**Minutes of the Center for Communal Studies Advisory Board Luncheon Meeting**

**April 11, 2016 – Noon – 2 PM**

**USI – Room UC2206**

**Members Present:** Director Dr. Casey Harison, Interim Dean of Liberal Arts Dr. Michael Dixon, Dr. Gregory Brown, Ms. Jennifer Greene, Dr. Jason Hardgrave, Ms. Marna Hostetler, Dr. Jane Johansen, Dr. Joshua Lockyer (*via Skype*), Dr. Carol Medlicott, Mr. Graham Perry, Emeritus Director Dr. Donald Pitzer, Dr. Michael Strezewski, and Ms. Connie Weinzapfel

**Members Absent:** Dean Emeritus of Liberal Arts Mr. Michael Aakhus, Ms. Wendy Bredhold, Dr. Don Janzen, Dr. Susan Matarese, and Dr. Silvia Rode

**Guests Present:** Mr. Leigh Kahan and Ms. Jaya Priya Reinhalter

**Administrative Assistant:** Ms. Marilyn Thielman

**1. Greeting**

Director Casey Harison greeted all persons present at today’s Center Board of Advisors meeting. He especially thanked Don Pitzer for filling in as Acting Director of the Center during Harison’s fall sabbatical and for chairing the Fall 2015 Board Meeting. Harison stated he was pleased that the Center’s new Bylaws were approved at that time, and he has posted them on the Center’s website.

**2. Introductions**

Harison introduced new Board members Dr. Gregory Brown and Dr. Michael Strezewski as well as Dr. Joshua Lockyer, who was attending the meeting via Skype. He also welcomed guest Ms. Jaya Reinhalter, winner of both the Center’s 2015 $500 Graduate Paper Prize and the 2015 $2,000 Research Travel Grant. Reinhalter has been researching in the Center’s Communal Studies Collection and was our Spring Lecturer. In addition, Harison welcomed Mr. Leigh Kahan, guest of Mr. Graham Perry. Kahan, a former member of The Farm (TN) intentional community, has been working with Ms. Jennifer Greene, collecting The Farm’s community materials for USI’s Archives. Finally, Harison thanked those members who drove a distance to attend today’s meeting.

**3. Minutes from Fall 2015 Board Meeting**

Harison directed members’ attention to today’s handouts, which included the Agenda, Minutes from the Fall 2015 Board Meeting, and the Center’s Annual Report. He then asked if there were any additions or corrections to the Minutes. There being none, Greene moved that the Minutes be accepted. The motion was seconded by Perry, and all were in favor. Harison said he is now posting Board Minutes on the Center’s website along with the Bylaws.

**4. Center Annual Report, 2015-2016**

Calling attention to the Center Annual Report, Harison reminded everyone that he is obligated by the Center’s Bylaws to create the report. Greene indicated that she sent to Harison a slightly revised Collection Development Report, which she will cover later in today’s meeting. In addition to Greene’s updated report, Harison said he is open to adding details of presentations, publications, or projects related to Communal Studies; and he asked members to email those to him as a Word attachment. Harison will also contact those members who are absent from today’s meeting with this request. Additionally, Harison has initiated a link on the Center’s website concerning the Center’s 40th Anniversary, which will be celebrated in the fall.

Reviewing the Annual Report item by item, these points were noted:

Under #3, Pitzer called attention to *A New Social Question*, edited by Harison, which Pitzer stated Harison had done humbly. The book is based on presentations at the Center’s 2014 Conference in New Harmony on “Capitalism & Socialism: Utopia, Globalization, and Revolution.” Harison wrote the Introduction. Many presenters have chapters in the book, including one by Pitzer regarding New Harmony’s founders. Pitzer announced a book commemorating Indiana’s Bicentennial this year. It is titled *Indiana’s 200: The People Who Shaped the Hoosier State*. Connie Weinzapfel wrote the essay on Jane Blaffer Owen, and Don wrote the one on Robert Owen in this volume. Additionally, Pitzer called attention to Mike Strezewski’s article in CSA’s journal, *Communal Societies*, Vol. 35, No. 1 2015, on “Harmonist Demography and Town Planning in New Harmony, Indiana.” Pitzer also has an article in that issue on “The Communal Studies Association at Forty: A Personal Retrospective.”

Under #5, Jaya Reinhalter presented the well-attended and well-received Spring 2016 Lecture on the intentional community Kashi in Sebastian, Florida. Harison stated that a colloquium rather than a lecture will probably be presented in the fall of 2016.

Under #6, Harison acknowledged Mike Strezewski as one of the judges for the 2016 Paper Prizes. The awards for the Graduate and Undergraduate Prizes will soon be announced.

Under #7, securing grants for the Center is an on-going project that Harison is discussing with Greene. He said that it is mostly a matter of finding time to put toward that project. He hopes to develop this more in the future working with Rebecca Deeg, Grant Administrator in USI’s Office of Sponsored Projects and Research Administration.

Concerning other on-going projects under #9, Harison reported that board member Don Janzen has done a great deal of work on western communal societies since moving to California. Janzen will return to our area and will be on campus for about a month beginning April 17.

Considering matters for the future under #12, along with plans for another Center Open House, discussion centered on major grant writing. Harison mentioned grants that could help us rearrange our space in the Center. In addition, Michael Dixon mentioned classes that are helpful and that student workers have been shown to be of value in this regard. “Digitizing money” was said to be available through grants as well. It was suggested that tour leaders in New Harmony could mention the classes that are available at USI concerning communal studies.

Correction of a typographical error in item #13: The period during which persons visited the Center should read “May 2015 to April 2016.” – (*not* 2015).

A motion was made by Greene to approve the current Annual Report with the correction having been made in item #13 and with any additions, addenda, and/or changes which Harison will soon make to the Annual Report. Harison will send to all Board Members a *Revised Annual Report*, which will become the approved Annual Report if no changes are made to the *revised version*. Graham Perry seconded the motion, and all were in favor.

**5. Reports from Jennifer Greene (Collection Development), Carol Medlicott (CSA), and**

**Connie Weinzapfel (New Harmony)**

**Jennifer Greene** reviewed her report listed as #8 in the Annual Report. She made some additional comments, and others joined in with these remarks:

Concerning acquisitions, the cost of $130 for shipping Pomona Heights materials will be split between the Center and the Library.

Greene personally thanked guest Leigh Kahan for his efforts in giving The Farm materials to USI’s Achives. Don Pitzer added his thanks both to Greene for her efforts in gaining these valuable Farm materials and to Kahan for his cooperation in that regard, telling him that it is a pleasure to have him attend today’s meeting. Pitzer reminisced about his visits to The Farm years earlier, and Kahan recalled times during his earlier residency there. Graham Perry also shared Kahan’s excitement and that of others who were able to interact with communitarians such as Stephen Gaskin, oftentimes gaining an understanding of history as it unfolded.

Greene is looking at a possible trip to Florida this summer to collect photographs of the caravan from David Frohman, an original member of The Farm, and then to visit the Kashi community. Greene continues to talk with Rachel Wright-Summerton regarding Padanaram’s materials. She also plans to visit and retrieve materials from these Midwest communities: Dancing Rabbit, Sheperdsville, High Wind, Bethel Colony, and Shiloh.

**Lunch served by SODEXO**

**5. Continued Reports from Connie Weinzapfel (New Harmony) and Carol Medlicott (CSA)**

**Connie Weinzapfel** has been working closely with Stella Ress in the History Department to decide what archival materials to keep on campus and what to move to New Harmony. She hopes to have an arrangement finalized by the end of the year.

Weinzapfel thanked Greene for her help with accomplishing the purchase of the last of the collections of Christa Thurman through the Collections Committee. Weinzapfel reported that Historic New Harmony is in the process of purchasing five pieces of Harmonist furniture – three chairs with original paint, a large wardrobe, and a table – for display in New Harmony.

A copy of the April 8th issue of the *Evansville Courier & Press* newspaperinsert *Westside* was displayed by Weinzapfel. On the cover was an artist’s rendering of the “Tree of 40 Fruits” in full bloom. The inside story tells of two six-year-old trees planted in New Harmony near the Atheneum the prior week, which have twenty fruits already grafted. Over the next three years, Sam Van Aken of Syracuse, NY will graft twenty more fruits to the trees. Varieties of fruit from the Harmonist community days will be grafted including peaches, plums, apricots, nectarines, cherries, and almonds. The long-term hope is to create a food forest with the different varieties growing all around town.

Weinzapfel reported that on May 10, Brent Glass, Director Emeritus of the Smithsonian’s National Museum of American History, will be lecturing in New Harmony concerning his book

*50 Great American Places*, published by Simon & Schuster.

**Carol Medlicott** reported on the 2016 annual conference of the Communal Studies Association (CSA), which will be held in Salt Lake City from October 6 through 8. The theme this year is “Millenialism,” and the deadline for the Call for Papers is the middle of May.

As editor of *Communal Societies*, the journal of the CSA, which is published twice a year in the middle of March and the middle of September, Medlicott also encouraged submissions. She said she would really like illustrations of the various Camphill Village communities, which work with handicapped persons – perhaps something that shows their signage.

Medlicott said the CSA is looking for another person for their Board – perhaps someone connected with ecovillages, sustainability, etc. Also, CSA is starting a Scholar Award. Along those lines, Harison asked if the CSA “Newsletter” might be a way to advertise the Center’s Paper Prizes and Research Travel Grant in the future. Medlicott stated that sometimes student papers are too long to publish in their entirety.

Other discussion followed concerning suggestions for placement in the CSA journal. Medlicott indicated that there has been nothing concerning The Farm in the journal for a long time. She is very open to getting articles from communitarians. Leigh Kahan said that he hasn’t lived on The Farm since 1985, and it has gone through some major changes since then. Medlicott wondered if Kahan could possibly do a reminiscence piece. He then shared some of his experiences while a resident there, and he acknowledged that there is a big difference between living in community and simply studying it. His main thoughts while a resident during that period with 35 to 50 persons per household was, “How can I become a better person?” and beyond that “How can we become a better community?”

Pitzer stated this is attuned to his “developmental communalism” philosophy. And, Pitzer referenced how Reinhalter is working with a team now to determine how to proceed within their Kashi community since the death of its founder. Reinhalter said that “the center of gravity is gone, and all they have is each other.” Pitzer had told her that it normally takes three to four years after the leader’s death to adapt and move on without dissolving the community. Johansen stated that this transition is talking about how your vision hooks into your life.

Greene reminisced about earlier years when the Center had communitarian speakers such as Reinhalter give a presentation, and deans of other colleges would attend. Pitzer then recalled that a Board meeting some five years ago, which he chaired prior to the appointment of Harison as Director, was attended by other deans at that time, and a motion was made to establish a committee of deans of the other colleges at USI. Unfortunately, that committee never formed, Pitzer explained.

Harison thanked attendees for their comments, and he indicated that issues such as those discussed can become part of the colloquium which he plans for the fall.

**6. Center’s 40th Anniversary**

Harison said that the Center’s 40th Anniversary celebration would be a good way to bring some of these other USI folks together. He plans to do some things this fall to publicize the Center’s anniversary, which will be directed to general audiences.

* Harison will be traveling to IUPUI and IUPU-Fort Wayne to visit centers on Religious Studies and the Holocaust.
* At the CSA Annual Meeting in Salt Lake City in early October, Greene, Pitzer, and Harison will be on a panel, moderated by Matt Grow (former Director of USI’s Center for Communal Studies), who will also be hosting the meeting.
* Harison has put a link on the Center’s website for the 40th anniversary. In addition, he will solicit testimonials, etc. He assured members that there will be a celebration with an anniversary cake at the Fall Colloquium, perhaps coordinating it near the time of the CSA’s meeting in October or in early November. Carol Medlicott said she feels that it should be two separate events – first the CSA Annual Meeting and then the Fall Board Meeting.

**7. Center Prizes and Research Travel Award**

The Center’s awards for the Undergraduate and Graduate Papers will be announced later this month and posted on the Center’s website. Director Harison wants Board members to consider how he might generate more submissions in the future since this year only one submission was received for each of those two categories. Judges have been asked to review each of the single submissions to determine if it is in fact worthy of the award. Harison is hopeful that more applications will be received for the Research Travel Grant. The deadline for applications is May 1.

**8. Other Items and Announcements**

Archivist Greene displayed the revamped Communal Studies Finding Aids, asking members what they thought about the two pieces. One option enables a geographic search and the other allows one to simply click on a *pdf link* to open it. She said there are 627 finding aids available. Greene then told members that since the system won’t give her many options, she has decided to wait until she gets both posted online and then ask them for their preference and/or further suggestions.

Director Harison reviewed a few other matters with Board members, and some of their comments are listed below:

* Harison asked for continued input of ways to advertise our Center to the public. He has advertised the Center Paper Prizes and Research Travel Grant on the Center’s website and on H-Net, and he sends information to a Master List he has developed with Marilyn Thielman. Additionally, Harison will create a generic ad for the Center and its prizes in the CSA “Newsletter” as well as in any other free listings that may be suggested.
* Board member Silvia Rode has been going to the conventions of the Society for Utopian Studies, Harison said, and some of those persons are on our Master List. He will be sure to ask Rode to take our Center brochures with her.
* Connie Weinzapfel said that two persons from New Harmony plan to attend ICSA’s Conference in Tamera, Portugal this July. Weinzapfel encouraged Harison to send information to her for those persons to take with them.

Just as an FYI for members, Weinzapfel indicated that Jaya Reinhalter has been staying in New Harmony at the Sanders Guest House for $35/night. This arrangement would also accommodate any future researchers very well, she offered.

Reinhalter mentioned having met with Rachel Wright-Summerton at Padanaram one day during her stay here, and she noticed considerable change since her former visit in 2001. They shared experiences concerning what it is like to lose the founder of a community and what the residents must go through to develop a process to regroup. Reinhalter said, “So, the story continues . . .” She also said that Wright-Summerton appeared to feel re-invigorated after their time together.

Greene expressed disappointment having sent a letter to thirty Western communities and hearing from only three. But, Weinzapfel stated that she feels that a 10 percent response is not that bad.

Brown suggested contacting high school junior and senior students to create interest in communal studies.

Leigh Kahan expressed appreciation for allowing him to be a guest at today’s meeting along with member Graham Perry.

Jane Johansen said that an unexplored research niche in Communal Studies is the connection between living in a community and creating an intellectual dialogue about the community, its life, and its connection to theoretical writing on communalism. An energetic discussion followed her remark.

Director Harison thanked all who attended today and indicated that he looks forward to the Fall Board Meeting – date to be determined later. The meeting adjourned close to 2:30 PM.

Respectfully submitted,

Marilyn Thielman, Administrative Assistant

mst – 8/10/16