

Canadian Rural Revitalization Foundation (CRRF)

Annual General Meeting

Minutes

Royal Oak Inn, Brandon, Manitoba

Thursday, October 16, 2010

7:20 - 9:00pm

Attendees:

Alessandro Alasia; Bob Annis; Bill Ashton; Kim Beelby; Matthew Brett; Heather Clemenson; Sarah Cunningham; Jennifer Daniels; David Douglas; Paul Duval; Ted Eastley; Ryan Gibson; Karen Heisler; Tom Johnson; Betty Kelly; Melodie Klassen; Pat Lachance; George Penfold; Norman Ragetlie; Bill Reimer; Kelly Vodden.

1. *Call to Order at 7:20pm*

The President noted that even though the AGM was being conducted in English, he welcomed any questions or discussion in French and would call upon some of his Board colleagues for assistance in this.

2. *Review/Approval of Agenda*

No items were added to the agenda. Bill Ashton put forward a motion to approve the agenda; seconded by Kelly Vodden; motion carried.

3. *Approval of Minutes from Last AGM*

Minutes from the last AGM held in Quebec City, October 17th 2009 were circulated for approval. Bob Annis put forward a motion to approve the Minutes of the last AGM; seconded: by Ryan Gibson; motion carried.

4. *Report of President*

David Douglas (President) noted that CRRF was in its third decade as an organization and that the past year had been one of consolidation. We have made progress as a Board working together constructively and with considerable commitment with monthly Board meetings. We have developed a Strategic Plan that is up on the CRRF website. The CRRF finances are now in good order and we now have an opportunity to look at future fund raising and funding partners. David gave special thanks to George Penfold (Treasurer) who has put CRRF finances in good order and to Heather Clemenson, (Board Secretary) for helping with the increased administrative activity of the past year. He congratulated Alessandro Alasia for the work that he has done in launching the Canadian Rural Research Network in which CRRF is a partner. David outlined some of

the recent publications and the research activities that CRRF has been engaged in. He talked about the next steps of partnerships and funding and making CRRF more collaborative and inclusive in the future; to encourage youth, First Nations and more women into the network. The full President's report is available on the CRRF website in the first CRRF E-zine; a newsletter that will provide a regular update on CRRF activities.

5. *Report of Treasurer*

George Penfold outlined the current state of CRRF finances. As of October 1st we have approximately \$9,200 in the bank; zero accounts payable but at least two outstanding items in accounts receivable (a 10% hold back from the Rural Secretariat for the Quebec Workshop funding \$1,500; and \$4,267.20 still outstanding as a 10% hold back from in previous NRRN monies).

He noted that the annual conference generates revenues that help to bring the Board to the AGM. Whether there will be any surplus funds in this year's conference to help defer Board expenses is still unknown.

6. *Approval of Audited Financial Statements*

George reviewed in detail the Audited Financial Statements, prepared by Harris Ryan of St. John's Newfoundland, for the year ending December 31, 2009.

It was suggested by the membership that the Board should consider tracking the informal collaboration and the in-kind contributions that are made throughout the year. This could be useful information for future fund raising activities.

George suggested that Board Members could submit to him the cost in-kind donated by individual members throughout the year. Bob Annis noted that there is a process in place that provides a formula for volunteer time donated. It was used for a regional round table report and is available through Bill Ashton. Ryan later noted that the Board should explore the opportunities to acknowledge the in-kind contribution of institutions (when appropriate); for example, the monthly conference call donated by the Rural Development Institute.

There were a number of motions put forward under this and the previous agenda item.

1. To receive the Treasurer's Report; motion by Bill Reimer, seconded by Ryan Gibson, motion carried.
2. To adopt the Audited Financial Statements as submitted for 2009; motion by George Penfold, seconded by Bill Ashton, motion carried.

3. To approve the Auditors for 2010; George Penfold moved that we continue to use Harris Ryan in St. John's Newfoundland; seconded by Bob Annis; motion carried.
4. That in addition to the Audited Financial Statements, that the Treasurer be asked to prepare an Annual Report of the in-kind contributions made to CRRF by Board Members. Motion put forward by Kelly Vodden, seconded by Matthew Brett, motion carried.

7. *Committee Reports*

a. Membership

George noted that collection of membership fees has not been the role of the Treasurer in recent years, at least since he has been in the position. The question of whether a \$30 membership fee was appropriate was asked by David Douglas. The following comments were solicited:

A membership fee adds legitimacy to the organization.

When there is no membership list it is hard to give numbers for grants and funding.

There is tangible recognition of the organization if there is a fee.

There is need to formalize a membership and this could also be done through a tiered membership fee.

The sum of \$30 is not much, though a student fee could be less. With the Annual Conference, a one-year membership fee could be built in.

A way of not detracting students from joining could be through having a student rate or a membership given by providing a contribution to the E-zine or some other activity.

Ryan Gibson noted that Deatra Walsh has looked at "barrier free" organizations in her review of the CRRF membership.

There was a suggestion of "pay what you can".

There could be an individual and a corporate or association fee.

The word "Foundation" in CRRF raised some questions; foundation seems to imply attracting big monies; there seems to be a contradiction between the purpose of the organization and the word "foundation".

The question of Membership is a future matter for the Board to consider.

b. Strategic Plan Committee

David Douglas noted that previously there had been a small group that worked with him in developing the ground work for the Strategic Plan. He noted that this item was covered in the President's Report.

c. Partnerships and Strategic Alliances

Mike Stolte has been handling this area and as he was not at the meeting, the item was deferred. However, there was some discussion.

A question was raised as to whether consideration was being given to partnering with the private sector. It was noted by David Douglas that this is in the Strategic Plan.

Paul Duval raised the issue of the absence of faith communities in the discussion.

It was noted that there are many other groups that are not listed that we need to connect with.

Strategically, it was suggested that we need to target the national bodies of organizations rather than small local groups. There would be too many to approach.

It was observed, however, that in the faith based communities most of the research work is done at the leadership level in local communities.

It was suggested that CRRF is good at conducting research but perhaps more work needs to be done in connecting with the users of the research. Some of this happens at the annual conference. The idea of CRRF is to bring together researchers, policy makers and folks on the ground; this is what we try to do at the annual conference.

It was also suggested that we should better market the research that we have.

d. Annual Report (E-zine)

David Douglas observed that our first E-zine newsletter had been printed for the conference. Communications is one of the Board's portfolios and it is headed by Deatra Walsh, who unfortunately was unable to attend the conference. David thanked Deatra for her work on the E-zine.

e. Website

Ryan Gibson, as CRRF webmaster, spoke to this item. He noted that the site is in process of revitalization; that connections are being made with other sites and that there is a feature called "send commentary" that he hopes people will use to send him ideas for the site. Ryan indicated that the site is expected to be upgraded and fully functional within three months.

8. Nominations Committee Report

David Douglas noted that there was no Nominations Committee appointed. Discussion around the appointment of Board Members ensued.

One idea was that a least three new members come in each year; to enable both new ideas and continuity.

Sarah Cunningham volunteered 10 to 20 hours to monitor and evaluate the Board's Strategic Plan.

It was suggested that the existing Board be re-elected but that they be tasked with coming up with recommendations on a Board Membership procedure and review the necessary amendments to the CRRF constitution.

It was observed that any CRRF member can work on a committee without being a member of the Board. This is one way to be engaged with the idea of perhaps becoming a Board member at a later time. Karen Heisler later noted that she would be happy to help out with the Membership Committee.

9. Election of Board and Officers

The Board Members for 2009-2010:

Bob Annis; Bill Ashton; Heather Clemenson; Serge Gagnon; David Douglas; Ryan Gibson; Bruno Jean; George Penfold; Bill Reimer; Mike Stolte; Kelly Vodden; Deatra Walsh.

It was noted that all current Board members expressed interest in continuing to serve on the Board.

Bob Annis put forward the motion that "the slate of all current Board Members be put forward and be accepted by the membership as the new Board of Directors for another term (2010-2011)". It was seconded by George Penfold and carried by all present.

Bob Annis later also expressed a motion that the following nominations be approved for the Board Executive: David Douglas, (President); Mike Stolte (Past President); George Penfold (Treasurer); Heather Clemenson (Secretary).

This was seconded by Bill Ashton and carried by all present.

10. Other Business

Bill Reimer informed the meeting that he has been asked to make a presentation on CRRF at a communications class at Concordia University that will explore fundraising options for CRRF. He will try to videotape their findings.

11. *Adjournment*

Bill Reimer motioned to adjourn the meeting. The meeting was adjourned at 9:00pm.