



# Willits Economic Localization

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## Coordinating Committee Meeting Minutes January 16, 2007

**Attendees:** Jason Bradford, Marc Grail, Freddie Long, Rachel Olivieri, Ron Orenstein, Liam UiCearbhaill, Mary Zellachild, Jason Bradford

**Guests:** Michael Hackelman, Earthmind

**Facilitator:** Ron Orenstein

**Notes:** Rachel Olivieri

**Check In** Waived by Ron O.

### **Organizational Structure – Liam & Freddie**

Michael Hackelman, holder of Earthmind (1972-'86), a 501c3 non-profit organization, discussed his proposal to offer WELL, without conditions, a merger with Earthmind. Discussion ensued relating the similarities of our visions and goals and Michael underscored his commitment to renewable energy projects and noted WELL's broad-based localization concepts in this regard.

It was determined that although Earthmind had undetermined assets, they did not constitute real property or monetary funds and would not be a significant factor in the merger.

The Organizational subcommittee consisting of Freddie, Michael, Jason, Suzie, and Liam proposed a five member board - that four current members of the CC be nominated to the Earthmind Board along with Michael Hackelman. This would constitute a relationship similar to WELL's relationship to REDI. In this case, Earthmind would be the fiscal sponsor and WELL the project. A Memorandum of Understanding would be drafted between Earthmind and WELL outlining the basis of that relationship.

Liam proposed that those new board members be selected now by the CC in order to facilitate capturing the Wallace Global Fund account under Earthmind's 501c3 non-profit while that transitory condition exists. That motion passed unanimously.

The selection process was determined by volunteers. Michael Hackelman, President, Liam UiCearbhaill, Vice-President, Freddie Long, Treasurer, Rachel Olivieri, Secretary, and Mary Zellachild, Liaison. The first board meeting is

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scheduled for Tuesday, January 23 at 6:30 to begin the merger process. It was determined that there would be a need for slight changes to the bylaws to assure a proper fit.

Freddie discussed our liability issue. At present, under the structure of our Governance and Strategic Plan Documents, WELL and its members are currently liable for damages should that condition present itself to our organization.

It was agreed that full notification of WELL's merger with Earthmind be disclosed to the general membership through these minutes as well as a general announcement during the February 5, 2007 plenary.

Freddie made a motion to publicly thank Michael Kisslinger, who has provided a great deal of timely support in this reorganization effort with expert counseling. That motion passed unanimously. Thank you Michael Kisslinger for all of your support as it was greatly appreciated by all.

## **Plenary Event February 5 – Liam**

Liam outlined the basic plan of inviting all groups, support and work; to talk about their accomplishments, upcoming plans, and current needs. As each CC member was tasked with contacting two groups each and report on their findings, much discussion ensued. Marc and Rachel shared the general consensus stating that overall expectations and response was low. In spite of this, many work groups have met or where planning on meeting prior to the plenary. In some cases, as a result of the general survey, members lost in the transition, were found and reattached.

Mary reported that the Food Group met in December and had two coordinators including Sarah O'Brien and Ursula Partch. Mary reported that the Liaison group had met twice and that Greg Kanne, Willits City Councilman, was an active member and very interested in WELL's progress within the community. Mary indicated that she planned to meet with Mike Adair (sp) to coordinate his coverage with the Mendo County Supervisors meetings.

Ron Orenstein reported on energy and security.

Brian covered Funding and Membership. He stated that getting the word out is the way to enroll membership and that effort would be invigorated more by joining passions with projects rather than fitting people into group boxes. The question was raised about do projects create the groups or do groups create the projects. In either case, having passion seems a critical and necessary factor to

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produce either. Liam stated that the Strategic Plan has a purpose that we should follow.

Freddie also reported that the last Membership meeting was an especially productive one following an enthusiastic discussion about their new outreach program to re-engage WELL's members by conducting a survey to find out what our members are already doing in their lives that exemplifies economic localization activities, two impassioned team members were "linked" one who raised sheep and one who needed wool. Freddie suggested that the outreach survey will likely uncover more such "link" possibilities connecting people to people, projects to projects, people to projects (and so on and so forth).

Jason reported briefly on the Research group. Due to excessive commitments on many fronts, that has not been followed closely. However, it was noted that many current activities like researching WELL's reorganization, the water group's research of Brooktrails' water issues, and the various subcommittees' research into such topics as slaughterhouse impacts, etc., research is an ongoing enterprise with all groups most of the time.

Liam discussed a recent well attended meeting of the Business Group. Reinhold Ziegler became that group's leader and liaison. Discussion concerned with defining "What is Local" and how does the business support local efforts within the community along with the Chamber of Commerce, BALLE, and Local First organizations consisted of most of the primary discussion.

## **RLNC Reloaded Update - Brian**

Brian considered changing the focus of the event from last year's broad-based outreach to a Mendocino centric summit. He spoke of inviting key people within the Mendocino community - those having visionary core values that translate into growing community and increasing economic viability.

Liam disagreed and preferred the original format. Liam suggested that the key issue was to jumpstart ICLEI and that integrity needed to be upheld in this event.

Brian stated that he had neither the energy nor the time to fulfill that requirement alone. Liam requested that Brian submit a specific proposal outlining that vision. Brian agreed.

## **2007 Budget Liam & Freddie**

The 2007 budget was passed out and commented on by the committee. Some specific line items were questioned and clarified to the extent that a proposed spending plan could foresee the future. It was determined that a budget is a target to shoot for. That built into that concept is a certain flexibility to shift funds

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and priorities to meet funding needs as they arise. It was noted that both Administration and Membership committees would bear the greater responsibility to track budgetary maintenance requirements. The motion to accept the 2007 Budget as is was unanimously approved. A copy of the budget is available to all WELL members upon request to the WELL office.

## **Job Description – Liam & Freddie**

Due to the Wallace Global Fund grant, more paid staff hours will be allocated to facilitate Administration tasks. It was proposed by the subcommittee that two positions be created. One position would handle primarily data entry tasks and receptionist duties. The other would become formally empowered to make daily decisions regarding various aspects regarding public relations and policy interpretations along the lines of an executive director.

The motion passed unanimously and it was agreed that the title of the new position would be determined at a later date.

## **Strategic Review of Committee Assignments & Activities - Marc**

Most of this discussion occurred during the committee and plenary reporting noted earlier in the minutes. Marc encourages us all to consider our follow-up – when we say we are going to do something we need a process.

Marc spoke to the bigger global issues and the inherent impact on every aspect of our local community life and suggested that issues like the Bypass, in light of these global impacts, not be engaged. That instead we focus on how those global changes will impact our community and that we prepare ourselves to survive them.

## **Check-Out – Waived by Ron Orenstein**

**Next CC Meeting — January 29<sup>th</sup>, 2007 6:00 pm**

**Facilitator – Liam UiCearbhaill**