

Minutes of the Center for Communal Studies Advisory Board Luncheon Meeting

May 17, 2017 – Noon – 3 PM
USI – Room UC 2205

Members Present: Director Casey Harison, Dr. James Beeby, Ms. Wendy Bredhold, Dr. Gregory Brown, Ms. Jennifer Greene, Dr. Donald Janzen, Dr. Joshua Lockyer (via *Skype*), Dr. Jason Hardgrave, Ms. Marna Hostetler, Mr. Graham Perry, Director Emeritus Donald Pitzer, Dr. Michael Strezewski, and Ms. Leslie Townsend

Members Absent: Dr. Jane Johansen, Dr. Susan Matarese, Dr. Carol Medicott, and Dr. Silvia Rode

Guest Present: Ms. Martha Janzen

Administrative Assistant: Ms. Marilyn Thielman

1. Greeting and Introductions

Director Casey Harison greeted all persons present at today's Center Board of Advisors meeting, acknowledging our newest Board member, LA's Dean Dr. James Beeby, formerly with Middle Tennessee State University, as well as Ms. Leslie Townsend, Interim Director of Historic New Harmony. He then greeted Dr. Joshua Lockyer, who was joining us again through *Skype*, along with guest Ms. Martha Janzen, wife of Dr. Donald Janzen.

2. Minutes from Fall 2016 Board Meeting

Harison called for corrections or additions to the Minutes from the Fall 2016 Board Meeting, which was emailed as an attachment to all members ahead of today's meeting.

Dr. Michael Strezewski moved that the Minutes be approved. The motion was seconded by Dr. Jason Hardgrave, and all were in favor.

3. Review of Annual Report

Note: Harison had given members a copy of the Annual Report before this meeting, requesting that they bring up any corrections and/or additions today so that he could then make those changes and add the revised Annual Report to these minutes for filing. Listed below are some comments from Board members:

- A. Ms. Leslie Townsend was not listed as a Board member on the Center website, but that correction will be made.
- B. Comments regarding Item #6 about Laura Kohl ("Jonestown Survivor") as the Center's Spring 2017 Speaker included:
 - Ms. Jennifer Greene thought that Kohl was wonderful, having talked to many small groups on campus as well as some 450 persons in Carter Hall, which included faculty, staff, students, and people from the community. Great feedback was received from the students, Greene reported. She had handled all arrangements, and Dr. Donald Pitzer introduced Ms. Kohl. Director Harison and Board members expressed their appreciation to Greene for a great program and to Pitzer for an educated yet very caring introduction.

Pitzer explained that Kohl always cries when she speaks about her experiences in Jonestown. Greene was appreciative that Kohl is using many of the pictures from USI.

- Dr. Joshua Lockyer said that he is planning to invite Kohl to be a speaker at his university next spring.
 - Greene asked members for ideas concerning upcoming speakers. She personally wants to have someone from The Farm here, thinking it would be a big draw. With respect to the topic, most members agreed that the Center should concentrate on ecological/environmental issues.
 - Under Item #7 regarding the Center Prizes, Harison said that he will update this item since the judges have now made a decision concerning the Research Travel Grant. One of the judges for the Graduate Prize, Board member Mr. Michael Strezewski, reported that this year's entries reflected "good quality all around." Harison reported that he is seeing many of the young scholars who have entered and/or won the Center Prizes going to the CSA Conferences, and he has been able to develop a good relationship with them.
- C. Concerning the motions from the Spring 2013 Board Meeting listed as Item #10, Harison feels that this would be a good project for student workers in the Center. Members agreed.
- D. Harison asked for members' suggestions for other activities/projects for the Center in the future, as listed in Item #13. He would like to do a book signing with Dr. Silvia Rode in the future. He thinks that staff could be invited to a "workshop" introducing the Archives, with a reward at the end – a publication perhaps. The Center's resources are under-used by our faculty. Greene remarked that this workshop should be something that forces them to do a "search" through the finding aids for next year. Harison is also considering a display case in the Liberal Arts Building.
- E. Concerning the Center Budget listed under item #15, Strezewski suggested using any leftover money for a student worker. A student worker could help with collection development. Greene suggested publishing the prize papers, which would be incentive for persons to apply. Harison's comment was, "That has been discussed." Lockyer's feeling was to hold off regarding collection development.

There being no further comments regarding the Annual Report, Harison noted that he will proceed with creating the revised Annual Report.

4. Review of Submission Requirements for Graduate Prize

Dr. Carol Medlicott, one of the judges of the Graduate Prize, said that the applications submitted were good, but she found it difficult to read only a chapter of a larger document. Members' comments included: It should be a stand-alone paper, make clear how it applies to Communal Studies, and perhaps put a page limit on it. Also, after getting permission from the winners, the papers could be put on-line with a link to "Community Updates" for people to read. Harison said that he will tweak the language a bit on the Center's website; "If sending a thesis or dissertation chapter, please include a short explanation of how the submission fits into the larger work."

5. General Items

A. Communal Studies Minor

Harison explained that the Board is the place to start with consideration of a Communal Studies Minor at USI. Discussion included the following: A Communal Studies minor may have some 21 hours of coursework. It should be multi-disciplinary. Students should be able to graduate in four years.

Courses in Communal Studies have been taught in the past by Pitzer, Leigh Anne Howard, and Dr. Silvia Rode. Greene will teach one in 2018 entitled "History of Ecovillages." It was suggested that a course be taught about New Harmony, possibly by Bob Reid, since there is an abundance of material available. Actually, Jason Hardgrave is currently involved in a Senior Seminar about New Harmony, and he is concerned about how to include sites into the curriculum.

Comments by other Board members appeared to be very supportive of a minor since Communal Studies has been around a long time. Pitzer recalled that years ago former USI President Ray Hoops called this a "signature program" and a self-study was also undertaken. Communal members were pioneers in many current studies, such as climate change.

Pitzer commented that he appreciates Dean Beeby's support of this initiative. Then, Pitzer made a motion that the Center's Board of Advisors commission Director Harison to develop a plan for a Communal Studies Minor. That motion was seconded by Greg Brown, and all were in favor.

B. Joining Center Facilities with Archives and Communal Studies Collection

Harison thanked Center founder Pitzer for putting in so much time and thought to develop the Center for Communal Studies in LA 2009 many years ago. Now, consideration is being given to moving the Center to Rice Library's Archives. This is because there have been few researchers in LA 2009 over recent years, and researchers have found some materials duplicated in the two locations. Therefore, the idea would be to locate the Center inside the existing "Dr. Donald E. Pitzer Communal Studies Reading Room." It is stocked with excellent materials for any researcher on the subject of Communal Studies.

Pitzer stated that he knew nothing about this move until he saw it on today's agenda, but he is for anything that integrates Communal Studies on campus. We have a collection at USI like none other. Some universities focus on particular communities, like Hamilton College with the Shakers, but ours is a marvelous collection with information on some 6,000 communities. The cause is worthy, Pitzer said, and he is for anything that further promotes it. He said it has been a great blessing for him to be involved in this venture.

Dr. Don Janzen questioned whether we still want to use the name "Communal" in our description. In California, that word has a '60s and '70's ring to it. Janzen says that Communal Studies is actually about "cooperative living." Then, members discussed whether the name speaks to the current audience. "Institute for the Study of Community" was suggested. Director Harison said he feels that this should probably be the Dean's decision, but the Board could possibly pursue this further at our Fall Board meeting.

Dean Beeby explained that if we are going to move materials from Liberal Arts (LA) to Rice Library (RL), it should be done in the summer. Funding for the move and its continued operations out of RL would still be drawn from the Center's Liberal Arts budget. Beeby said that Marilyn Thielman, the Center's Administrative Assistant, recently worked some extra hours for several weeks at LA's front desk when LA was in the process of hiring another staff member. Her plans would be to continue her two-day work week in RL after the move.

Harison agreed that there is plenty of time for a summer move to RL. Archives Librarian Jennifer Greene explained that the Communal Studies Room in RL would easily accommodate a desk and chair for Thielman along with the conference table that is currently in that room. And, fortunately, it is a highly visible area in the library.

There being no reservations about the move, Harison asked for a motion to proceed this summer with this move to integrate the holdings of the Center and the Archives at Rice Library. Graham Perry made that motion, it was seconded by Dr. Donald Janzen, and all were in favor.

Lunch break – Buffet in UC 2202

6. Reports

A. Josh Lockyer

Dr. Joshua Lockyer reported that, as a Board Member of Communal Studies Association (CSA), he wants to encourage members to nominate persons for six awards given annually by CSA. The link is <http://communalstudies.org/awards>. The deadline for nominations is June 1. Lockyer then reviewed some of those awards given to individuals and organizations who have contributed to the field of communal studies through their service as well as articles and artifacts. The CSA also offers a Research Fellowship with a due date of March 1 (not June 1 as with the 6 awards above) and a Hidden Collections Grant with a deadline of September 1.

Lockyer also reviewed some of the highlights of the April 5th CSA Board meeting concerning Mormon sites and the Shaker Society along with plans for 2018 through 2021. He told of their making progress on the *Communal Societies* Journal, Volume 38, Issue #2 – the Jonestown anniversary issue. Also, Tim Miller will be writing a piece to be published in *Communities* magazine.

Note: At this point Dean Beeby left for another meeting, but he said that he hopes to be able to spend more time talking with each Board member in the future. He complimented Director Harison for doing things well.

B. Jennifer Greene

Projects

Laura Johnston Kohl events

Presented to 4 classes (75 students)

Presented to campus and community (450 people)

Interviewed by 4 television stations, 2 radios, and Evansville Public Library podcast

Werner Kontara with South-West International Communities Alliance (SWICA)
Looking to build a resource and financial organization to develop communities
Could be a resource center for them and get materials from them.

UASC promoted Communal Studies during Arch-Madness in March, 2017
Stelle painting came in second place.
Former community member, Timothy Johnson, will be sending additional seminar material, writings, and newsletters from Stelle Group.

Kevin Celuch, professor of marketing
Team project looking at select communal groups to see how they portrayed themselves/ communities internally and to the public.
He will be working with up to 20 groups from the Communal Studies collections.
A student worker, funded by Business College, is scanning newsletters from over 20 groups.
Many of these documents cannot be put online, due to copyright, but can be sent out to fill requests from researchers.

Nicholas Smaligo from Carbondale, Illinois was here looking for teaching materials on communal groups in southern Illinois. Not much was available for his idea. He is working with a camp for ages 10 to 18 years. Greene hopes to visit and see his presentation in July.

All the Communal Studies finding aids are online with all updates.

Outreach to include Communal Studies in other courses. Greene will teach in Spring of 2018 "History 300 – History of the Eco-Village." Harison and Greene will probably do a display case in Liberal Arts on Communal Studies.

Collection Development

The Farm

Still working on scanning all of Leigh Kahn's materials – 5 of 6 boxes completed
Receiving from David Frohman more photos from the early years
Working on getting the audio tapes from Stephen Gaskins' Monday Night Classes.

Fellowship for Intentional Community (FIC)

Greene will be visiting Dancing Rabbit, Sandhill Farm, and Red Earth at the end of May to pick up collections and other primary sources from surrounding communities.

Shiloh

Board member Josh Lockyer drove to Shiloh and picked up tapes of daily meetings and mailed to the Center.

C. Don Pitzer

Dr. Pitzer thanked Lockyer for his help in picking up the last of the Shiloh materials for USI's Archives, and Pitzer expressed sincere appreciation for his being on the Board via Skype.

Members were reminded about the CSA Annual Conference at Zoar on October 5-7. Pitzer told of the theme of “Adaptability” – how intentional communities face change.

He and other members commented about some changes that are being made in many communities, and some ideas regarding aid were offered:

- Padanaram is talking about reopening its schools.
- Koinonia, birthplace of Habitat for Humanity and founder Clarence Jordan’s Cotton Patch Gospels, is now in its 75th year. It is having some financial difficulties.
- CSA is going to sponsor the Fall 2017 issue of FIC’s *Communities* Magazine in support of its networking among current communities. The CSA is underwriting this issue to help celebrate the FIC’s 30th Anniversary. Three CSA members wrote articles. Deborah Altus wrote on “The Value of Community: What Defines Success?” Susan Matarese wrote on “Why I Study Communal Societies.” Pitzer wrote an introductory article for this issue on the close relationship of the CSA and Center with the FIC over the years.
- ICSA, founded in Israel in 1985, faces some financial challenges. The Kibbutz movement and the Israeli government do not financially support the more than 200 communal Kibbutz groups as much as they once did. The current ICSA President, Dr. Dan McKanan, a professor at Harvard Divinity School, is trying to find ways to bolster the outreach and financial wellbeing of the organization. McKanan is assisting the ICSA to set up partnerships with communities and organizations, asking them to appoint a liaison to be a part of their networking. Those assisting the ICSA in this way are being asked to contribute \$85 to \$120 annually for ICSA operations. Each contributing organization or community will also appoint a liaison to work closely with the ICSA Board and its President. Center Director Casey Harison has agreed to serve on behalf of the Center if it joins in this arrangement.

Explaining that it is critical to continue our support of the ICSA, Dr. Donald Pitzer made a motion that USI’s Center for Communal Studies participate in this partnership with ICSA, with Dr. Casey Harison as the liaison person initially, and a donation of between \$100 and \$200 be given in financial support. Greg Brown, stating that a partnership with the ICSA has the potential to become a real asset to the Center, seconded the motion. All were in favor.

Pitzer thanked members for their continued support and closed by reviewing some publications that will soon be available by various pioneers in communal studies.

D. Don Janzen

Report of Don Janzen on activities for the Center in Los Angeles, California:

At the present time there are at least twenty-five known intentional communities in the greater Los Angeles area, and others are constantly being discovered. In an attempt to bring these communities together, in 2016, the Los Angeles Intentional Communities Summit was founded, and the first meeting was held on October 2nd at the Los Angeles Eco-Village. This past April 23rd, the second Summit was held at the Sugar Shack community. I volunteered to be on the Planning Committee for the Summits, and this has allowed me to make close friends in a number of communities. At the Summit gatherings I introduce myself as a representative of the Center for Communal Studies, and invite communities to send information about themselves to the Center. I always have several dozen copies of the Center’s brochure available for distribution.

Most of the Los Angeles intentional communities maintain a website, and in several cases I am on the community's email list, and receive information about news and events in this way. I have started downloading this information, saving it as a PDF file, and sending it to Jennifer Greene in Special Collections. This preserves information about the community that will eventually be deleted. I am also saving information from the websites of a community in San Diego, and several communities in northern California. Many of the Los Angeles communities sponsor events for the general public, and the posters advertising these events are particularly interesting. In almost all cases, these posters appear only on the community's website, and so I download them, and save them as a JPEG file. I have been able to get the community that sponsors the most events to sign a release so Special Collections can feature a gallery of their posters on line.

Since I moved to California I have visited nineteen communities in the Los Angeles area, and in most cases I have made multiple trips to these communities. Elsewhere in the State I have visited five communities. So far, I have sent Special Collections:

762 photographs
203 community event posters in JPEG format
72 PDF articles on communities

In all, Special Collections has received (in PDF and JPEG format) 585 pages of posters and community news.

In the 1960s, California became the focal point of community formation with the advent of the Hippie communes. Because of the Hippies' counterculture attitude, and their rejection of mainstream society, they attracted national attention and are well documented. I am observing that in the first decades of the 21st century, California seems to again be the forefront of community development. However, this time the movement is different, and does not appear to be drawing national attention. Instead of withdrawing and rejecting society, communities are inviting people to be part of their community. This is occurring through community sponsored events that are open to the public, and members of communities becoming involved with neighborhoods and the community at large. As a result, 21st century communities view themselves as being part of society, in contrast to the Hippie communities who saw themselves apart from society.

The growth of intentional communities in the Los Angeles area was apparent at this past Summit. Six different people, who were interested in starting a community, came to the meeting. They had not received a flier announcing the event, but had heard by word of mouth that a group of intentional communities were getting together. One community was there that had formed since the first Summit.

The growth of communities in California, and the west coast in general, is reflected in two other ways. Besides the formation of an organization of intentional communities in the greater Los Angeles area, two individuals are in the process of starting the Southwest Intentional Communities Alliance that will bring together the communities of Arizona, Nevada, and California. The West Coast Intentional Communities Conference is having its third annual meeting this fall in Southern California, the first two having been held in Northern California. The region is alive with intentional community activity.

Only five of the twenty-five known intentional communities in the greater Los Angeles area are listed in the most recent Fellowship for Intentional Community directory. I believe that it is critical that information about these communities be collected and preserved. A new chapter in the history of cooperative living could be underway in the Los Angeles area, and perhaps throughout California, and I am trying to see that the Center, and Special Collections, is at the forefront of documenting this chapter of cooperative living.

7. Other Items

Director Harison announced Connie Weinzapfel's official retirement from the Center Board of Advisors. He stated that Weinzapfel had been a faithful member since 2009, and an official Certificate of Appreciation from the Center will be sent to her. Leslie Townsend will now represent Historic New Harmony on the Center Board.

Harison thanked everyone for being at the meeting.

Respectfully submitted,
Marilyn Thielman, Administrative Assistant

mst – 10/16/17