



18 March 2025 Virtual Board Meeting

Trustees present: Reza Ahmadi, John Malooly, Mary Pendergast, Chloe Aguin, Maria Estrada, Linda Jim, Kim Sorrentino, Tom Barton, Victoria Bacon and Jennifer Newell.

Trustees excused (advance notice): Jim Dreyfous

Staff present: Jeff Jones, Āfā 'Aikona, Kate Lyngle-Cowand, Matthew Utley, Angie Trumbo, Helen Dishaw, Bobbi Minard, and Tim Brown.

Guests present: Holly Yocum (Pathway Group consultant) and Lia Summers (Pathway Group consultant).

*Note - due to weather this meeting was virtual rather than in-person*

Reza welcomed people to the meeting and after a brief introduction initiated an ice-breaker asking participants to share their favorite thing about spring.

Reza then asked for a motion to approve the February 2025 board meeting minutes. Kim made the motion, seconded by John. The motion was approved unanimously.

Reza shared that it's time to seek new Trustees to the board. Tim explained we are seeking 2-3 new board members with expertise in HR, legal, finance, and lived experience. The goal is to elect new Trustees at our May or June meeting.

The focus then turned to adding a staff representative to the board in some capacity. Linda asked for more information about the benefits of this and Maria expressed that a staff presence on the board might provide better insight into Aviary issues and improve transparency. Reza took a straw poll of board interest in thinking through this more. All Trustees were interested in moving forward with a draft of how this might work. Tim will follow up and form a Task Force to work on this.

Jeff presented the current financial situation of the organization, highlighting that revenue goals are being challenged and expenses are trending up. He noted that the slowest season is January to March, and while the first quarter of the fiscal year 2025 was slower than expected, the organization is starting to come out of this period with spring nearly here. Jeff highlighted a few areas in which the organization is facing challenges in earned revenue. Reza asked about the board's role in increasing revenue. Tim pointed to word of mouth being our best marketing so board members can help us by getting friends to visit, attend events, hold birthday parties and more with the hope that a good experience leads to having another advocate in the community. And that goodwill can spread in the community, and ideally leading to individuals, businesses or foundation able to provide larger donations and support.

Following Jeff's presentation Afa shared an update of the work she's doing with community engagement. She showed several photos of partners who have been to both campuses. She is working with a team of Aviarrians to host a Tianguis at The Nature Center at Pia Okwai, building on the community interest in the Redwood Swap Meet, which has closed. She also shared the Aviary's pivot to an Adzill program. Adzill is a Dine word that references the strength we get from working in and for the community.

Helen followed stating that our AZA accreditation application was submitted and that we are one of six pilot programs having submitted the application electronically. She also shared that our accreditation inspection will be May 12 - 15 - board members should be ready for volunteer opportunities to help prepare us for their visit.

Tim asked if there were any questions about the staff report. There were none. He then shared that Tecun (Daniel Hernandez) will be doing an externship with the Aviary focusing on an Indigenous place names map that can eventually be displayed at both campuses, and some additional information and explanations that can compliment the maps. He will also serve in a consultancy role to support Afa's work.

Tim also shared that construction on the Eco Lab is imminent. That it hasn't started offers good and bad news. Good news is that we've earned more money on the invested money waiting to be used for construction. The bad news is that tariffs could result in higher costs.

Next, Reza and Tim introduced Holly and Lia from the Pathway Group. Lia and Holly presented the strategic planning workflow of the organization, which consists of four main components: strategic assessment, strategy creation, finalization, and adoption. They discussed the process of gathering information through surveys, focus groups, and interviews with internal and external stakeholders. The team also conducted a SWOT analysis and discussed the organization's values and vision for success. The strategic priorities were identified and refined through a series of exercises and discussions. The final strategic plan includes a revised mission statement, updated values, and four strategic priority areas. The team is now seeking feedback and questions from the board.

Reza asked for a motion to approve the mission statement: *in partnership with community, inspiring action to conserve birds and habitats*. Maria made the motion, seconded by John. The mission statement was approved unanimously.

Next Trustees discussed the values, which include community, wellbeing, integrity, and joy. Victoria raised a question about whether these are core values that can be used for employee evaluations and as a measurement tool. Tim and Reza acknowledge that while the values haven't been fully operationalized yet, there's an opportunity to develop them into competency assessments for each level of the organization. The group debated whether to vote on the values as they are or take more time to flesh them out. Holly cautions against being too prescriptive, while Victoria advocates for a unified understanding of each value. Tim expresses comfort with the staff working to make the values more prescriptive for practical use in evaluations.

The board continued discussing the proposed organizational values, particularly focusing on "joy" as a core value. Kate explains that joy encompasses various aspects of the Aviary, including visitor experiences and employee satisfaction. The board decided to hold off on voting on the values to allow more time for reflection and discussion.

Next Holly presented the strategic priorities for the organization, which include being an outstanding community partner, fostering an ecosystem of learning, ensuring capacity to thrive, and promoting wellbeing for all. The Strategic Planning team discussed the importance of these priorities and how they align with the organization's mission and vision. After a brief discussion Reza called for a motion. John made a motion to approve the strategic priorities, seconded by Tom, and approved unanimously.

Holly and Lia shared the next steps, including the creation of a draft strategic plan document and the implementation of a tracking tool to monitor progress. The Strategic Planning team expressed their engagement and enjoyment in the strategic planning process.

In other business, Kim reminded everyone about Ready to Hatch on May 29th, and encouraged everyone to support the event through ticket sales, sponsorships, and silent auction item donations.

The meeting was then adjourned.