

MINUTES OF THE Alternate ROOTS
Executive Committee Face-to-Face Meeting
October 28-29, 2016 ROOTS Office: Atlanta, GA

Present: Charmaine Minniefield, Carlton Turner, Ashley Davis, Trey Hartt, Paige Heurtin, Jessica Solomon, Joseph Thomas, Tamiko Ambrose-Murray, Keryl McCord, Monique Davis, Kim Pevia, Don Harrell, Samuel Valdez, Esmerelda Balthazar, Nicole Garneau

Not present: Hasan Davis

POP:

Purpose: To meet as the Executive Committee in support of the staff, network and organization in developing and implementing strategies associated with organizational work plan and mission and to make decisions connected to our legal and fiduciary responsibilities.

Outcomes:

- Build trust among the Executive Committee and staff
- To continue our internal practice of deepening our work in undoing oppression at the leadership level
- Orient and welcome our new Executive Committee members (and refresh our returning members)
- Develop our 2016-17 Executive Committee workplan, including our annual meeting schedule
- Review and provide feedback on the 2017 budget
- Move the conversations forward and develop next steps on planning conversations: financial, leadership, and public policy
- Review and discuss the 2016 ROOTS Week accessibility audit
- Provide a deeper analysis of ROOTS Week for the staff to inform their 2017 planning
- Start a conversation on how ROOTS supports larger social movements

Friday, October 28, 2016: The meeting began at 10:00am

All members checked in.

Trey introduced the agenda.

Monique led a discussion on meeting roles and meeting agreements.

Facilitator - Trey
Co-Facilitator - Carlton
Public Scribe - Jessica
Emotions Monitor - Don
Door Monitor - Esme
Note-Taker - Nicole
Timekeeper - Keryl

Carlton introduced the background of “Race Peace” and led the group in undoing oppressions work that had been developed as tools in that work. The group re-convened to reflect on the process.

ROOTS staff prepared binders for each ExComm member. Those binders included:

- Employee & ExComm Contact List
- Core Values
- By-Laws
- Organizational Chart
- 2016-2018 Strategic Plan
- Membership & Participation Guide
- Hosting a Rhizome
- Meeting Processes & Roles
- The Formal Consensus Process
- Financial Policies & Procedures Manual
- Check Request/Reimbursement Form
- ExComm Travel & Logistics
- Accessibility Access Study from ROOTSWeek 2016

As part of the ExComm orientation session, the group performed a dramatic reading of the ROOTS core values. Other important parts of the book were highlighted. The consensus process for decision making was discussed, as were moments where a legal vote is required for the organization to do its work.

Monique Davis led an “art break.”

Carlton Turner presented the [Strategic plan overview](#). ExComm members were encouraged to reference the Strategic Plan as presented in their binders.

Elizabeth Labbe-Webb was contracted to audit the accessibility of ROOTSWeek. [Her report is available here](#). ExCom members were encouraged to read the report tonight, for discussion as part of Saturday’s discussion of ROOTSWeek.

Trey presented the 2014-2015 ExComm Work Plan. We assessed the ways in which ExComm fulfilled its last work plan, as preparation for developing a new work plan.

Worth noting is that the work plan section under “Innovation Ensembles” was not totally resolved last year, but led to productive conversations around the roles of work groups, committees, etc. There is more work to be done on how to more deeply engage members.

Emergent pieces of work as priorities for ExComm as identified by Carlton and Ashley:

- 5 year financial Planning
- Leadership Planning
 - Transition
 - Emergency leadership transition plan
- Policy work:
- Member Engagement:

- First responder process
- Youth engagement
- Underrepresented communities
- Uprooting Oppressions work (and Documenting that work)

Monique and Paige made a presentation on the Budget. All ExComm members are encouraged to join the Finance Work Group if they want to dig deeper into the details of ROOTS finances.

Paige explained the purpose of the Balance Sheet and Profit and Loss, and made a presentation of those documents. The Balance Sheet is supported by the document “Notes to Financial Statements.”

Monique made a presentation on the [2017 Proposed Budget](#).

Carlton and Keryl reported on their Development trip to NY when they were invited to meet with the Doris Duke Charitable Trust, the only non-current Duke grantee that was invited to meet. They also met with the Warhol Foundation, Ford Foundation, and other foundations. The 2017 budget reflects projected grants based on those meetings.

Staff emphasized many places in the budget that appear as administrative expenses but represent direct support for artists, for example the bulk of **Contracted Services** goes to artists, as well as **Transportation** and **Newsletters & Publications**.

Lines highlighted in yellow represent places where the budget changed since the draft we saw at ROOTSweek.

It was noted and flagged that as part of this budget, Carlton put a pay reduction for his own salary into the budget as an expense saving measure. Nicole strongly urged Carlton not to fix budget shortfalls in this way. There was a discussion of who on staff/ExComm should be consulted before staff salaries are cut. Tamiko suggested that reductions in salary should be at least discussed with others, for example the Personnel Committee.

The 2017 budget was approved by consensus of the people in the room.

The ExComm reviewed its “Bike Rack/Community Garden.” Items discussed were questions around the “Our Town” grant and questions about the collaboration on ILI. Carlton shared his perspectives on both of these issues. Carlton gave an overview of our work with the NEA Our Town grant, and reported that the collaboration with other national organizations through ILI has been generative, loving, supportive, and focused on abundance.

Bike Rack/Community Garden

Our Town/NEA
 Book Contributors Wanted
 ILI collaboration
 ROOTS Weekends expanding beyond the South
 Movement Building within ROOTS
 Archiving and Office Move

First Responder Work Group
ROOTS Latinx Group

The ExComm toasted Keryl McCord on the occasion of her last ExComm meeting!

Saturday, October 29, 2016: The meeting began at 10:00am

Facilitator - Jess
Co-Facilitator - Trey
Public Scribe - Tamiko
Emotions Monitor - Monique
Door Monitor - Kim
Timekeeper - Esme
Note Taker - Nicole

The first work session of the morning, the body split into small groups to discuss:

1. Transition Planning (supported by Ashley)
2. Financial planning (supported by Monique and Trey)
3. Policy planning (supported by Carlton), potential topics: creative placemaking, juvenile justice, cultural equity

Major takeaways from large group reports-back:

Financial Planning:

Participatory Budgeting (training, education)

- Co-op, Sharing Economies (creating economies that share resources for next 40 years, skill shares, tool shares, marketing co-op, ROOTS store / Etsy)
- Financial Planning (find expertise for 5-year financial plan, investment rubric, identify investment planning folks)
- Alternative Income Sources (social entrepreneurship, etc)
- Culture of money and Leadership Development (grassroots fundraising, education around personal/systemic relationships to money)

Questions:

- Have we ever measured the yield of artists that sell/present their work at ROOTSWeek?
- Can we lift up research around doing business with organizations & businesses that share our values?
- Creative, Pop Ed, Hands-on methods for engaging folks in Participatory Budgeting?
- How do we develop a multi-year budgeting process?

Resources:

- REAL: Rural Entrepreneurship through Action Learning
- GIFT: Grassroots Institute for Fundraising Training
- Finding ways to tie donations to ROOTS tangible and specific (i.e. ways to target donations to particular projects)
- SOAR: Strengths, Opportunities, Aspirations, Results

Next Steps:

Plot out this work in time and space, present to ExComm at a future call, work into agenda of future F2F meeting

Policy Planning:

Youth Justice

The group brainstormed issues and organizations to highlight as part of the ROOTS Weekend in Richmond, April 2017. Next step: ROOTS staff capture this info and put together resource list for folks doing this work in the south, generate content on the website to share with field.

Creative Placemaking

(in light of the fact that a lot of discussions have happened around this issue already, the group chose to focus on the other two buckets). Issues raised involved how to continue to engage creative placemaking resources in just ways and be engaged in community development projects the center poor people/people of color who are particularly threatened by gentrification.

Cultural Equity

The group discussed the ways in which resources in the philanthropic sector are not shared equitably--Report from *National Center on Responsive Philanthropy*. 5 years out the statistics are even worse, even after highlighting/challenging the field. Next step: propose changes to existing tax structures, looking at alternative non-philanthropic support systems, Education around Philanthropy & Cultural Inequity. Focusing on the ways in which ROOTS approaches Cultural Equity and share that with the field.

Questions:

How do we create a Harm-Free Zone within Alternate ROOTS (internal policy within ROOTS)?
Are there organizations & individuals focused on helping young people get elected to public office?

Can we animate reports through performance & video?

Based on a power analysis of the US tax code, how do we develop concrete proposals for shifting the power based on the tax structure?

Transition Planning:

Contingency (Emergency) Planning

1. Need to reinvigorate the Personnel Committee immediately
2. Table of contents for Emergency Transition Folder (Passwords, etc.)

The ExComm was briefed on the status of current staff contracts. Ashley Davis has enrolled in a leadership development program and has taken on leadership transition planning as her project in that program. It was emphasized that all conversations around any staff transitions are to be held in confidence until public announcements are made.

There was a discussion of issues and questions related to leadership transition within ROOTS. These questions will be addressed by the ExComm in coming months with support from the Personnel Committee.

Next steps:

Reactivate the Personnel Committee

Trey asked NG to chair Personnel Committee

Important to have Personnel Committee be reflective of the membership

The following people volunteered to serve on the Personnel Committee: Jess, Trey, Monique, Charmaine, Carlton, Nicole, Sam, Kim. Nicole will convene a subset of this group and first order of business will be to read and react to transition document. All ExComm members are reminded that they are invited to participate in this process and give input regardless of whether they are on the Personnel Committee.

There was an art break provided by Liza Garza and Eli Lakes!

Trey presented an update on the [ExComm Work Plan](#) based on yesterday's work. The group committed to making a 2-year work plan and "thinning" the work plan to eliminate tasks that are staff work.

Visioning - What ways would we like to participate in national movement building?

Carlton framed this discussion with background on the history of Alternate ROOTS' work in solidarity with the Southern Movement Assembly. Alternate ROOTS also has deep ties to the Movement for Black Lives and has expressed solidarity with the water protectors at Standing Rock. How do we see ROOTS leading and supporting various social movements? This also impacts Leadership Transition.

There was a discussion around this. Ideas raised include: skill sharing, uses of technology, ROOTS listening sessions (happened in Dallas), community organizer position, questions around how to make sure that members are engaged and informed about social movements ([i.e. Platform for Black Lives](#)). AWD suggested potential programmatic links i.e. a round of Professional Development grants focused on social movements, and including specific action steps with regard to specific local issues. Engaging the membership directory as a source of connection around specific social issues. Poster sessions available--create a poster about what's happening in your community. ROOTS is a resource opportunity for great jobs/positions in the field. Keep at the forefront: intersection of art and social change. Be more intentional about creating spaces for interaction between artist and social change folks.

Deeper analysis of ROOTS Week

- Brief [overview](#) of registration attendance/ financials

Carlton updated ExComm on the resolution of the conversations with Black Swan Catering. Ashley Davis has been in communication with Aramark. Eric will not be the manager for ROOTSweek. Food has been a tormenting issue within ROOTS. Food as a cultural practice has been at the center of dramas around ROOTS Week and we might need to simplify and be nourished in a less deluxe way. ExComm should be prepared to support that.

There was a suggestion that ROOTS continue to be intentional about the visual environment of the performance space.

Other topics discussed: the performance/disruption by SpiritHouse and the ramifications of folks' reactions, triggers, etc. especially in light of the fact that SpiritHouse was contracted to hold the Health/Healing support work.

There was a suggestion that assigning emcee/community organizers for Late Night could strengthen Late Night programming and alleviate the staff's work.

There was a discussion of cultural appropriation in the performances/curation of performance work. ROOTS' core values were emphasized in terms of having courageous and difficult conversations. Whose well-being is sacrificed when we privilege the ability of artist to make mistakes and be educated? Kim's reaction to the performance was highlighted as a best practice within ROOTS.

Staff articulated a desire for ExComm to support framing around the presentation of performance so that folks have context. The need for curation support was also highlighted. ROOTS week is an artist retreat and a service to artists, that is a safe container for artists to bring work in whatever state it's in. Importance of having conversations that don't shatter an artist. The Critical Response process was lifted up, and Liz Lerman has also modified the process.

Next steps: at ROOTS Week we can return to some of our training and development work: finances, facilitation of talkbacks, workshops, skill-shares. Frame: "Back to Basics?"

Parking Lot:

Skillshare around justice-based creative placemaking. Discussion included gentrification, placekeeping, ROOTS being pulled upon to show up ethically in this community of Atlanta/the south. Opportunity to mobilize activists, have a position. Community development power is a long game. Theaster Gates was offered as an example of creative, justice-oriented development. Art x Culture x Social Justice Network was lifted as an organization hosting conversations. There was a discussion of Creative Placemaking, Placekeeping, gentrification, etc.

How can ROOTS become a Harm Free Zone?

Parking Lot:

The ExComm performed a plus/delta evaluation of the Face-to-Face meeting.