

The Center for Local Government Board of Directors Meeting  
July 1, 2020

1:30pm – 3pm

Virtual

In attendance: Jim Lukas, Mike Rahall, Jack Cameron, Vickie Earhart (Board); TJ White, Cody Smith (Staff)

Absent: Kristen Bitonte

- The meeting was called to order at 1:30pm
- May 6, 2020 board meeting minutes
  - Motion to approve by M. Rahall, seconded by J. Lukas. Motion passed 4-0
- W.D. Heisel Memorial Scholarship Selection Discussion
  - The Board discussed the individual criteria they utilized for selecting their best candidates. J. Lukas asked what could be done to establish common judgement criteria for the Board. J. Cameron suggested that there need to be more compelling cases from the candidates. Currently they make their case through a short statement. How can this be more robust?
  - J. Lukas stated that the Board may want to come up with specific criteria so that the candidates can be judged evenly against each other. T. White stated that he would provide a report to the Board which would flesh out current criteria, so that the Board can identify what to keep, what to get rid of, what to clarify, and potentially how to weight it.
  - M. Rahall and J. Lukas asked if a financial consideration should come into play. T. White stated that if the Board went in that direction, criteria would need to be developed and a way to verify the financial situation would need to be developed. T. White stated that this may also lead to IT security issues on CLG's end, if CLG has to collect any proof of financial need.
  - M. Rahall stated that the majority of this year's candidates came from Northern Kentucky. He asked if there had been any pushback from the Cincinnati Area Management Association (CAMA) on candidates not coming from inside CAMA's service area. (CAMA is a donor to the scholarship fund). T. White stated that he could not recall any specific pushback. T. White stated that the scholarship is sent directly to Program Directors at UC (MPA and Planning school), UD, Wright State, Ohio State, and NKU. Based on the demographics of the applicants, NKU may have more aggressively pushed out this scholarship opportunity. T. White looked at historical winners. Over the last 6 years, there have been 2 from NKU, 2 from Wright State, 1 from UD and one from OSU.
  - The Board then reviewed candidates. Prior to the meeting, each Board member was asked to rank their top 4 candidates, which would help determine the finalists from whom to vote. MOTION from J. Lukas, seconded by J. Cameron, to award the 2020 W.D. Heisel Memorial Scholarship to Michele Adams of NKU.
- CLG Member Retention
  - T. White pointed out a potential threat to CLG is that Managers that are either new to the region or to the career field have not been exposed over their careers to CLG. This leads to a potential retention issue. V. Earhart stated that it is wise for CLG to keep an eye on what communities want out of the organization. This will evolve over time. V. Earhart also stated that CLG should continue to look for ways to link themselves into the regional local governance conversation in the Greater Cincinnati area- especially in a post-Covid era where there may be more of a push for intergovernmental collaboration.

- CLG Website Project: Preview of the new homepage
  - C. Smith provided the Board with a preview of the new CLG website- with the caveat that much of the wording and photos were placeholders. The Board then provided input.
  - J. Lukas suggested a space for member governments to make announcements or share news. CLG staff thought this was an excellent idea and said that could be done in the scrolling photo section of the site.
  - J. Lukas asked if the website would have connectivity to social media. T. White stated that CLG has a Twitter account and that we would check with our IT professional to see if Twitter connectivity could be added.
  - J. Cameron stated that the visuals still need to be updated. This includes finding a more modern font and updating the CLG logo. V. Earhart suggested modernizing the logo for the website to include the 10 county service area and a star for every member government. This would help people unfamiliar with CLG understand our reach and the size of our network. T. White stated he would work up a prototype logo.
  - V. Earhart suggested using the Cincinnati USA Regional Chamber’s website as inspiration and using action words instead of nouns. They have action words like “connect,” or “influence,” whereas CLG’s website has more neutral phrases like “information sharing.” T. White stated that staff would look to modernize the wording.
  - J. Cameron asked what the timeline for the website was. T. White stated that the project began in April and that he targeted a September roll-out. J. Cameron asked why that was the timeframe. T. White stated that he set the timeframe (it did not come from CLG’s IT professional for example), and it was based on the 6 month process it took to design the current site in 2012. T. White stated that staff could expedite the website roll-out however.
  - A question was asked about what Content Management System (CMS) CLG would be using. C. Smith stated Wordpress. T. White stated that the current site was on the Joomla platform, but that Wordpress had a better “back end” system for the site to be updated, etc.
  - The Board discussed the “Join the Center” link, stating that it should be able to be done online, as opposed to the current system where a government must reach out to T. White. T. White stated that to join CLG, in addition to paying dues, staff needs to conduct an orientation meeting. He stated that an online “join” form could be developed, but that in practice it was still going to require personal contact after a government hits “submit.” V. Earhart suggested simplifying the language on the “join” page to focus on the membership eligibility language, as the benefits of membership are laid out elsewhere in the site. Likewise, much of the “membership benefits” language could be added to the “about us.”
  - T. White stated that one of the goals he gave staff was to develop a website that was designed so that as CLG launched new programs, the website would be structured in such a way that a new program could be added without disrupting the design of the page. As such, items like CLG’s programs would be included as drop downs.
  - C. Smith stated that the website was designed to be mobile optimized as well as desktop.
  - T. White stated that staff would be making some adjustments to the ratios of the sizes of items on the page in order to make it more easily viewable. Finally, T. White reminded everyone that much of the text on the homepage was placeholder text and would be updated with sharper language.
  
- CLG Budget Adjustments (Covid, health insurance, miscellaneous)
  - T. White provided the Board with an adjusted budget. Changes included an increase in health insurance costs by \$905. Employee contribution revenue also increased, since that is locked in at 20%. T. White also stated that due to Covid-19, CLG’s mileage and parking budget was going to have roughly \$600 reallocated. Likewise, there would be a drop in office supply expenses.
  - T. White also adjusted revenues to reflect one member government that had been suspected would not renew. J. Cameron stated that changes like that were unnecessary as budget amendments.

- T. White stated that he would provide an updated set of budget adjustments in an e-mail to the Board. No action needs to be taken at this time.
- Leadership Academy
  - T. White stated that the CLG Leadership Academy was proceeding virtually. It is his expectation that there will not be any live classes this year. As such, T. White suggested reimbursing Leadership Academy participants for the portion of their Leadership Academy tuition that would have gone to food and room fees.
  - J. Lukas asked if there would be any other anticipated changes to cost based on the Leadership Academy going virtual. T. White did not anticipate any additional changes. The other Leadership Academy line items included speaker fees, which for the most part had been paid out, plaques for the graduates, and money for the Xavier University partnership.
  - T. White stated that the amount to be reimbursed is \$1,300, which equates to \$65/government. While this is not a lot of money, CLG is trying to demonstrate to the governments that we recognize that it is not the “full” Leadership Academy experience without the in-person aspect.
  - J. Lukas asked if CLG had received negative feedback from any of the students about the Academy being held virtually. T. White stated that the students are understanding of the situation.
  - MOTION by M. Rahall, seconded by V. Earhart to reimburse Leadership Academy participants unused money from their tuition that would have covered room fees and food.
- CLG Annual Meeting
  - T. White sought advice from the Board on how to hold the CLG Annual Meeting. He stated that the meeting was scheduled to happen in September, and that it would likely be virtual. However he wanted to pursue all options, so Lori Stuckey (CLG staff) reached out to the City of Blue Ash about holding the Annual meeting outside at Summit Park.
  - Some feedback from the Board is that the park may not be a draw- generally people come for the speaker and the networking. Additional feedback was that it may unfortunately need to be a virtual business meeting this year.
  - A question was asked regarding when a final decision needed to be made. T. White stated by the end of July.
  - A question was asked about whether to reimburse members for their Annual Meeting expenses. T. White stated that most of the money for the Annual Meeting came from charging for tickets. Since there are no tickets, there is no charge for that portion of the event to be reimbursed. There is an additional \$700 in the CLG budget to help cover Annual Meeting costs, but that money is “general fund” money coming from CLG membership dues. This makes the Annual Meeting different from the CLG Leadership Academy, where the reimbursement was part of tuition payment, which was separately invoiced and was an additional cost for governments above and beyond membership dues.
- The meeting adjourned at 3:25pm