



**Sonoma Valley Fund**  
**Board Meeting Minutes**  
**Meeting Date:** March 14, 2019  
**Meeting Location:** SVUSD Office

#	AGENDA ITEM	RECOMMENDATION/ACTION TAKEN	
1.	<b>Call to order and Approval of Minutes</b>	Name Time	Blattner 3:03 pm
<p>Art Grandy moved to approve the January meeting minutes, Mollie Collins seconded the motion, and the board voted to approve the minutes.</p>			
2.	<b>Financial Update and Budget Discussion</b>	Name Time	Lew Perlson
<p>Lew has posted financial statements YTD, on the board website, and noted that there has been very little activity since the beginning of this year.</p> <p>With regards to the 2019 budget for the operating fund of Sonoma Valley Fund: it lists the 2018 budget, 2018 actuals, and proposed 2019 budget.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Note that star event cost was lower in 2018 because the awards were purchased in the 2017 budget year. The 2019 proposed budget item will increase by \$3,000 to account for cost of award purchase for this year's event.</li> <li>• Question: if Star event revenues can be broken out into their own line item? Answer: yes, Lew will add an expected revenue line to the budget to accommodate this.</li> <li>• Question: will this budget be adapted mid-year, and how will new affiliate model be accounted for with regards to costs for staffing, space, consultants. Answer from Beth Brown that these items are paid directly through CFSC's overall budget and are not meant to be accounted for in the SVF operations fund budget.</li> </ul> <p>Judy Young made a motion to approve the budget with these amendments, Penney Magrane seconded the motion and the board voted to approve the budget.</p>			
3.	<b>Grants Update</b>	Name Time	Judy Young
<p>The grants committee met and will be bringing in May a proposal to make a grant allocation of \$700,000 from the Todd trust to the Sonoma Land Trust. More information to come on this.</p>			

Cohort update: Jill has declined the option to do a second cohort, but Karin and the grants committee are moving forward with identifying a potential new consultant to run the next cohort.

Grants committee: hopes to engage in some communications efforts to promote the work of the cohort. Will be considering an insert in Valley of the Moon magazine, seeking an article in the Index-Tribune.

4.	<b>Development Update</b>	Name Time	Art Grandy
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The major effort of development committee in the near future will be to focus on a longer-range plan for Star Event fundraising. They aim to making a focused effort to bring in new sponsors.

Art would also like to have calling cards for board members, will work with Caitlin on this.

5.	<b>Governance</b>	Name Time	Mollie Collins
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**No update.**

6.	<b>Star Event</b>	Name Time	Penney Magrane
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They had a kickoff meeting for the event discussing the idea to make this the nonprofit Oscar awards and widen participation, build out a stronger sponsorship base, sell out at 350 guests (last year attendance was 280). This year's event will be at Cornerstone. The date is October 6, 2019.

They want to create the story and get it out in the press. Laura will help with a press release. They are looking for wineries to pour wine at the event. Honorary chair is Karen Collins.

7.	<b>Update on Affiliate Model and Community Survey</b>	Name Time	Elliot Levin and Andy Eber, Partnership Resources Group
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Beth spoke about the timing of this project: this is a transformative time for the foundation, and we believe that the time is right and the call is urgent. We are delighted to have Simon and J's experience in fundraising and campaigns, and are bringing in the Partnership Resources Group to help us raise the bar with designing a feasibility study for our campaign.

*Presentation from Elliot and Andy:*

Their firm was established 27 years ago, and have supported many local capital campaigns including the Redwood Empire Foodbank, Santa Rosa Community Health, Petaluma Health Centers, the SAY Dream Center, Sweetwater Spectrum, and the Sebastiani Theater. They have background in health, education, human services and the arts.

**Q: What is a feasibility assessment?**

A: It's a process of listening. The goal is to be able to offer board and organizations the answers to two questions: 1) Under what conditions will people and institutions fund our initiative? 2) If we satisfy those conditions what level of giving can be expected?

The objective for Partnership Resources Group is to: test the feasibility of a campaign to raise \$15 million in some combination of endowed and expendable funds to benefit the Sonoma Valley. And to support the development of a fundraising strategy, and cultivate and identify potential major donors.

**Q: Will the study will break out anticipated giving into immediate gifts, pledges over time, or legacy giving?**

A: yes, especially for this campaign that will be an important piece.

**Q: From previous things PRG has done do they already have lay of the land and people to speak to or is that something the task force needs to bring?**

A: While some of the major donors are known, they really want to find those lesser known donors, people who have weekend homes. Identifying who to talk to will be an important role for the task force.

**Q: If the feasibility study is successful, does PRG offer campaign consultancy as well?**

A: These are separate lines of business. PRG does not contract for campaign consultancy while in a feasibility phase to avoid a conflict of interest.

**Q: Since people don't necessarily know what SVF does or who CFSC is, do we need to educate people on this first?**

A: The campaign's Case for Support is the central argument for why people should give. We will take a test case to donors for the study, but is not expected to be the final version that the campaign will ultimately do their launch. The case needs to address: what is the big idea? What is the credibility of the SVF and CFSC? Will this campaign be viewed as competing with individual agencies? Do service providers have the capacity to utilize the dollars raised if the goal is quite large? Is there donor fatigue? What is the urgency?

J and foundation staff will produce the first draft, of this case, with opportunity for input from the task force and SVF board. Then PRG will take the case to each donor who is interviewed, along with a cover letter, and the feasibility interview will dig into the participant's response to the case.

**Q: Making a case for money is clear when you are building a building. What is experience with asking more open-ended questions?**

A: We don't like to make assumptions in approaching donors, and start interviews from a place of listening. Inquiring into donor motivations and values will help to support a case like ours.

**Q: How do we overcome opposition? Nonprofits might have a feeling that the campaign is competing with their own fundraising?**

A: Generally, in campaigns, whether community wide or specific, donors are encouraged to consider campaign gifts as "plus giving" which is additive to their annual giving, and not competing with their normal donations. A campaign ask should be positioned as going above and beyond any giving, they already do. In a case like ours, we would present the campaign as additive, strengthening the nonprofit network that people care about.

As a foundation you have staked out ground in the Valley to say: we are a value add to the nonprofit organizations, we are the convener or people and organizations, we are solutions oriented, able to take on complex issues that transcend just one agency.

**Q: Has CFSC ever done this before?**

A: We haven't, which is why this is so significant and why we have Partnership Resources Group providing their technical expertise.

**Q: If a donor doesn't want their donation to go to an endowment but do want it to be expendable, will that be an option?**

A: The \$15 million we are testing is for a combination of both endowed and expendable funding. Donors who don't want to give to an endowment but do want to support the campaign will have a place to give.

**Q: What is the timeframe?**

A: A study usually takes 120-160 days. We are looking at a timeframe that runs into the summer months.

**Q: Concern that the foundation chose Sonoma Valley Fund because we are "ready to launch", but readiness is uncertain. We struggle as a board to figure out what we are, and we don't raise very much on an annual basis. To say that we have the image credibility and relevance to ask the community for \$15 million could be a stretch.**

A: This isn't a case for the Sonoma Valley Fund as a standalone entity, the entity behind the case is the Community Foundation and we do have a 36-year history and \$220 million track record of funding to support the ask. The results of the feasibility study will, ideally, help us get "unstuck" and provide a clear sense of direction towards a shared goal of greater community support and impact.

**Next steps:**

Form task force of 6-7 people, including the chair of board, foundation staff, and 4/5 others. Task force will meet 3-4 times, 90 minutes each. The scope and role of the task force is to meet for only this defined time period to support generating the feasibility study invitation list and make connections to help those interviews get scheduled.

The task force will help to identify about 45 people to interview for the feasibility study. Looking for people with: capacity to give, access to others with capacity, opinion leaders, people with fundraising campaign experience, and some balance of age and geographic spread, and full-time residents and weekenders.

8.	<b>Adjournment</b>	Name Time	Simon Blattner 5:02 pm

**Board Members Present:** Chip Allen, Simon Blattner, Mollie Collins, Ted Eliot, Priscilla Essert, Katherine Fulton, Art Grandy, Penney Magrane, Michael Mulcahy, Lew Perlson, Karen Roche, Peg Van Camp, Judy Young, Laura Zimmerman

**Board Members Excused/Absent:** Nancy Ramsey, Ken Stokes, Lucy Weiger

**Guests/CFSC Staff Present:** Beth Brown, Caitlin Childs, Andy Eber, Barbara Hughes, Elliot Levin, J Mullineaux

**Next meeting:** May 9, 2019