost but would probably be cheap since they would just be reviewing, not translating

Carl: do fliers have to have address for bulk stamped? **Kristi** will check, **Wa'Lynn** will also check

Carl: 25% of area population is Russian or Ukranian **Richard and Carl** provided list from Water Dist

Jessica: have one flier with all three languages, **Shorty** agreed.

Rochelle has contacts at church to distribute as well

Future considerations:

Rebecca has idea for future funding, September chipping event in addition to April. About \$2500 for two days. She is designing fliers and signs generically for future use **Carl**: Rebecca won't need to know until July, but she replied if we can't do it she needs to know now so she can kick more rocks **Rona** agreed **Rebecca** needs to know within next two months so we can get on their calendar. **Rochelle** pointed out that **Rebecca** needs to fill out form so we are being transparent, how do we prove we're representing everyone fairly? We need to define our criteria. **Wa'Lynn** recommended written proposal and press release, offered to help, **Rebecca** wants to be on agenda for May.

Clarify- The written proposal with information on how the project effects social determinants of health was a suggestion to the interim board for creating criteria, then doing a press release about such criteria so the opportunity is not just for those in this group.

Linda: other projects like Neighborhood Watch Dog Group. **Lisa** is not at a point to ask for Watch Dog funding as there are other things right now.

Carl is working on other projects like tire amnesty, and a program for picking up larger things like appliances

The goal is to link as many things as possible to FCA, such as Watch Dogs, World Cafes, etc, so we can link on website and publicize.

Meeting adjourned at 7:30 PM.