

**Meeting of the Board of Directors
Friends of Niger
November 4, 2018
Zoom Conference Call**

Present: John Baird, John Hutchison, Amy Wilson and Penni St. Hilaire

Absent: Tom Corcoran, Larry Koff, Cheryl Turner, Phyllis Forbes, Dale Downes, Yari Rabiou and Seybou Douma

The meeting was called to order at 7:04 p.m. EST. John B said that 4 people constitute a quorum according to the bylaws.

The agenda was approved.

The minutes were approved as corrected. Clark Kerr's name had been misspelled.

President's Report: John B discussed his initiatives for the coming year.

a) Board Retreat -- want to place renewed emphasis on the value of spending face to face time with each other. Can give us new enthusiasm and ability to work with each other toward FON goals and mission. Rent a large house completely adequate to our needs. Lightbown funds can be used. [Maybe we cook a meal together (and wash dishes) Friday night, go to a nice restaurant on Saturday, and host a reception for New Englander Niger RPCVs on Sunday.] Urge everyone to attend! Possibly in late March or early April. New Doodle poll coming.

b) Website Update - again Lightbown funds available. Dale is looking into having a U of Michigan student serve as an intern for this.

c) Involve New People - Three people have offered to help, and the survey shows others, but we need to find ways, and people, to gradually familiarized them with FON and engaged them.

d) Develop More Contacts in Niger - more eyes and feet on the ground. Also make new effort to follow more closely the activities of CONUSA (Douma) and the Niger Diaspora with Yari.

e) Increase our Membership/Contacts List - by ~300 with the help of Tom Lightbown and NPCA.

Treasurer's Report: Larry submitted a report prior to the meeting (attached). As of October 18, 2018 FON has \$31,397 of which \$15,705 is in the general fund.

Membership: John B reported that there are 803 contacts. In the last 3 years 203 individuals have contributed. There were 153 donations last year.

Old Business:

1. **Fiscal Sponsorship:** Amy sent the latest draft of the fiscal sponsorship document to Clark Kerr who is using FON as a pass through for his Albino project. It should be noted that there is a third party involved. Kerr sends money to a Swiss program which coordinates the project. The critical feature is that we need to document what happens with FON funds. John H pointed out that it is in FON's interest to attract projects through others, and to replicate projects such as Potentiel Terre and the solar clinic electrification projects, and the information needed should go in the solicitation letters.
2. **CEX:** Amy would like to send out an edition in January if not before. Now that she has the process down this can be a way of communicating on a monthly basis. Ideas for the next CEX include an article on CONUSA and/or solar electrifications. Content should be sent to Amy and she will figure out how to put it in the CEX.

3. **Fundraising letter:** Dale had prepared a third draft of the letter but not all board members had seen it. The request will be a one page letter, with a double sided description of projects. It was agreed that everyone should see the letter and critical that the projects committee review the descriptions of projects. (Both the draft and the project descriptions were sent out after the meeting.) The letter should be sent out the last week of November.
4. **Bylaws:** Amy is doing research on appropriate bylaws.
5. **Projects committee:** a report has been submitted and no action was required at the meeting.
6. **FON Facebook page:** No report
7. **2019 Operating Plan and Budget:** No report, both Dale and Larry absent.

Additional discussion:

- Evaluation of Moringa Projects: the rejected bidder has been sent an email.
- Cheryl is an excellent source of information for the projects committee.

Potential Terre: the school year has already started. The project is looking for a piece of land from the Government. Cheryl and Tom D are working on a business and financial plan for the second phase. This has been a positive process especially with Cheryl able to meet with project in Niger. (Update: Cheryl was not able to visit the project but did meet with Zakari Hassane. She also met with Moustafa and with Djibo before he headed out to do the evaluation and briefly after he came back)

The meeting adjourned at 7:58 pm, EST, but conversation continued.

The next meeting will be December 2, 2018 at 7 pm, EST.

Respectfully submitted,

Penni St. Hilaire
 Member at large
 revised 11/15/2018
 updated 12/1/2018

Addendum

On November 21, 2018 John Baird submitted the following proposal to the board:

Moved that Friends of Niger fund in the amount of 2,129,000 CFA (approximately \$4,250) the proposal Appui à la conduite de la 2^{ème} année de formation de 70 femmes et filles submitted by M. Zakari Hassane for the Nigerien Association Potentiel Terre.

On November 25 John Baird announced that the motion to fund Potentiel Terre carries as shown by the votes below.

John B - (in favor, but didn't vote)

Phyllis - yes

Larry - yes

Cheryl - yes

Tom C - (no response)

Douma - (no response)

Dale - yes

John H - yes

Amy - (no response)

Penni - (no response)

Yari - yes