

**MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF THE BOARD OF DIRECTORS
FRIENDS OF NIGER
BY SKYPE
April 22, 2018**

Present: Meredith McGehee, Tom Corcoran, Larry Koff at 7:33, John Baird, Steve Bushell, Amy Wilson and Penni St. Hilaire

Absent: John Hutchison who was not able to connect, Yari Rabiou, Seybou Douma

The meeting was called to order at 7:07 pm EST

The minutes were approved as corrected.

Camel Express Newsletter: John B read a list, on email, about what was to go in the newsletter. The solar panels article is in progress. He needs a letter from the President which Meredith will provide. He has a picture of the American Ambassador to Niger, Eric Whitaker, in a FON tee shirt. John B will reach out to Douma for input. He is trying to reach Anna Falkovitch for help with Mail Chimp. The BU archives could be mentioned.

Nomination Process for 2018 Board Members: A nomination form was prepared and shared with the Board. The nominating committee is Larry, Penni, John B and Amy. John B will contact Phyllis Forbes and Leslie Natzke; Amy will contact Ken Patterson and Dale Downs. It was noted that in the bylaws everyone is reelected every two years. Maybe we should have scattered terms. The bylaws need a look. Members will be given 3 weeks to submit nominations.

Survey: Amy sent out a summary of the survey goals, findings and next steps prior to the meeting. (Attached.) She plans to send out findings to responders.

Treasurer's report: Larry provided an income and expense summary for 2017, attachment 2. Currently there is \$37,251. This includes the reserves of \$6,004. The PayPal account has \$4,314. \$27,000 is available at the time of the meeting. There is \$14,370 in unrestricted funds. Larry needs to contact Pam White to discuss the Jane Huser funds. The Lightbown's funds are restricted.

Amy is moving to get information on QuickBooks with a lot more capability to look at details. Amy and Larry are working to get more information on QuickBooks so there can be quarterly reports. Meredith noted that we need to increase our transparency and move into the 20th century. Larry and Amy will walk us through the system at the next board meeting.

Projects: A project update was provided prior to the meeting. Attachment 3. We now have a project numbering system.

Tom C said we need to support Mustapha Harou for the Maringa project. We may have one more village for the project. The question remains as to how to support the plantations up to raining season. Ox carts during dry season? Meredith noted that Tom D had raised concerns about ox carts and water. Tom C said there was no particular request at this point in time. Amy said we need to make sure the projects is sustainable. There was a discussion about the issues.

Amy's drafted a request for proposal for the Maringa project for an organization to analyze the work to date and make recommendations about future activity. Meredith was confused about actual need and was not sure we have the capacity to find people to carry out the study. We need more clarity on what we need to do to make the Maringa project a success. There was no proposal at this meeting. The board needs to see something before the next meeting. The projects committee needs to get something to the board.

Amy moved to send a second installment for 2018 - 02, sewing machines for the Women's Sewing Cooperative. Larry asked how much, when. He will contact Tom D for details. The motion was unanimously approved.

Fundraising: Tom C told the Rotary that we are on hold.

Website: When the website was refreshed about 5 years ago that was about the limit of Steve's capability to refresh. Steve has been doing this for 10 to 12 years.

Next meeting June 24 at 7 pm EDT.

Need to revisit pass through questions. Amy developed a proposal but nothing has been agreed or implemented.. Larry and Amy need to keep Meredith informed on progress.

The meeting was adjourned at 8:24 pm, EDT.

Respectfully submitted,

Penni St. Hilaire
Recording Secretary
6/10/2018

Attachment 1

Recap of Survey goals: to gather ideas suggestions and encourage involvement of members. Important categories were: connections & networks that might help us implement projects, ideas about FON organization & management, ideas about FON projects, skills, interests, abilities, hopes & dreams for FON. The scope of this survey went way beyond an inventory of members and provided some of the information that might be generated in a strategic planning session. Thanks to John Baird for helping to sort through all this.

Overview:

- the response was GREAT 104!! Lots of thoughtful comments
 - I lumped and compiled and shortened in an attempt to make it more digestible.
 - MANY offers to help and get involved, more came in the last half which I have not sorted through yet
- * many ideas offered would be easy to implement and support some of the existing direction of the board very well. I think a working group could prioritize some ideas and reach out to start involving some of the folks easily, quickly. What might initially seem like more work would bring huge dividends in my opinion and reduce current workload by sharing it around in bringing in new folks.

Next Steps:

- Complete analysis of latest responses, close the survey on Survey Monkey (since I had to pay a monthly fee)
- Share compiled, condensed analysis of ideas shared with all respondents
- Share offers of assistance to nominating committee and project committee
- Form board working group to review organizational suggestions and plan for implementation of promising ideas
- Convey project related ideas to project committee

Attachment 2

FON Income and Expenses Summary

Date range covered: January 1, 2017-December 31,2017
(In dollars \$)

INCOME 2017 (\$)	
FON Membership	498
NPCA Membership	980
Unrestricted Contributions	26971
Restricted contributions (Lightbowns, Dosso,,Solar clinic lights, Moringa)	8335
Paypal contributions	4893
Sub total	41677
Program Income	
T Shirt sales	45
Total Income	41,722
EXPENSES 2016 (\$)	
Postage/CEX Printing	1258
P.O. Box	234
Conference	56
Advertising face book	50
Licenses-permits	26
Wire Transfer fees	509
Sub total	2133
Project Funding	26071
Total Expenses	28,204
NET Income 2017	13,518

Attachment

3

Funded, ongoing projects

2017-09 Hide Tanning and Leather Tent Making by ACHET 'AKAL in Tchintabaraden for 1,350,000 CFA (~\$2,700.00). *Six month project funded in two installments, the first at the Dec 10, 2017 Board Meeting and the second on March 6, 2018 upon email consent of the Board.*

The Achet'Akal women's cooperative of Tchintabaraden was funded at the December 10, 2017 board meeting for a cooperative by 60 women to purchase hides and skins, tan them, receive training in sewing leather tents, and sew the tents for sale. The beneficiaries are women who are trying to reestablish their positions in their community after having lost normal means of support in their society.

The first installment of 775,000 CFA (~ \$1,550) was sent in December 2017. A mid project report dated Feb. 22, 2018 was received and accepted by FON and can be viewed on Dropbox. On March 6, Larry sent the second installment of 575,000 (\$1268.90). The project is fully funded now.

A dropbox has been set up for project reporting, which now includes the funded proposal, some photos of results, and the mid project report. We will be looking forward to more photos of progress and the final report.

2018-01 Workspace Rental for Women's Sewing Cooperative by Bien-etre de la Femme Rurale (BFR) in Niamey for 540,000 CFA (\$1,097.78). *Six month project funded installment at the Feb 11, 2018 Board Meeting*

This proposal asks FON to fund rental of a sewing training space for 6 months, with the idea that fees charged the trainees will result in BFR being able to continue renting the space on its own. This is part of a several phase project leading to the development of a sewing microenterprise development center. The proposal is on the Dropbox projects directory for this project.

A preliminary project report has been received (in Dropbox) indicating that the workspace has been rented and outfitted with sewing machines. For whatever reason, the rental receipt did not come through on Dropbox. We will be looking forward to more photos of progress and the final report.

2018-02 Sewing Machines for Women's Sewing Cooperative by Bien-etre de la Femme Rurale (BFR) in Niamey for 1,950,000 CFA (~\$4,000). *Six month project funded in two installments. The first installment of 900,000 CFA (\$1,829.64) was approved at the Feb 11, 2018 Board Meeting. The second installment of 1,050,000 CFA (~\$2,100) is being requested for approval at this Board Meeting.*

The second proposal is asking for the purchase of 30 sewing machines to be placed in the training center for sewing training and production purposes. Poor women with little means of support will be trained to sew as a means of learning to provide their own support. The proposal is on the Dropbox projects directory for this board meeting. Dropbox\FON Shared\Projects\A Board Meetings\February 11, 2018. The first installment of the proposal was for the purchase of 15 sewing machines only. The second installment being requested is for 15 more sewing machines as well as 3 month's partial salary for an accountant to design a sewing microenterprise development business and provide us with a proposal of how to fund it.

A preliminary project report has been received (in Dropbox) indicating that the workspace has been rented and outfitted with the first 15 sewing machines. For whatever reason, the receipt for the machines did not come through on Dropbox. However, the photos received make it clear that the machines are in place in training center and documentation indicates that new trainees have been registered since January and that the training has started. We will be looking forward to more photos of progress and the final report, as well as a proposal for the follow-on phase.

2018-03 Amélioration des Conditions d'Encadrement des Femmes et Filles du CEPEF

by Potentiel Terre in Dosso for 1,211,000 CFA (\$2,461.88). *Approved at the Feb. 11, 2018 Board Meeting and to continue for approximately six months – an add-on to their original proposal.*

Potentiel Terre made an impressive start in Sept. 2017 to their project of training young women and girls in performing domestic duties. It had become clear from their photos and receipts posted on Dropbox that they were likely to run out of money. Consequently, Potentiel Terre submitted a proposal for FON to augment our financial input to the project. Given that FON had just received more than \$5,000 dedicated to the Potentiel Terre project, and given that their proposal made sense in terms of what they needed to do to make their training center more comfortable and functional, the FON board moved immediately to approve the proposal at the Feb. 11., 2018 meeting. The proposal is on the Dropbox directory for the project.

Potentiel Terre continues to add photos and other documentation regularly to their project Dropbox. Their most recent monthly report is for Feb. 2018.

2018-04 Well Construction (Puits de Chintighismen) by OURZP in Tchén Tabaraden for 1,344,440 CFA (~\$2,700). *Approved by email consent of the Board and funds sent April 4, 2018. FON funds to construct the well were matched with funds from other sources and local inputs.*

The main objective of this project is the improvement of the living conditions of the pastoral populations of the region to the north of Tchén Tabaraden in general, and the women beneficiaries of the previously funded milk goat projects in particular. A 20 meter deep well will be dug and lined with cement. This action will allow these women and their goats to have a good water source. Construction has begun.

We are awaiting our first photos and reports of the project.

Pending requests for funding

We have 4 pending proposals that have some potential to develop into proposals that could be funded by FON. I made comments to ONG GADED since the last Board Meeting on their proposal to make and apply compost to croplands in the Bouza area, but never got a response.

Promotion de la chaîne de valeur fromage de chèvre de la zone péri urbaine de Niamey by ONG Tin Hinan, with whom we have worked before. The proposal is to setup a goat dairy and goat cheese making industry in Say to market in Niamey. The proposal was written to be submitted to Rotary for funding. Since we have heard no word, we assume the proposal was not funded by Rotary, and we will begin negotiations with Mme Habsatou as soon as we get time. The Lightbowns have expressed some interest in helping fund this project.

Transformation du Lait de la Chamelle by ONG Kouritel – An ONG with whom FON has worked before, has submitted a new proposal to start a camel milk dairy in the region of Birni N’Konni. They have been informed

that we have received the proposal and will begin review. We have seen a camel milk dairy proposal from them before and it was way too expensive. This one is more in our price range.

Production de l'Huile D'Arachide by ONG OCEDD – This is a new organization to me. They are proposing to work with a women's cooperative in Tamou, Say Region in the production and marketing of peanut oil. Have been informed that we will review the proposal and get back to them.

Sous Projet Artisanat de la Femme Bororo by ONG Kouritel. A long standing project proposal to advertise and sell artisanal goods from Niger over the web. Still need to find someone to help with the marketing on this end.