

020923 PFR Board Meeting Minutes

In Attendance:

Harry
Erick
Eva
Kate
Melanie
Rachael
Kenneth
Travis
JCM (staff)
Nyala (Associate Board)

1. Pitch Deck/Corporate Giving – please use the pitch deck for your own outreach efforts to potential corporate/larger donors. The deck may change a bit over time, but the link will remain the same.

2. We received a \$2,500 grant from Break Free From Plastic.

--Applied for Whole Foods Community Grant 11/15/2022

--Applied for LA Community Purpose Grant 1/23/2023, and advanced past first round

--Pitching David Bohnett Foundation for a grant February 2023

3. Board Member Jody amazingly got his employer, Boston Consulting Group, to sequester a team of five consultants for six weeks of pro-bono work on behalf of PlasticFreeRestaurants.org. They are just shy of halfway through their commitment. It has been amazing. JCM is having weekly check-ins with the team, and Kenny has joined in for some of them as well.

--Three potential targets have emerged among their roster of corporate clients: [REDACTED]

--THE GOOD: In all three cases, there is a path by which PFR could act in an advisory role instead of relying on funding from these corporate partners. If a big corporation simply writes us a \$500K check to continue doing what we're doing now, then it could try to exert significant pressure on our methods or agenda, since refusing to do so could result in a significant loss of our funding. But if our corporate partners are largely spending their own money, then we can largely avoid that pressure.

--THE BAD: In all three cases, these corporations need to feel comfortable that what's being implemented can withstand scrutiny with respect to "greenwashing," and PFR needs to feel comfortable staking its reputation on the likes of [REDACTED], which will unquestionably continue to pollute in other ways and other arenas. In all three cases, substantially more money will be needed in PFR's coffers. And in all three cases, PFR needs to be substantially more efficient and capable of handling massive numbers of requests. This essentially means that PFR will need to hire at least one full-time salaried staffer.

--There are a couple problems with hiring a staffer:

--Our bylaws

--Our current budget/revenues

--Being "owned" by a corporate daddy that would then have leverage to stretch our agenda

--Spending more than 10% of our revenue on overhead.

--In case you're wondering, JCM would not be this staffer. I fully plan to continue as an unpaid Executive Director, but I don't have the time to spare for a position that would require 40+ hours/week.

--How do we get around these hurdles?

--Increased fundraising

--Change bylaws?

--Perhaps a commitment from one of our corporate partners to fund 6-12 months of a PFR staffer's salary as a condition of our partnership and PFR's willingness to stake its reputation on a partnership with the corporation? Are there legal issues with this? Would, for example, ██████ be paying a PFR staffer on its own payroll? In either case, is that a bad look? Or a blurring of the lines that could potentially threaten our 501(c)(3) status? Need to investigate.

--Discussion:

--Erick: Let's position ourselves where "No more \$\$" is the biggest concern/threat that could be leveled at us from a corporate partner.

--Kenny: Let's embrace the partnership opportunities that allow for an advisory role. Of the three proposed by BCG, let's start with the one that is least intense from the standpoint of PFR expense and time: ██████

--Eva: We definitely need to be careful with our reputation. Litterati lost its sway with a lot of environmentalists after it cozied up to some corporations.

--Erick: We need to make sure that we are applauding actions and events and commitments and outcomes, *not brands*.

4. JCM proposed that we eliminate the fundraising requirement for members of the Board of Directors, triggered by either a flat sum of money coming in during a calendar year, or some other metric of scaling up. After some discussion, it was decided that this topic should be revisited at a subsequent board meeting, because BCG is in the middle of its work (which could change our fundraising landscape somewhat), and also because most of our board members have historically done the bulk of their fundraising at the end of the calendar year.

5. Bi-annual officer elections were held. RESULTS: Eva and Kate will be co-Chairs of the Board. Travis will be the new CFO. Erick will be the new secretary.

6. Simon Nordgreen, BCG's team leader for the PFR pro-bono work, gave the Board a 15-minute presentation about BCG's efforts and interviews and research to date.