

NNREC fundraising meeting 2007-07-13
Allison, Dan, Stephanie, Jonathan (part)

The spring budget is the latest, has not been updated since because bookkeeping and reporting is behind, and there have been no major changes in funding (this budget is dated 2007-01-24 and was adopted by the board 2007-03-10).

Priorities for NNREC fundraising are salary for the Executive Director salary and making sure that people giving us money are happy with the products.

For the near future, until the funding crisis is resolved, the Executive Director will spend 50% of time on fundraising, with about 2/3 of time towards operating funds and 1/3 towards project funds; our target for the remainder of this fiscal year is \$25K.

We will work on a fundraising plan starting in September, with the objective to have a 2008 budget and a fundraising plan which supports the budget, in place by the January 2008 board meeting; the fundraising plan will identify a significant portion of funds as sustainable - continuing for more than one year or continuously. The plan will address who is working on grants, when they are due and when awarded, target amount, and source of funds.

What does Dan need from board?

1. work with Dan to identify one or more major operating grants
2. letters of support for applications
3. meetings with funders
4. promptly review grant applications, and if appropriate, write them for review by Dan

We discussed becoming a partner with United Way. Dan and Stephanie will meet with United Way of Northern Nevada and the Sierra, and Dan and Allison or others will meet with United Way of Southern Nevada. Nevada Outdoor School is a partner with United Way of the Great Basin (the remainder of the state) and has found them willing to fund environmental education, however, our experience so far has been that UW Northern Nevada funds only social service activities; we don't have any experience yet with UW Southern Nevada.

We discussed the community foundations. Dan and Stephanie will meet with Chris Askin of the Community Foundation of Western Nevada in Reno, and Dan and Allison or others will meet with Nevada Community Foundation in Las Vegas.

Between now and September meeting, Dan will be working on:

1. completing all reimbursements and related reporting to funders
2. bringing bookkeeping up to date so that financial reports can be completed (2007Q2), budget can be updated (with addition of actuals column to the format), and a report made to the board on financial status by the August board meeting
3. Dan will clarify funding status with NAAEE on EETAP Capacity and EETAP Certification in 2007 and 2008
4. follow up with NDF on 2007-2008 grant

5. if there are high quality grant opportunities (significant funds and reasonable likelihood of success) with deadlines before the September meeting, Dan and board members will proceed with working on these as soon as possible

From: "Jonathan Mueller" <jonathan@sierranevadajourneys.org>

Date: 2007-07-23 11:42:36 PM PDT

To: "NNREC Director" <director@nnrec.org>, "Allison Brody" <allison.brody@unlv.edu>, "Stephanie Lefevre" <orchid@cascadeaccess.com>

Subject: Jonathan's Fundraising Thoughts

Fundraising Committee –

Thanks for including me on that meeting and for writing up the notes. I apologize again for my phone issues as I really wanted to be a part of the meeting. Allow me to share a few thoughts:

- I strongly support making the ED salary the number one fundraising priority (with a second priority making sure our current funders are happy). I also agree that Dan should be spending 50% of his time on fundraising.
- I recently went through the one-week Grantsmanship Center program (<http://www.tgci.com/>) and highly recommend it. With a scholarship it costs around \$400 and over the course of the week you write – and get great constructive feedback on – a grant. \$400 to get a well-written grant was well worth it for SNJ and I think it can be for Dan, as well. It also gives you access to a searchable database of grants. The link to that database is: <http://www.tgcialumni.com>, username: sierra6130 password: empoweringyouth . Dan, I'd encourage you to check out the website for potential funding sources. Once I'm back in town I'll be combing through it and can see if there's any near-to-medium term grants available for NNREC.
- Operating funds for this year are clearly important ... though they're generally the hardest to get, as you all are well aware. This may be out of left-field – and may not accord with the intentions of the strategic plan – but I'm curious if there may be some way to charge fees for some of the programs/certifications/projects that NNREC does. A “grants-for-programs/fees-for-overhead” model – if it's something that can accord with current programs and the strategic plan, and even if it's only a few thousand \$'s a year – will go some way toward getting Dan's salary paid and keeping the lights on.
- I don't know that you'll need a 3rd person at the Community Foundation of Western Nevada meeting with Chris Askin, but he and I have (an admittedly short) history since the CFWN served as SNJ's Fiscal Agent, so I'd be more than happy to be a part if someone can't attend that meeting.
- Re: board member involvement in grant-writing and the “what Dan needs from the board” section ... a model that's worked well in the past for me is to have a board member “sponsor” each grant that the ED works on. Board members many times see grant-writing as an intimidating process if they have to do it on their own. A sponsor, however, would have responsibility for working with Dan to strategize how to approach the grant (understanding funders' objectives, deciding tone, appropriate content, etc.), working on getting letters of support, serving as the first line of review once Dan has written the grant (and prior to his submitting it to the entire

board or fund-raising committee for review), follows up with the funder, etc.. It gets the board member invested in the grant process and involved in important governance work without unnecessarily overwhelming them. Each board member could aim to sponsor one grant each year.

- I've left a message with John Hagar of Sierra Power to follow up on the mini-grant proposal but haven't heard back. I'll try him again before I leave.

Just thoughts. I hope you all are having a great middle-of-the-summer. I'm off to the Tetons until the 13th to lead a trip so unfortunately I'll miss the next board meeting. I look forward to catching up on my return and raising money to kingdom-come!

Best, Jonathan

Jonathan Mueller Executive Director Sierra Nevada

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