

# Notes from May 12, 2010 Member Meeting

**28 members present, 21 members sent regrets**

**Staff Members:** Brendan Reimer, Geoff Ripat, Janielle Brooks-Smith, Julio Rivas, Karin Kliewer, Kirsten Bernas, Lindsey McBain

## Group conversations

### Governance

#### Conversation Summary

- Manitoba Working Group(s) – could be formed to include a variety of topics including policy, strategic directions, learning events, etc.
- Advisory panel/team
  - Rep or partner with allies
  - Could be working group
- Feedback loop with membership – local accountability
- More specifics for member meetings
  - Collect, collate, refine policy resolutions
- Not a new board, not many meetings
- Strategic consultations, defined process
  - Local engagement, a few meetings
- Could members appoint Manitoba representative on national board?
- What is the role/responsibility of members?
- Members set operational priorities?
  - Things like allocating staff hours, etc. may not be members' responsibilities.

#### Additional Summary

- Desire for a process for local input
- Desire for structure (lite) that is consistent YET nimble, flexible
  - This structure/process will have a role in setting strategic direction
- This could take the form of an advisory panel with thematic working groups
  - This experiment could be incremental: 'evolving and growing'

#### "Action Plan"

1. Form group to work on this (Kerniel A., Molly M., Christine L., Erika W., Kate S., Jason G., Brendan R.)
2. Develop an approach by end of June
3. Send to members for acceptance
4. Try out for 1-2 years.

## Communication

### Conversation Summary

- Make clear titles for emails
- Be clear – membership orientation package
- Personal communication
  - Lunches, informal topical coffees, phone calls and conference calls
- Distinguish between engagement
- Fewer emails, focus on a link approach
- Clarify intent of email in email heading (membership, opportunity, etc.)
- Standard lead time and reminders
  - Notices for events requiring participation sent out a month ahead of time, and day before
- It is about relationships, not volume
- “Build it and they will come”
  - Talking about website – creating a quality resource for people.
- Briefing notes to members (pre and post events in which they are involved)
  - Chance for people to give input before meetings
- Funding/activities – look for member participation opportunities
  - Report to membership on funding received, projects that emerge through funding
  - Some members wanted to make sure the Network has adequate resources – members can help to leverage resources
- Priority areas for working groups could be topical areas outlined in Newsletter.
- Use Gathering to disseminate Annual Report – Create MB-based member brochure
- Facebook, etc.
- Members design political messaging and meetings
- Forum for two-way communication, discussion board
- Could have two to four member meetings per year to communicate about issues?

## Policy

### Conversation Summary

- Policy specifics; resolutions, not just topic areas
- Pro-active preparation, review papers
- Set priorities
- Survey now on broad issues for working groups
- Room for individual priorities
  - If we do resolution process, it may be helpful for people to be able to bring ideas forward from the floor to accommodate last minute resolutions.
- Balance quick wins and long, broad priorities

- Can we align funding applications with priorities?
- “who benefits and how do they benefit” screen
  - Lens placed on recommendations that come forward (include in resolutions application process)
- How to fit short term goals with long term vision
  - Allowing space for long term visioning (suggestion: could be a working group in and of itself?)
- Incorporate organizational needs of members into policy areas
  - (ie. Funding issues – another potential working group?)
- Find balance between operational management and direction setting
  - It may not be members’ roles to manage staff’s day-to-day activities.
- “Position vs. Policy” Are we developing recommendations for formal government action (policy), or are we developing a value statement about something (positions)?

## Next Steps

- Coordinate working group on governance
  - Put together draft and background information before meeting
- Design collective communications’ strategy (look at existing strategy)
  - Include details/philosophy/principles on how we talk to members (ie. Timing, clarity of messaging, etc).

## Appendix – Small group conversation results

### Group 1

What we need to do:

- Have local policy/priority agenda items. These wouldn't be in conflict with the national board but in addition to the national items and MB Specific
- Get updates on lobbying work

How we should/could do it:

- Have some kind of structure
- Working group
- Means for members to communicate needs (quarterly, bi-annually)
- Collaborate with CCPA on research initiatives
- Collect member priorities (through email), collate priorities, Members/group come(s) together to add details/shape
- NOT board structure, NOT lots of meetings
- Annual policy/priority selection/meeting with narrow/specific areas
- Email with subject line: CCEDNet policy/priority areas
- Feedback loop to members

### Group 2

- Keep in mind that participation may be based on volunteer time.
  - Possibility of a set number of meetings per year (dates set out far in advance)
  - Perhaps three meetings/year
- More formal structure and direction from local region
  - Ensures local accountability
  - Ensures local engagement
- Concern re: moving organizers towards admin jobs

### Group 3

How? (How do members want to be involved in defining what CCEDNet does, the role it plays, and where time is allocated (strategic direction)?)

- Minimal bureaucracy
- Collective process
- Strategic consultation
- Represent common needs
- Advisory Panel/Team
- Voluntary/optional

What? (what needs to be put in place to make this happen?)

- Opportunities for dialogue
- Defined process (min.)
- Maintain annual conference
- Bi-annual Strategic Planning (or similar)
- Information resources
- Manitoba groups could choose representative on national board?

### Group 4

1. Define the role.
  - a. Need for Membership-based advisory structure
  - b. Working groups to deal with relevant issues (members can decide priority)
  - c. ☆ More clarity in communication
  - d. Q: what is expected from members? (Membership commitment)
    - i. Where are we now
    - ii. What are expectations/obligations for all members
  - e. ☆ Bringing members together regularly. Should there be a coordinating body? Yearly consultations, define target themes (policy) that members can engage in.

- i. Members offering expertise in target themes
- f. There should be a connection to policies, and action to be taken
  - i. Communicate to members. What about “pop-up” issues that may not be in the policies? How do we expect CCEDNet to respond?
  - ii. CCEDNet should be present to discuss “pop-up” issues.
- g. There is assumed credibility when we receive communication; network should be involved in the working groups.
- h. Does CCEDNet and other organizations have the capacity to handle this engagement?
  - i. They should/would be as long as the issues are relevant
- i. Besides policy, what other ways can members be engaged?
- j. Maybe members should decide what issues we would like to push for, what CCEDNet should focus on.
- k. If CCEDNet staff is interested, we could look at what priorities we want CCEDNet to focus on. Staff should be available to work with the working groups, to exchange ideas.
- l. To ensure clear direction of the working groups, maybe a steering committee is needed to consult.
- m. There should be staff autonomy and flexibility

Reporting:

- Form advisory group
- Form working groups (thematic)
- Have regular (yearly?) meetings to set directions.