

COSTEP-CT Meeting

October 22, 2013

Introductions and Members in Attendance

Sarah Griswold, guest

Rob Novak

Rich Malley

Paul Barren

Paul O'Pecko

Betsy Pittman

Lizette Pelletier

Jane Cullinane

Kathy Craughwell-Varda

Tara Kennedy – note taker

Liz Shapiro

Review Responsibilities of Boards

Hallmarks of an Effective Board – handout

Board Source Guidelines for Basic Responsibilities of Boards

1. Not a lot of self-assessment – might be a good time to do that
 - a. Board self assessment chart – ways we could address challenges that were expressed
2. Determined mission and purpose – clear and well stated
3. Organizational planning - a little more attention needs to be paid to this
4. Clarifying roles
5. More clarity – strategic agenda and who we need in order to fill that agenda – what is the optimal size for the group? A structure that s more layered?
6. Determined program and services
 - a. Have worked with existing programs only
 - b. We haven't done anything on our own; we are more reactive than proactive?
Reactive more to when people come to us specifically to help with partnering
 - c. What are the outreach programs – what do we want to provide as outreach? As a deliverable? We don't have a deliverable as a group
7. Enhancing public standing
 - a. Organizations have integrated what they've learned but people have a hard time recognizing us as a group
8. Legal and ethical stuff – gloss over for now
9. Recruit and orient new board members
 - a. Important for defining roles to make sure that people know what they are supposed to do so we don't lose people we need; no burnout; maintain enthusiasm!

Review Board Assessment Sheet

Go through individually and then we will hand them in to Sarah; she will report back to see what people are thinking

Board member matrix

- Thinking about who you want on the Board – adapting this would help to make sure that you have the right kind of coverage that you feel you need to have

- Emergency responder community is lacking – need more representatives from that branch

Discussion of Organizational Needs

Sarah would like us to talk about the opportunities and the challenges of the group

Sarah's perception as an outsider: a lack of clarity in CT and compared to MA – who is doing what and what people's relationships are – good intention and great ideas but less clarity on how to implement (for both on CT and MA); needs to be a stronger involvement from the emergency responder. Ironically, this was the grant that Kathy did with IMLS and one of the criticisms from the reviewers was that there was no concrete documentation as to why the two groups don't collaborate.

Is funding an issue? Right now we have no funding coming in – we have to volunteer our time to do the work – this grant that Kathy and the CT State Library wrote was supposed to really promote this need – first responders crossing with cultural heritage.

There is someone running COSTEP-MA but Gregor seems to be running the show; CT and MA are the two COSTEPS that have gotten the furthest; CT is a community group and MA is Gregor. We need to follow up with IMLS so we can re-apply.

Need to find stability in order to fund things going forward – we are the healthier model! But we need sustainability of the group – there is a money issue, but that's separate almost when it's an all volunteer group. At a certain point, we have to say we can't do anymore. We need a plan that is practical that acknowledges the amount of time we have available. What can you do most effectively with the resources you have? In addition, what needs to be done? We aren't going to have any source of income so we should take advantage of the volunteers we have.

The CT State Library has been supportive of COSTEP. We are a good clearinghouse for information – getting a good base of knowledge and pushing it out. We have technical knowledge and the ability to push information out. What else do we need?

Board member matrix: should represent our constituents – more resistance on the cultural heritage side; afraid of firefighters telling them that they are violating code.

One key opportunity: this group represents many different organizations. The larger organizations are allowed to be here – that is enormous – there is support. Who is behind the consortium? Who are the collaborators? COSTEP is committed to sharing this information and making these resources available. We need those other types of groups to have the same type of commitment. Keep trying until we get that grant and find those friendly first responders. For example, Essex.

Set up a program of how to have a conversation with the first responder. Try to get the people who will talk to us – more communication and follow up. With one success story, build other successes over time. Strategic goal: take Essex model and find out why it worked. Put something on the web site and press about how successful it was. Put up a program! Do first responders have program? Would Belfor host us? What about insurance companies? Trying to tackle the insurance world to understand our side of things. Add Jackie to the Board!

Review of By-Laws Draft

Article I: straightforward – changed a little bit, but that should be fine – add tribal nations and non-profits to Name; does everyone know what a cultural resource organization is? For bylaws, it doesn't matter. We could put a definition in the bylaws. Add "...such as libraries, archives, historical societies..."

Article II: Purpose and functions – Liz thinks that they should not be included since they are so hard to change, unless you keep it super general; you do need purpose and functions as general elements. Put your activities in strategic plan instead – reference in a different document instead (#1-#7 out) No moving targets in the bylaws.

Article III: Membership and Governance – no paid members; Organization Structure paragraph is something Sarah added – “membership” seemed like it was a large group of organizations that participate and then there was a lack of clarity about who is doing what and what the roles are. CT needs to resolve this. “Membership of COSTEP” – is that the right language? Take out the membership section. Do only governance. Org Structure paragraph should be removed. What is the structure going to be? Maybe still a simple steering committee.

Org Structure: define steering committee – establishes major policies and objectives of the group. Do we include nominating a chair and co-chair? Key relationship list from COSTEP-MA.

Article 3: Steering Committee

- Steering committee will establish major policies of COSTEP, nominate and elect officers to insure sustained leadership and resources of the organization.

- Steering Committee to include at least 8 people.

- The members of the Steering Committee will reflect the diversity of the state of CT and will serve at the discretion of the committee as a whole.

- Any member of SC that misses three consecutive meetings per year without prior notification may be removed or replaced. A SC member may be removed for other reasons by a 3/4th vote of the remaining members of the Committee.

Article 4: Officers

- The officers of the SC will be first chair, second chair, and secretary. A treasurer will be appointed by the SC if needed.

- Officers will be elected by the SC for a term of one year at the first meeting after the start of the New Year. None of the officers can serve in one than more position concurrently. Nominations for the officers will be discussed during the last quarter of the calendar year.

- The chair will officiate at all meetings. In their absence, the second chair will officiate. The chair will set the agenda.

- The secretary will take the minutes of the meetings and distribute them prior to the next meeting.
- Officers may be removed by a 3/4 vote of the remaining members of the SC. The SC will take immediate steps to fill any vacant positions.

Article 5: Meeting

- The SC will meet no less than five times per calendar year, including once per year.
- Meetings shall be orderly, with an agenda and following accepted practices and standards.
- A quorum of the SC will consist of five members. At the discretion of the chair, votes will be taken in absentia.
- Board action is best addressed during a scheduled meeting, the following factors will be considered by the Executive Committee before determining whether to ask for an action by written consent:

How soon is a decision required? Needs to be decided...

Whether the decision would be better made after further discussion and/or whether alternatives should be considered.

Whether the action is a routine action that the Executive Committee can take in lieu of the Board at its regularly scheduled meeting.

Whether a conference call meeting can be scheduled and held either just for discussion or, if a quorum is obtained, to take a vote.

Whether all Board members have indicated that they are unanimously in favor of the action and will be available to sign and return a written consent.

If after cons ...

Article 6: Committees

- The SC will establish committees or task forces to accomplish its goals.
- Ad hoc committees will have written job descriptions and understood goals and objectives.

Article 7: Dissolution

- The organization may be dissolved by majority 3/4 of the SC.

Article 8: By-law Changes

- The by-laws of the organization will be reviewed at the same meeting as when the slate of officers is discussed and may be amended by a majority of SC members as needed.