

Earthskills Rendezvous Leadership Council

Meeting Minutes

March 5th, 2025

Held via Zoom

6:00 PM - 7:30 PM

Present:

- Other Attendees: Retha Nelson
- Staff:
 - General Coordinator: Sara Callaway
 - Financial Coordinator: Tom Buchenot
- Leadership Council:
 - President: Michael Ismerio
 - Treasurer: Fuz Sanderson
 - Secretary: Nick Wentworth
 - Members:
 - Danu Macon
 - Nate Olive

Quorum Established: Yes

LC Absences:

- Judy Langston

1. General Coordinator update from Sara Callaway:
 - a. Reviewed ticket sales and pricing compared to the budget.
 - b. Reviewed guest passes for the event with instructor coordinator
2. Financial Coordinator update from Tom Buchenot:
 - a. Worked on balancing quickbooks and paypal with incoming work trade payments
 - b. Reached out to staff members to discuss their event budgets
3. Approved 2026 event dates
 - a. April 20th-26th
 - b. October 19th-25th
4. Discussed unattended youths at the event. Impact on safety and liability, how can we best meet the needs of youths at our event.
5. Discussed 40th anniversary celebrations including organization for the ancestral games, fashion show, and historical slide show.
6. Discussed new applicants to the Leadership Council to help fill the 3 empty seats.
7. Voted to renew Fuz Sanderson's term for two years.

8. Next meeting will be held as the LC listening session in person at Rivercane Rendezvous.
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February 5th, 2025

Held via zoom

6:30 PM - 8:00 PM

Present:

- Other Attendees:
- Staff:
 - General Coordinator: Sara Callaway
 - Assistant Coordinator: Retha Nelson
 - Financial Coordinator: Tom Buchenot
- Leadership Council:
 - President: Michael Ismerio
 - Treasurer: Fuz Sanderson
 - Secretary: Nick Wentworth
 - Members:
 - Danu Macon
 - Nate Olive
 - Judy Langston

Quorum Established: Yes

1. Established the membership renewal schedule to begin the terms of service for LC members who have been present on the board since before the new bylaws established 2 year term lengths. Fuz Sanderson's seat will be voted on in March, Judy Langston in June, and Nate Olive in September.
2. Approved the minutes from the January 26th meeting.
3. Reviewed the incoming funds from another non-profit organization helping to fund compensation for Cherokee people who come to Rendezvous as teachers, speakers, and guests.
4. Discussed the possibility of elder and other discounts. Including what service they provide the community, and what cost they have for ERI as an organization. Proposed a task force including Judy Langston and Retha Nelson to communicate with the aging population of rendezvous about barriers to attending, both financial and otherwise.
5. Reviewed progress on 40th anniversary celebrations.

Following up 5 days after the meeting, Nate Olive requested we revisit the topic of the potential elder discount to investigate if it could fall under pre-existing funds. Added to the agenda for the 3/5/25 meeting

January 26th, 2025

Held in person near Asheville

10:00AM-6:00PM

Present:

- Other Attendees:
- Staff:
 - General Coordinator: Sara Callaway
 - Assistant Coordinator: Retha Nelson
 - Financial Coordinator: Tom Buchenot
- Leadership Council:
 - President: Michael Ismerio
 - Treasurer: Fuz Sanderson
 - Secretary: Nick Wentworth
 - Members:
 - Danu Macon

Quorum Established: No

LC Absences:

- Judy Langston (Excused)
- Nate Olive (Excused)

1. The attendees of the meeting discussed the importance of rendezvous to each of us and our personal history with the event.
2. Discussed individuals who have contributed to Earthskills Rendezvous' history and longevity, and how to include as many of them as possible in the 40th Anniversary event to the extent they are interested.
3. Reviewed the 2025 Rivercane budget and considered the cost increases associated with rent, food, and human resources. Then approved the pre planned annual 5% ticket increase in alignment with previous years to cope with increasing event costs. Reduced the Early Bird discount from 15% to 7.5%
4. Brainstormed plans for the 40th Anniversary including some community suggestions. Some examples included "Ancestral Olympics", special celebrations, and historical acknowledgements. Delegated tasks to board members and staff for followup. Also discussed how to make the event feel welcome for first-timers.

December 10th, 2024

Present:

- Staff:
 - General Coordinator: Sara Callaway
 - Assistant Coordinator: Retha Nelson
 - Financial Coordinator: Tom Buchenot
- Leadership Council:
 - President: Michael Ismerio

- Treasurer: Fuz Sanderson
- Secretary: Nick Wentworth
- Members:
 - Judy Langston
 - Nate Olive
 - Danu Macon

Quorum Established: Yes

- General Coordinator update from Sara Callaway
 - Checks have gone out to staff for hours worked leading up to the canceled Falling Leaves Rendezvous. Staff pay and other expenses added up to approximately \$11,000. Fundraising efforts are wrapping up, with totals around \$4,000, leaving roughly \$7,000 to be paid out from ERI's bank accounts.
 - Reviewed the potential for budget increases and the costs that may arise in planning the 40th anniversary. Aiming to review and approve final numbers at the January Meeting
 - Discussed possibilities of inviting entertainers, instructors, and descendants of Native teachers who shared their skills with the Earthskills community early in the gathering's history.
- The Leadership Council approved a discretionary budget of \$5,000 for use by the General Coordinator to start planning the 40th anniversary celebration.
- Leadership Council proposed a preliminary agenda for the January in person meeting

November 12th, 2024

Present:

- Staff:
 - General Coordinator: Sara Callaway
 - Financial Coordinator: Tom Buchenot
 - Assistant Coordinator: Retha
- Leadership Council:
 - President: Michael Ismerio
 - Secretary: Nick Wentworth
 - Members:
 - Judy Langston
 - Nate Olive
 - Tiffanie Pope (Resigning effective 11/12/2024)

Quorum Established: No

- Absences
 - Fuz Sanderson (Treasurer)
 - Danu Macon

- Opened the meeting with reflections to and from Leadership Council member Tiffanie Pope who resigned effective the date of this meeting. Massive gratitude to Tiffanie for her years of service, leadership, and support!
- Leadership Council reviewed and approved the staff pay to compensate hours worked by staff prior to Falling Leaves which was canceled due to the impact of Hurricane Helene.
 - A gofundme was created to help off-set the costs so that not all of it would have to be pulled from the limited funds in the ERI bank account
- Retha Nelson has been officially hired as the assistant coordinator
- Leadership Council has scheduled an in person meeting in January to help plan the Spring event and set goals for the future

September 17th, 2024

Present:

- Staff:
 - General Coordinator: Sara Callaway
 - Financial Coordinator: Tom Buchenot
- Leadership Council:
 - President: Michael Ismerio
 - Treasurer: Fuz Sanderson
 - Secretary: Nick Wentworth
 - Members:
 - Judy Langston
 - Nate Olive
 - Tiffanie Pope
 - Danu Macon

Quorum Established: Yes

- Received General Coordinator Update from Sara Callaway and Financial Coordinator Update from Tom Buchenot
 - Held a productive staff meeting around putting on Falling Leaves 2024. Starting to work with Retha Nelson on projects to ensure she is a good fit before officially hiring her as assistant coordinator.
 - Hired a new accountant and began reconciling relevant accounts with her new input.
 - Continue discussing 40th anniversary celebration. Based on precedent of former anniversary celebrations, the main event will be in the Spring, with the potential for more festivities in the fall.
 - Discussed potential fundraising strategies, including another round of ERI themed merchandise, grant-writing, and an advertisement package as presented by the Financial Coordinator Tom Buchenot
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August 5th, 2024

Present:

- Staff:
 - General Coordinator: Sara Callaway
- Leadership Council:
 - President: Michael Ismerio
 - Treasurer: Fuz Sanderson
 - Secretary: Nick Wentworth
 - Members:
 - Judy Langston
 - Nate Olive
 - Tiffanie Pope
 - Danu Macon

Quorum Established: Yes

- General Coordinator Report from Sara Callaway
 - Staff team preparations for Falling Leaves 2024 are going well, looking at hiring Retha Nelson as an assistant coordinator
 - The Council discussed the importance of celebrating the 40th anniversary of Earthskills Rendezvous
 - Reaching out to people who have expressed an interest in helping facilitate celebrations at the 40th anniversary.
 - Discussed the importance of maintaining a vision for the future of growth and change while celebrating our history.
 - The Council reviewed Michael Ismerio's role on the Board and voted to renew his term for 2 years
 - Next meeting to be held September 17th, 2024
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July 8th, 2024

Held via zoom

6:30pm-8:00pm

Present:

- Staff:
 - General Coordinator: Sara Callaway
 - Financial Coordinator: Tom Buchenot
- Leadership Council:
 - President: Michael Ismerio
 - Treasurer: Fuz Sanderson
 - Secretary: Nick Wentworth
 - Members:
 - Judy Langston
 - Nate Olive

■ Danu Macon

Quorum Established: Yes

LC Absences:

- Tiffanie Pope

1. General Coordinator Report

- a. Working with applicants to the assistant coordinator position to fill the role.
- b. Official preparations for Falling Leaves 2024 have begun including a preliminary budget based on current ticket prices, staff role activation/check ins, and updates to the gatebook.

2. Financial Coordinator Report

- a. Updated tax paperwork with the accountant and reviewed the proposed budget
- b. Attending a scheduled meeting with previous ERI financial staff on 7/13 to transition the secondary kitchen bank account ownership and clarify job processes

3. Term Limit petition

- a. The LC and senior staff discussed the petition signed by 11 people at Rivercane 2024 calling for the implementation of a 3 year term limit of 2 year terms on board members.
 - i. Discussion included discussing potential pros and cons to term limits.
 - ii. Based on conversation with community members including some who signed the petition, there is a lack of clarity on the specific problems which instituting term limits would address.
 - iii. The bylaws approved in March of 2024 include defining Leadership Council terms as 2 years in length, at which point a new term would be voted on by an affirmative vote from the LC or the member's tenure would end.
 - iv. The LC is continuing to focus on cultivating a diverse board in all ways including age, race, gender, sexual orientation, and socio-economic background.
 - v. Consensus reached by the LC around the need to communicate more with the community to promote transparency, understanding, and invite continued conversation as needed.

4. Term renewal Voting Schedule and voting protocol

- a. To ensure compliance with the new ERI LC bylaws, a staggered schedule of voting to start LC terms for Michael Ismerio, Tiffanie Pope, Fuz Sanderson, Nate Olive, and Judy Langston will be implemented between August 2024 and August 2025. Nick Wentworth and Danu Macon will be serving their terms which started in 12/23 and 3/24 respectively.
- b. This will begin with a vote for Michael Ismerio at the end of the 8/24 LC meeting.

5. The next LC meeting will be 8/5/2024.

June 10th, 2024

Present:

- Staff:
 - General Coordinator: Sara Callaway
 - Financial Coordinator: Tom Buchenot
- Leadership Council:
 - President: Michael Ismerio
 - Secretary: Nick Wentworth
 - Members:
 - Judy Langston
 - Nate Olive

Quorum Established: No

LC Absences:

- Danu
- Fuz Sanderson
- Tiffanie Pope

1. General Coordinator Report
 - a. Updates are being made to the website
 - b. A digest of survey feedback has been made and shared with staff members
 - c. Independent contractor contract template is being made for future gatherings
 - d. Considering new staff/work trade roles for helping to facilitate affinity spaces
2. Financial Report
 - a. Financial Coordinator Tom Buchenot presented on ERI's profit and loss, including expense breakdowns, with comparisons showing trends from past years.
 - b. Finalized numbers will be posted on the website's Financial Transparency tab before October 2024
 - c. The organization is looking for a new accountant who is more responsive than the current one
3. Term Renewal Voting Schedule
 - i. Discussion of term limits pushed to a time when more LC members are present
 - b. Under the current Bylaws LC members serve 2 year terms and then need to be voted back in. LC members Michael Ismerio, Nate Olive, Judy Langston, and Tiffanie Pope need to be assigned start dates for their current term over the course of the next year to stagger potential onboarding/offboarding of LC members. That process will begin with a vote in August to establish a new term for Michael Ismerio.

May 13th, 2024

Held via zoom

6:00pm-7:30pm

Present:

- Staff:
 - General Coordinator: Sara Callaway
 - Financial Coordinator: Tom Buchenot
- Leadership Council:
 - President: Michael Ismerio
 - Treasurer: Fuz Sanderson
 - Secretary: Nick Wentworth
 - Members:
 - Tiffanie Pope
 - Danu
 - Judy Langston
 - Nate Olive

Quorum Established: Yes

1. Celebrating Rivercane 2024 followed by the Coordinator Reports
 - a. Creating shared resources for staff to use in order to continuously improve the gathering
 - b. Discussed outcomes from the gathering with more children than ever before
 - c. Financial reports including fundraising numbers are being processed to be presented to the board and posted to the website when they are finalized
 2. Spring LC Listening Session Followup
 - a. A new committee has been formed under the name Racial Justice and Right Relations to focus community efforts
 - b. Discussion around implementation of term limits is ongoing
 3. 2024 Survey responses
 - a. LC members and senior staff reviewed the feedback surveys
 - b. Opened discussion and created an internal resource for categorizing similar responses as well as making sure relevant staff members receive feedback with actionable follow-up
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March 25th 2024

Held via zoom

6:00pm-7:30pm

Present:

- Staff:
 - General Coordinator: Sara Callaway
 - Financial Coordinator: Tom Buchenot
- Leadership Council:
 - President: Michael Ismerio
 - Treasurer: Fuz Sanderson

- Secretary: Nick Wentworth
- Members:
 - Nate Olive
 - Judy Langston
 - Tiffanie Pope

Quorum Established: Yes

1. Roll call
 - a. Listed above
 2. Board President Michael Ismerio read the [ERI Mission Statement](#)
 3. Approve February LC Meeting Minutes
 - a. Approved unanimously
 4. Coordinator Reports
 - a. General Coordinator Sara Callaway:
 - i. Working with staff members to ensure spring event is on track
 - ii. Planning to post an assistant coordinator position this spring
 - iii. [Financial transparency](#) uploaded to the website
 - b. Financial Coordinator Tom Buchenot
 - i. Working with Sara Callaway for access to bank accounts and other financial accounts
 - ii. Working with staff on updating operational budgets
 - iii. Looking into IRS policies to ensure ERI is in compliance
 5. Nick Wentworth for Secretary
 - a. Proposed by Michael Ismerio, 2nd by Judy Langston
 - i. Approved unanimously
 6. ERI Bylaws
 - a. LC discussed the current version of the proposed bylaws
 - b. Michael Ismerio Proposes new bylaws, 2nd by Judy Langston
 - i. Approved unanimously
 7. Danu for LC member
 - a. Proposed by Michael Ismerio, 2nd by Judy Langston
 - i. Approved unanimously
 8. April LC Meeting
 - a. Will be held on site at the 2024 Rivercane Rendezvous in the form of a community listening session
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February 5th, 2024

Held via zoom

6:00pm-7:30pm

Present:

- Other Attendees: Danu
- Staff:

- General Coordinator: Sara Callaway
- Financial Coordinator: Tom Buchenot
- Leadership Council:
 - President: Michael Ismerio
 - Treasurer: Fuz Sanderson
 - Members:
 - Nate Olive
 - Judy Langston
 - Nick Wentworth
 - Tiffanie Pope

Quorum Established: Yes

1. Welcome to our new Financial Coordinator
 - a. Tom Buchenot attended the meeting as the new Financial Coordinator
 - b. Danu attended as an observer interested in joining the Leadership Council
2. Approve meeting minutes from January
 - a. LC meeting minutes from September 2023 - January 2024 approved and posted on the ERI website
3. Sara Callaway - General Coordinator's Report
 - a. Tickets are live with no price increases from the Fall 2023 listings
 - b. Working on finalizing staff positions
 - i. New Assistant Instructor Coordinator Calen
4. Discuss New Bylaws
 - a. Discuss term limits
 - i. Consultant Linda Akey defines industry standard as 2 year terms with a 3-4 term limit
 - ii. LC members expressed views on instituting term limits
 1. Concerns around loss of institutional knowledge for an organization with limited year-round activity
 2. Potential benefits of turnover to keep the organization vibrant
 - iii. Discussed alternatives including
 1. hybrid structure with some long term seats and some short term seats
 2. Structure allowing long term board members to return after a break
 - b. Decide whether or not to increase the board to 9 members
 - i. Discussed impact on bringing in new energy while preserving institutional knowledge
 - ii. Discussed additional availability for the high priority of increasing diversity
 - c. Discussion of Bylaws tabled for continuation offline
5. Review 2023 Falling Leaves Rendezvous Survey Responses
 - a. Discussed methods for increasing survey responses in the future

- b. Reviewed the feedback that provided celebrations or actionable requests for change
 - i. Forwarded positive feedback to relevant staff and instructors
 - ii. Discussed requests for change to be implemented at Rivercane 2024
 - 6. Scheduled the next meeting for March 11th, 2024
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January 8th, 2024

6:00pm-7:30pm

Held via Zoom

Present:

- Coordinators:
 - General: Sara Callaway
- Leadership Council:
 - Chairperson: Michael Ismerio
 - Treasurer: Fuz Sanderson
 - Members:
 - Judy Langston
 - Tiffanie Pope
 - Nate Olive
 - Nick Wentworth

Quorum Established

Agenda:

- Welcome Nick Wentworth
 - Members welcomed Nick Wentworth to the LC
- Approve meeting minutes from November and December
 - Determined that meeting minutes would be approved via email
- Sara Callaway - Coordinator's Report
 - Updated the website with a new "get involved" tab including job postings
 - Reviewed 2023 Financials with Whip Randolph & recategorized budget
 - Working with Treasurer Fuz Sanderson to create visual aids
 - Presented 2023 Financials to the LC and answered questions members asked
- Fuz Sanderson - Treasurer Report on 2023 Budget Actuals
 - Reviewed need for a smooth transition from Whip Randolph to an eventual new Financial Coordinator
 - To current knowledge, ERI is in compliance with tax regulations and reporting requirements
 - Discussed addressing current savings balance and insuring funds are cared for properly
- General Coordinator 2023 Bonus proposal

- Proposal for bonuses thanking senior staff for significant emotional and logistical contributions during 2023
 - Michael Ismerio proposed \$1000 to General Coordinator and \$500 to staff Treasurer
 - 2nd by Nick Wentworth
 - Approved by consensus
 - Choose 2025 Rendezvous dates - FYSA Full moon Saturday April 12 and Monday Oct 6th
 - Michael Ismerio proposed the following dates for 2025 events:
 - April 14th-20th
 - October 6th-12th
 - 2nd by Nate Olive
 - Approved by consensus
 - Review [FLR survey responses](#) (Please read these before the meeting)
 - Reviewed notes taken by LC members after reviewing responses
 - In depth discussion tabled for the next meeting due to time constraints
 - Discuss and Approve New Bylaws
 - Discussed significance of potentially expanding the size of the board to 9
 - In depth discussion tabled for the next meeting due to time constraints
 - Other Business
 - Discussed potential new LC members
 - Impacted by the result of the bylaws discussion
 - Next Meeting scheduled for February 5th, 2024
-

December 11th, 2023

6:00pm-7:30pm

Present:

- Staff:
 - General Coordinator: Sara Callaway
- Leadership Council:
 - President: Michael Ismerio
 - Secretary: Tiffanie Pope
 - Members:
 - Fuz Sanderson
 - Judy Langston
 - Nate Olive

Quorum Established

LC Absences:

- None

Meeting Minutes:

1. Coordinator Report: Presented by Sara Callaway
 - a. Individual post event debriefs
 - b. Creating job descriptions
 - c. Instructor Coordinator Alex Kilgore requested an assistant
 - d. Requested Leadership Council hire new Financial Coordinator by February 2024 if possible to assist with Rivercane 2024 in April
 - e. Planning to send newsletter with all current job openings
2. New LC members
 - a. Discussed current applicants to the LC
 - b. Discussed need to actively pursue candidates for the LC to help encourage new energy and diversity
 - c. Michael Ismerio proposed inducting Nick Wentworth onto the Board
 - i. 2nd from Fuz Sanderson
 - ii. Approved by consensus
 - d. Discussed drafting a response for all applicants who were not voted onto the board
 - i. Fuz Sanderson to send an example letter to meet this need
 - e. Discussed LC applicants for viability as board members as well as other positions in the organization
3. Finalize bookkeeper job description
 - a. Settled on job title of Financial Coordinator
 - b. Whip submitted a job description that Sara Callaway reformatted to be consistent with other staff job descriptions and edited to reflect current understandings of what the organization needs from this role. Sara also created a job application to post online.
 - c. Discussed details of pay and hours for new Financial Coordinator position in the context of other staff positions
4. Propose Fuz Sanderson as Board Treasurer
 - a. Nate Olive proposed Fuz Sanderson become Board Treasurer
 - i. 2nd by Michael Ismerio
 - ii. Approved by Consensus
5. Choose 2025 Rendezvous dates - Full moon Saturday April 12 and Monday Oct 6th
 - a. Proposed Spring event April 14th-20th and October 6th-12th for 2025 events.
 - i. Not approved, tabled for next meeting
6. Review the post-event budget.(actuals)
 - a. 2023 financials being worked on, tabled until January meeting
7. Feedback on the "where the money goes" pie charts, and decide if we are going to publish them.
 - a. Tabled until Sara Callaway holds meeting with Whip Randolph on recategorizing ERI expenses
8. Review feedback forms
 - a. Not discussed
9. Proposed in-person January meeting

- a. Requested by Judy Langston
 - b. Dates of 13th-14th suggested with Asheville location
 - i. No consensus on location or viability, tabled for offline discussion
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November 13th, 2023

Present:

- Staff:
 - General Coordinator: Sara Callaway
- Leadership Council:
 - President: Michael Ismerio
 - Secretary: Tiffanie Pope
 - Members:
 - Judy Langston
 - Nate Olive

Quorum Established

A. Consultation with Linda Akey of Competent Assistance for Nonprofits.

i. Michael and Sara consulted with her beforehand.

ii. Michael planned for this training.

iii. Before the meeting Linda reviewed our bylaws.

iv. The Leadership Council attended a training session with Linda Akey for this monthly Leadership Council meeting.

A. She instructed us on what is required of all non profit boards of directors.

B. She advised us on our bylaws.

October 6th, 2023

Falling Leaves Rendezvous Leadership Council Listening Session

~10am-1pm

Meeting held in person in the stage area near the kitchen at Avalon

Present:

- Staff:
 - General Coordinator: Sara Callaway
 - Treasurer: Whip Randolph
- Leadership Council:
 - President: Michael Ismerio
 - Secretary: Tiffanie Pope

- Members:
 - Fuz Sanderson
 - Judy Langston
 - Nate Olive via phone

Quorum established

1. Michael convened the meeting.
2. He set the intention of the meeting as an opportunity for the Leadership Council to listen as individuals share feedback.
3. He detailed the format of the listening session.
 - i. John Lash timekeeper
 - ii. 2 min per person
 - iii. we won't be responding to each person
 - iv. at the end of the session, open it up to board members to share reflections.
 - v. tiffanie is taking notes
4. He laid ground rules.
 - i. requests: respect, share perspective while honoring there are other perspectives
 - ii. Concise
 - iii. assume positive intent. we're here bc we love rendezvous
 - iv. address issues, not people
 - v. listen with care for deeper meaning folks are trying to share
 - vi. Aura kept track of the order of speakers
5. Michael gave an update of what the Rendezvous Leadership Council and staff have been doing since the Spring 2023 event.
 - Sara, Nick, and Justin stepped up to create conflict resolution/harm reduction policy. It was approved by the LC. It is now posted on board and at First Aid. It is a work in progress, open to feedback.
 - Sara initiated the creation of a Care Team to support people with emotional stress, conflict, and other issues during gathering. Trying it for the first time this event.
 - Sara brought in John Lash at the event as a professional conflict navigator to hold space and support the staff, LC, and community with communication and conflict
 - The LC approved the created LGBTQIA space in response to Alinahh et al proposal
 - There is one proposal in review for increasing equity and building community bridges submitted by Phillip Nogueras
 - We hired a new Equity Program Manager and BIPOC Liaison and we are continuing to offer an event-supported BIPOC space (began spring of 2023)
 - The LC hired a professional nonprofit consultant to advise us

- To increase accessibility and transparency, we posted the LC email address and official meeting minutes on our website
- We are working to create an online proposal form for change ideas from within the community
- There is an incident report form on our website. The only people who currently see are the General Coordinator (Sara) and the leadership council president (Michael). We are working to make it available for the Care Team.
- Michael is working with the NonProfit Consultant to update our bylaws, which are the foundation of how our organization operates

6. Michael Opened the floor for community feedback.

Here is the Community Feedback we captured in our notes, broadly grouped into areas of concern. Please forgive any mistakes or accidental omissions in the info we gathered.

LEADERSHIP

- Want more listening sessions like this
- Want more communication
- Wanting transparency about LC term limits
- Wanting more training (equity, racial justice, anti-oppression) for leaders in the community
- More diversity in LC and staff
- Would like someone on the LC in a subsistence economic status (economic diversity)
- How to prevent burnout for folks in leadership/staff roles?
- Desire for sociocracy
- Desire for more horizontal vs vertical leadership
- Celebration for folks' contributions! Thank you!

CONFLICT

- How do we handle conflict and microaggressions? Desire to keep talking about it
- Concern for the belonging of people who speak out against things
- Feeling too much pushback when concerns are brought to leadership
- Wanting public acknowledgement and spaces to discuss conflicts that are up in the community
- Clear accountability desired

STAFF

- Request for clarity about job descriptions and expectations for staff, how hiring works, contracts
- On-boarding support for staff desired (particularly for folks in new positions)
- Holding boundaries about what we're willing to accept in the work culture, desire for clarity about the work culture of Rendezvous
- Want to work in an environment where people feel safe and feel heard

- Desire for systems for roles being passed on, connection between previous folks and new folks, structural knowledge

EQUITY

- Desire for us to lean into discomfort
- Want the history of the land brought by a person of that heritage, daily land acknowledgement
- Desire for Pre-camp for BIPOC and LGBTQIA
- Auto-request donations for BIPOC fund at ticket checkout
- Commit a percentage of ticket sales to BIPOC fund
- Create a paid position for a community bridge builder
- Please share all proposals with the community that have been submitted

WORKTRADE

- Desire for worktrade crew lead compensation
- Concern that worktrade folks are getting left behind and not provided for as well as others in food, tools, compensation, etc
- Contrast of people who “play” at primitive skills vs people who “live” the skills, desire to uplift people who “live” the skills
- Would like to have a lower worktrade requirement for people from the global majority or who are neurodivergent

YOUTH

- Concerns about people working with children (Do we do background checks?)
- Desire for scholarships for kids

INSTRUCTORS/CLASSES

- More classes taught by women, indigenous folks, queer folks, POC, more instructor diversity
- Desire for more soft skills, soft skills as survival skills
- Pay all instructors
- Concern for the growing number of materials fees per class, as an accessibility issue

RESOURCES

- Financial transparency desired
- Curiosity about resource allocation
- Concern about economic disparity
- Public mutual aid space/community resource space desired
- Need to go after funding, grants
- Have an online store
- Remove price for dog entry
- Allow driving in daily
- Missing breakfast, desire to create a more gathered scene

September 25th, 2023

6:00pm-7:30pm

Present:

- Staff
 - General Coordinator: Sara Callaway
 - Treasurer: Whip Randolph
- Leadership Council
 - President: Michael Ismerio
 - Secretary: Tiffanie Pope
 - Members
 - Judy Langston
 - Nate Olive

Quorum Established

1. The Leadership Council approved the minutes from the August meeting
2. Sara emailed the Leadership Council her monthly Coordinator Update
 - a. The Leadership Council read it.
3. Treasurer's Report
 - a. Whip emailed the Leadership Council a Treasurer's Report.
 - b. The Leadership Council read it.
 - i. Leadership Council members asked clarifying questions.
4. Linda Akey
 - a. Michael and Sara both had meetings with Linda Akey and feel pleased with the results.
 - b. Linda Akey will instruct a Board of Directors training program during our November zoom meeting. She will also review our bylaws and give us feedback on them.
 - i. The Leadership Council agreed with this plan.
5. Conflict Policy
 - a. Sara, Justin and Nick co-created a new Conflict Policy and emailed it to the Leadership Council.
 - b. The Leadership Council read it.

- i. Leadership Council members asked clarifying questions.
 - ii. The Leadership Council agreed on it.
 - 6. Redesigning in-person Leadership Council meeting at Falling Leaves Rendezvous
 - a. Michael proposed changing the agenda of our in-person meeting at the in-person event to a listening session where members of the community share their feedback and concerns.
 - b. Other Leadership Council members agreed to this.
 - 7. Budget approval
 - a. Whip shared the budget for the coming October event.
 - i. Leadership Council members read it.
 - ii. Leadership Council members asked clarifying questions.
 - iii. Whip answered them.
 - iv. The Leadership Council approved the budget.
 - 8. Response to Leadership Council applicants
 - a. Michael volunteered to write a response to Leadership Council applicants to inform them of the progress we have made since we announced we were seeking applicants, and why we have decided to wait to move forward on the interviewing process.
 - i. The Leadership Council agreed to this.
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August 14th, 2023

6:30-8pm

Meeting held via Zoom

Present:

General Coordinator: Sara Callaway, (Treasurer: Whip Randolph - absent)

Leadership Council:

Chair: Michael Ismerio

Members: Fuz Sanderson, Judy Langston, Nate Olive, Tiffanie Pope

Quorum established

Agenda

- 1. July LC minutes
 - a. The Leadership Council reviewed and edited the minutes via email.
 - b. The Leadership Council approved the meeting minutes.
 - c. Sara will post the minutes online and share with elders.
- 2. Coordinator Update
 - a. Sara sent out her monthly Coordinator Update via email.

- b. The Leadership Council read it.
 - c. Sara shared some details.
 - i. She celebrated that ticket sales are going well.
 - ii. She highlighted that she hired a new Equity Program Coordinator, Phi Ranglin.
 - iii. She is still looking for a site coordinator.
 - d. Michael would like to see Whip write and send us a monthly update too.
 - i. He will ask him to do so.
- 3. Leadership Council candidate review
 - a. The Leadership Council discussed applicants and potential candidates.
 - b. The Leadership Council agreed that we want a strong interview process before going further with candidates.
 - c. Members believed that discussing this matter with a nonprofit consultant to learn best practices would be wise.
- 4. Nonprofit consultant review
 - a. Michael reported back after his initial consult with Linda Akey.
 - i. He was impressed and pleased and proposed we consult with her further.
 - ii. Members requested that she share a resume and references before we hire her.
 - A. Michael agreed to ask her for this.
- 5. BIPOC space and potentially Queer space
 - a. Sara proposed to continue hosting a BIPOC space for the next event.
 - i. Sara reported that Phi felt good about the BIPOC space at the last event.
 - b. Sara proposed we support a Queer space as has been proposed by members of our community.
 - ii. The space will be supported with a facilitator, tarp and firewood.
 - iii. The Leadership Council discussed concerns about other identities asking for a designated space, and where to draw the line.
 - A. It was suggested that it makes sense to draw the line at marginalized identities.
- 6. Meeting with Conflict Policy Team
 - a. Sara proposed that we schedule a meeting with the team working on conflict policy to review it in September.
- 7. Joint LC and staff meeting
 - a. Sara shared that staff members would like a joint meeting with the Leadership Council to facilitate direct lines of communication and a more shared reality.
 - b. Sara suggested we do this in September.
- 8. Equity training
 - a. Sara has been doing research on possible equity trainings for LC and staff.

July 10th, 2023

6-7:40pm

Meeting held via Zoom

Present:

General Coordinator: Sara Callaway, Treasurer: Whip Randolph

Leadership Council:

Chair: Michael Ismerio

Members: Fuz Sanderson, Judy Langston, Nate Olive, Tiffanie Pope

Quorum established

Agenda:

1. June meeting minutes:

- a. The Leadership Council reviewed and edited the minutes via email.
- b. The Leadership Council approved the meeting minutes.
- c. Sara will post the minutes online and share with elders.

2. Ticket price change:

- a. Sara proposed to raise overall ticket prices 5% to help cover the rising rental rate and other costs.
 - I. A change to how tickets have been priced previously is to remove the multi-day discount from 2-day tickets. The multi-day discount starts at 3 days.
 - li. Adjust full event tickets to be calculated at 5.75 days instead of 6 to reflect more accurately what's being provided.
 - iii. The Leadership Council approved these changes.
 - iv. Sara will pass along ticket price details to Colleen for August ticket sales.

3. Coordinator update:

- a. Sara continues to work on a new conflict protocol.
 - i. Whip, Fuz, Nick and Justin are working with her.
- b. She had a couple phone calls with prospective equity consultants.
- c. She wrote job description and sent to a few possible fits for equity point person
- d. Sara cited an ongoing need for continued conversation with the LC around our plans for Equity, Inclusion and Belonging.
- e. She is in the process of reaching out to staff to learn who will be working Falling Leaves 2023.

- f. Sara will look into getting Rendezvous a Zoom account.
 - i. Up until a few months ago, a private account was used.

4. Michael's update on bylaws:

- a. He submitted our questions to a lawyer but didn't hear back.
- b. He has a free consultation scheduled with CJ (from Firefly)'s mom who is a non profit consultant.

5. Nate's proposal about bylaws:

- a. He proposed to remove the amendment requiring that our organization be membership-based.
 - i. This was put into the bylaws years ago but never implemented.
 - ii. LC had discussed previously and approved removing

6. New LC members process:

- a. Applicant and potential Leadership Council member update.
 - i. There have been 3 applications submitted
 - ii. The Leadership Council reviewed a list of other potential applicants.
- b. Nate submitted a proposal for the interview process.
 - i. It is similar to what others have read from Firefly's application document.
- c. The Leadership Council agreed to review proposals and interview questions for potential LC members and decide on them via email before our August meeting.
 - i. Nate will send out an email spearheading this process.
- d. The August Leadership Council meeting will be devoted to discussing potential Leadership Council members.

7. Queer space proposal brought by Alinahh:

- a. After Rivercane Rendezvous 2023, Alinahh submitted a proposal via email.
 - i. The Leadership Council read the email.
 - ii. The Leadership Council discussed the proposal.
 - iii. The Leadership Council will further discuss via email.
- A. Sara will start the thread

8. Next meeting August 14, 6:30

June 12th, 2023

6-7:40pm

Meeting held via Zoom

Present:

General Coordinator: Sara Callaway, Treasurer: Whip Randolph

Leadership Council:

Chair: Michael Ismerio

Members: Fuz Sanderson, Judy Langston, Nate Olive, Tiffanie Pope

Quorum established

Agenda:

1. Leadership Council application process:

a. Update on applications received

I. We have received 2 applications

II. Tiffanie replied to each person to let them know their application had been received and that they'll receive an email with next steps.

b. We want to ensure that the application process is done thoroughly, professionally, and well.

i. Leadership Council members work closely on oftentimes difficult and tense issues; a good fit is very important.

i. Relationships with potential members take time to cultivate.

ii. The fact that the position is unpaid and involves hours of monthly effort means that finding interested people is that much more difficult.

iii. We are discussing how the interviewing process of applicants can be done well.

2. Review of 5 points petition and update of our response:

a. Immediately diversify LC:

I. LC agrees that diversifying the LC is important and our goal,

II. LC commits to relationship building with BIPOC and Cherokee people seeking a potential good fit.

b. Pause to Equity Program:

i. Though we have received negative feedback from participants of color, we also have received numerous reports of positive feedback from participants of color.

ii. LC agreed that we plan to continue the Equity Program

iii. Sara has written up a job description for the Equity Program liaison and is in the editorial process with help from others.

iv. We want to ask recipients of past scholarships for feedback to hear how their experience was. This needs to be delegated.

v. We commit to working to make our events feel welcoming to future recipients in a strategic way we can actually commit to instead of things that sound good but can't actually be implemented.

vi. LC members have been consulting other organizations with a similar focus, compiling names of consultants, training programs and organizations offering services to support us with this process.

c. Direct link to LC:

i. We are making our monthly minutes available for viewing on the website

ii. Nate has shared an official format for Tiffanie to use to make them easier to read and understand.

iii. Minutes will be reviewed between LC meetings and minutes from the previous month's meeting will be approved at the following month's meeting

d. Clarifying mission statement to include equity:

i. LC discussed and agreed that our mission is teaching and sharing earthskills. Equity and inclusion are important values that drive how we carry out our mission.

–e. Documented protocol to handle conflict and harm:

i. Sara is hiring a conflict mediator to be present at Falling Leaves Rendezvous.

ii. She is working with others to develop a new conflict protocol and will have it ready to implement by Falling Leaves Rendezvous 2023.

iii. She will wait to decide exactly what will be done about the conflict between Jon and Makeda until a new protocol is decided.

3. Approve last month's Leadership Council meeting's minutes:

a. Leadership Council reviewed and approved minutes.

i. Sara will post them on the website.

ii. Sara will include the link in the announcement outlining our initial public response to the 5 points petition.

4. Writing the initial public response to the 5 Points Petition:

a. Nate and Tiffanie will write the response with Sara's help.

i. The Leadership Council will approve it.

ii. Sara will publish it publicly by the week of the Firefly Gathering.

5. Timing of next few months Leadership Council meetings:

- a. Nate requested that we shift our monthly meeting a half hour later.
 - b. The Leadership Council agreed that for the next few months we would meet a half hour later.
-

May 8th, 2023

6pm-8pm

Meeting held via Zoom

Present:

General Coordinator: Sara Callaway, Treasurer: Whip Randolph

Leadership Council:

Chair: Michael Ismerio

Members: Alex Kilgore, Fuz Sanderson, Judy Langston, Nate Olive, Tiffanie Pope

Quorum established

Agenda (Received May 3, by Michael Ismerio)

1. Celebrations from Rivercane 2023

2. 2024 Dates:

- a. Dates of April 15-21, Oct 14-20, to land on good moon cycle
 - i. LC votes 6-0 to approve the dates
 - ii. pending Avalon approval

3. Update on incident reports submitted:

- a. there were 2

4. Update on applications submitted for Leadership Council:

- a. there has been one submitted

5. Volunteers to help with equity work:

- a. Nick Wentworth, Justin Godbey, Katie Mann, Phillip Noguerras, Andrew H
- b. Michael has planned with CJ (chair of Firefly Board of Directors) to have monthly calls to learn and share

6. Discuss and take action on petition brought to us at the LC meeting at Rivercane:

- a. Diversify the Board immediately in identity:

- I. To learn more about how to do this wisely, Michael plans to talk with CJ of Firefly and also Russell Sparks of Buckeye Gathering about the process.
 - b. Pause to Equity Fund:
 - I. LC discussed and decided that we will continue the Scholarship/Equity fund.
 - ii. Nate volunteered to return to that committee.
 - c. Direct line of communication to LC:
 - I. LC discussed and decided to post our LC email address on the website.
 - d. Clarify Mission regarding equity:
 - I. LC discussed and agreed that our mission is teaching and sharing earthskills. Equity and inclusion are important values that drive how we carry out our mission.
 - e. Documented process for harm/conflict:
 - I. Sara shared in a recent email with staff what Rendezvous' current protocol on harm/conflict is.
 - li. During this meeting LC agreed that further discussion is needed.
 - iii. Various folks are working on crafting potential conflict/harm processes, including Whip, Sara, and Justin & Nick
 - iv. Whip proposed that we decide what conduct we are ok with, and what we are not ok with.
7. Compensate Sara for extra work she's done during Rivercane and in followup efforts:
- a. LC agreed that we'd like to compensate Sara for the extra hours and energy she has put and will put into addressing this both at the event and afterwards.
 - b. LC will vote privately via email.
8. Public Response about Rivercane events:
- I. Sara agreed to use the email that she wrote to staff about conflict protocol and equity as a starting point to craft an email to share with the public.
 - li. LC will approve, and our names will be listed at the bottom with Sara's.
9. Update about Jon and Makeda conflict and conflict protocol:
- i. Discussed and LC agreed to apply the new protocol we are in the process of crafting to this conflict.
 - li. Sara requested not to be the point person for conflict in the future.
 - lii. LC agreed to make point person for conflict at gatherings a separate position in the future.
10. Rivercane Budget review:
- a. Meeting ran long and we ran out of time for this.
11. Action Items:
- a. Alex will reach out to Shannon Wentworth re: bookkeeping
 - b. Sara will put the LC email address on the website so that folks know how to contact us, Michael monitors it.

- c. Sara will work on a document similar to the one she sent to staff that we can use as a public statement regarding conflict protocol and equity.
 - I. she will email it to LC for approval and editions
- d. Sara will continue to work with others to craft a new conflict/harm process