

**MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF THE BOARD OF DIRECTORS
FRIENDS OF NIGER
BY SKYPE
DECEMBER 10, 2017**

Present: Meredith McGehee, Larry Koff, John Baird, Steve Bushell, John Hutchison, Amy Wilson and Penni St. Hilaire

Ex-Officio: Tom Dechert

Absent: Tom Corcoran, Yari Rabiou and Seybou Douma

The meeting was called to order at 7:05 pm EST.

Treasurer's Report: As of the conference call there was \$10,000 in the bank account and \$500 expected to come from PayPal. This does not include the \$6,000 in the money market account. This means that \$10,500 is available to spend. Meredith said that she was incurring expenses for the appeal letter.

Projects Committee:

1. Funding for the NGO Achet'Akal Project. This women's cooperative of Tchintabaraden has requested funding to purchase hides and skins, to tan them and to be trained in sewing them to make tents to sell. They have requested 775,000 CFA for phase one and 575,000 CFA for phase 2. It was moved, seconded and unanimously approved to set aside the whole amount, 1,350,000 CFA, and to send the 775,000 CFA now and hold the 575,000 CFA after they have sent in a progress report that is approved by the projects committee and the board.
2. Bien-Etre de la Femme Rurale (BFR) has two proposals to reestablish and reorient the women's sewing cooperative project being directed by Mme. Alhassane Nafissatou. The proposals are in the final stages of development and Tom D expects that the first one will be ready to go to the board in January.
3. CONUSA has not yet reported on medical supplies that were shipped if they arrived and where they were sent.
4. Moringa Plantations: John H learned on his trip to Niger that the women are having difficulty getting enough water to the Moringa trees. He proposed that each plantation be increased to at least 1 ha and be converted from Moringa monoculture to a polyculture for both nutrition and economic benefit. The projects committee is studying the feasibility of outfitting the gardens with solar pumps. Tom D is working on getting a hydrologic study done to answer question before further action can be taken. Larry suggested holding off on funding any additional Moringa projects until we received Tom D's report.

Tom C sent Meredith an email saying he did not believe FON is ready to apply for Rotary funding until we have an answer to the water issue. FON will not be submitting a proposal in 2018. John H said we need to get water table information even if we have to pay for the information. Amy said we need to have a really strong project before submitting it to Rotary.

Larry asked whether Tom D would need financial support for the hydrology study. Tom D said he had scheduled a meeting the following week with an expert and will have some idea of the time. He said it will take some time and not be easy.

Amy pointed out that we are moving from an organization that funds projects to one that runs projects and we need to think through what kind of support is needed. Tom D and Amy will develop a request for proposal for all the information needed for water for the Moringa plantations. We need to get the information on the wells and water and take this project one step at a time.

Donation to Himma Food Bank: Immediately prior to the meeting John H sent out a request that FON donate \$800 to the Himma Food Bank since Himma had provided him support on his trip. Larry wanted more information on how the food bank works. Tom D suggested that since FON received \$500 from giving Tuesday, we could donate

that amount to Himma for the food bank. A motion was made and seconded that FON donate \$500 to the Himma food bank. The motion passed with a vote of six for and Amy opposed.

Annual Appeal: The letter was written and there was to be a get together at Meredith's house the following Saturday to get the letters ready for mailing. John B had been very helpful with the logistics of the addresses. Meredith would send the letter to the board. The letter provided an update on the Moringa project.

Survey of FON members: Amy said it will take some time to analyze the results. She would also appreciate some help in the analysis. She noted there are a number of people who responded and wondered why more people were not involved with FON. The question is how do we engage more people. Tom D suggested inviting Tom or Patsy Lightbown to participate. This is an election year. Meredith has agreed to serve as president until the election but we need to find a new president. Amy asked if there is a nominating committee. Penni agreed to follow up with Amy as to whether and how there should be a nominating committee.

We learned that Seybou Douma was not on the FON Google group. Penni said she would contact him. (Which she did but has not heard back.)

The next Board meeting will be Sunday February 11, 2018 at 7 pm, EST.

The call ended at 8:19 pm, EST.

Respectfully submitted,

Penni St. Hilaire
revised: 2/5/2018
Approved by the Board February 11, 2018

Addendum: On December 30 Meredith sent out the following for a board vote:
Please send to me your vote for the following questions. If you are the person involved, please abstain on that question.

1. Send a receipt for several donations on behalf of FON for solar power project for lighting health clinics. YES or NO
2. Send tax receipt for an in-kind contribution for the amount of \$4,000 to John H for his August trip to Niger during which he visited FON-funded projects. YES or NO.

The board vote was as follows:

Question 1. Send a receipt for solar power project.
YES. THERE WERE NO NAYS.

Question 2. Send a tax receipt to John H.

Based on responses, research and a strong desire to do what is appropriate under tax law John H should proceed as follows:

“Example of an unreimbursed expense: A chosen representative to an annual convention of a charitable organization purchases an airline ticket to travel to the convention. The organization doesn’t reimburse the delegate for the \$500 ticket. The representative should keep a record of the expenditure, such as a copy of the ticket. The representative should obtain **from the organization a description of the**

services that the representative provided and a statement that the representative received no goods or services from the organization.”

Please note that IRS says that the charitable organization should not list the value of the in-kind contribution/non-reimbursed expense; the donor is responsible for substantiating and documenting those expenses.

So John H should receive a note from Larry K with a description of the services he provided to FON during his trip and a statement that John H did not receipt any goods or services from FON. The note from FON should not state the amount as that is for John H. to provide.