Development Committee Meeting Minutes
4/24/25 - 4:00-5:00 pm via Zoom

Attendance: Diane Harding, Melanie Kosaka, Ken Curtis, Denise Soderholm, Whitney Bosel, Joan Gossett, Tyler Dang, Jackie Wah, Flor Williams, Myles Ritchie, Winston Welch

• **Approved Development Committee Budget for 2025-26**
Due to current financials conditions, discussed whether committee should spend $15,000, approved by TOC board, to development cohesive strategic fundraising plan. Decision made to go ahead with plan to hire professionals to create underwriting kit, membership brochure, printing materials, professional cultivation events.

Goal is to get 7-10 meaningful contacts with potential sponsors – what is takes before someone will give. Important to invite corporations and sponsors to events like tree giveaways so they can see firsthand work that TOC does.

TOC used to have full-time development director who made those meaningful contacts which resulted in bequests. Between bequests and fundraisers, when TOC had much larger staff, is how TOC survived financially.

• **Asking Branches to contribute to TOC**
As branches benefit from what TOC spends to support them, get branches to contribute more to TOC. Expand policy where branches give percentage of grants to extend to all funds they bring in. Diane will do temperature check with branches to feel out the idea. Let branches know TOC needs support from them. Ask how would they feel about giving percentage to TOC to keep things going. Also consider if amount of funding generated would make much of an impact and weigh against any possible ill will it may cause. As money from branches would not be a huge amount, should focus more on large donors.

Branches fundraises for projects in their communities. TOC needs to raise money statewide for advocacy, etc. Request branches contribute 10% of whatever fundraising monies they bring in. TOC staff contributes administrative time to putting on Town Party – consider asking for a percentage.

Many organizations have endowment fees that go back to the foundation. To make case to branches, show what other organizations that are similar in size, require as give back to central organization for operating costs.

Development Committee could request policy change from TOC board that branches give a percentage of whatever their balance is every year.

In 2015, change made where all dues went to TOC. Prior to that, membership dues went to branches.

Branches would be able to use fundraising materials. Ask branches to contribute towards $15,000.

• **Arbor Day Foundation Grants**
Myles has videos and photos from past tree giveaway events from last 6 years, a requirement of grant reporting. Those are available for TOC use.

TOC gets 15% minimum for administration fees as well as any other monies after expenses so often get more than 15%.

Funders like to see impact on community – what impact did your project or event have? Create video edit of testimonials, focus on people with video testimonial of when they received tree and get follow-

up video interview to see how tree is doing. Myles already planning doing follow-up survey from past recipients so can expand to re-interview a few people. He also continues to monitor and photographs trees planted at Windward Community College from Arbor Day funding. Next Arbor Day tree giveaway scheduled June 21, 2025 on Maui.

Myles continued to offer TOC resources to branches for tree giveaways and continues to submit grant proposals for all branches. If branches let Melanie know about upcoming events, she could craft some PR for them.

• **Emergency Fundraising Appeal to Members**
Melanie will edit letter. Better to tone it down and make shorter. Suggested making it more visual, less text, and more positive.

At TOC board meeting – present edited letter to get approval to do email blast to members (400+ that we have emails for).

Myles has emails from tree giveaway recipients. Eventbrite rules say cannot go back and use emails so he will look at Terms of Agreement. Might be possible if list is exported to use it. Do separate email from TOC members and donor email, using another platform with a targeted message for that group.

• **Miscellaneous**
Melanie shared website for Omidyar *Waves of Change* leadership forum celebrating 10 years: https://omidyarfellows.org/about-the-program/hawaii-leadership-forum/.

Example of good narrative showing impact they have had on the community. TOC won't do anything as detailed but stressed it takes professional writer, designers to put together very impactful.

Next meeting: discuss new membership levels and benefits.

Submitted by Jackie Wah