

## Occupy Portland General Assembly (GA) – Portland Oregon April 11, 2013

10 present

Facilitator: Jack

Stack: Robert

Notes: Jim

Q = question

A = answer

C = comment

R = Response

Agenda:

1. Canvass
2. Treasurer for Vigil
3. Occupy Love
4. Announcements

Agenda Item: Canvas

Proposer: Started up thinking about this about 3 months ago: to get a group to knock on doors, increase awareness of Occupy, raise support, and also raise funds. Keller, Hong, and Joe have been talking about it. Joe has 25 years of experience with canvases. Knows the good and bad side. Good side: allow people who are activists and of Occupy to become full time activists. The moneys that they would generate for themselves would become a living wage. They would go out in the evening and that would free up the rest of their day for activist activities. With where we are, with a dwindling awareness of what we are doing and a corresponding need for more resources, it would be great to get a canvas together. Start with 5 people and build up to 30 or so. A canvasser can expect \$250-\$300 per week. Build up functions, with bringing in new blood. People don't have the opportunity to know what we're doing because they're not hearing about it. Knows it works from experience with Greenpeace canvases. When you're canvassing as an activist first, the money tends to flow very well. The red lights for Occupy and the canvas have been related to the money issues around canvassing. A well run canvas with good people would hopefully overcome all that. Looking to have the GA nibble on this and see if it something GA could endorse and give the green light for to get it together, and hopefully not be sandbagged at the end of the road. The structure would be an Oregon non-profit corporation. We would work with FoOP. The purpose of the canvas would be to take care of its overhead and give the money's left over to Occupy. Structurally, those would be first steps, to set up the nonprofit. In the bylaws would be the definition of the moneys, the types of split the canvas has, so that Occupy could begin to see a potential income coming in on a regular basis. Canvases generally pay minimum wage (\$9/hour) and then overage. On an average night about \$110 a little bit more. The money's above the minimums, some would stay with the corporation and the balance would go to Occupy. A coordinator is necessary and an assistant coordinator is necessary. These would be paid positions. All the various campaigns were working on [i.e. the activities of the various Occupy spokes and affinity groups] would be invited in to have their

information distributed as part of the canvas. They would tell people what is happening and ask for political, activist and financial support. Each day folks [canvassers] would start with being briefed on the issues of the day, go out, then come back at the end of the day.

Q. Could it be set up so that individual committee's could provide issues for the canvassers to promote?

A. Yes.

Q. Are the canvassers paid employees or subcontractors? If paid employees what are the startup costs? Do you have a number for startup costs?

A. My anticipation is they would be paid employees. That is a gut reaction. There are some tricky laws with paid contractors. The upfront costs should not be very much. When they start working, the moneys that they are generating will be enough to take care of their minimum wage plus FICA. The actual cost come on gradually. If GA approves this, we'd first look at getting a couple hundred for a nonprofit corporation. Then we'd have to logistically work out an agreement with Occupy for a place to be. Initially we'd have to improvise transportation and have bookkeeper and coordinator in place. None of that costs a lot of money, until canvassers are trained and ready to go out. That starts up the payroll. If it does not work for any reason, by taking a gradual approach, starting with 5 canvassers then growing it from there, then we can expand. My guess is that for less than \$500 we can have an up and running canvas.

C: I know a couple who has a house with eight rooms, they accept you then drive you to your destination. They get room and board plus a minimum wage. I did canvassing for a while and it would not cost much to get something started. If we throw a big block party to get people aware so that people would donate. We have to work with our image as well.

C: Great idea. Needs to happen. A kind of advertising. Advertising really works.

C: The other part of the canvas is D. Hong's – he is emphasizing making the outreach rather than raising money. This one is the other way around compared to where we'd be looking for the donations. I know several people were unhappy about forming another corporation. I think those kinds of things...I'm around to where I'm good with it.

C: Early on I was sitting in one of the few finance meetings, that I sat in on, 8 or 10 months ago, and someone proposed the same thing as an individual. He did not propose it the same way but the same idea of going door to door in name of occupy. 8-10 people frowned on it. The ethic was that everyone here is giving of their services. That was the initial reaction and I have not heard it brought up sense. What makes this different...I guess with him it was "I will do this service for you and I will make money off of it." What is the difference from then to now? [later Joe clarifies that he will not be making money from this]

A. Canvases are either good or bad. A bad one is a night mare. A good one is a delight. What we can say is with the experience that we have with canvassing and the understanding of the need to train people to be effective, what folks are is an activist first, that puts a foundation

underneath the words that may not have been there before. We know that if we sat down and began to train ourselves in terms of how to be a canvasser (using a clip board, communicating, what works tactically at a person's home) that is the beginnings of a good canvas. Just someone who says I'm going to knock on doors and raise some money for Occupy is very different.

Q: There are people in the movement who do not like the philosophy of paying someone to go get money for the movement. That was the issue that shot it down last time. I think if you are setting up your own nonprofit that dedicated the profit to Occupy that is not the same thing. A standalone organization is needed in my opinion. How long do you want the GA to gnaw on it before deciding?

A: The procedure to get a 90% on only endorsing the idea,... we would not proceed with anything until we got some kind of an endorsement like that. We don't have enough quorum for a GA.

C: Every time we have brought up the idea of a need for a quorum for GA it's been defeated. I don't see the GA getting bigger than this any time soon.

A: If that is the case, ... the 3<sup>rd</sup> week in May...we are coming into the prime canvassing time. It is going to take a couple weeks to get coordinators together, a couple weeks to train, that's about a month, that would be a good time to get started...when the weather is better. Can the GA endorse this tonight?

C: Proof is in the pudding. We don't have any money. We need to piss or get off the pot. I'd like to have more people know what we're doing so it does not look like we are doing something behind peoples back. We've [folks in the room] been here [at GA and Spokes]. We are concerned about getting into the commitment on a lease and not being able to pay. We've got to do something.

C: I see strife, jealousy, envy. A lot of people are out of work. A week ago, someone offered someone some work. There were perceptions of favoritism, and if that person was not hiring them they think you are calling them a thief or a liar. Being separate from Occupy helps that.

Response: A lot of that happens on a subjective basis. I've done a lot of managing so can pass on to people how to manage the canvas. Survival as an activist is an art form. Canvassing is a pillar for so many of us.

C: A positive is we know each other, so we know who we can trust and who is responsible.

Q: Can we move it to a thing to be voted on?

C: Would like to see a movement, the moment we see we are going to we need to announce to everyone we are doing this, a press release, the whole nine yards. There are people at KBOO who are friendly to us [that would help].

R: Great idea. The canvas itself is newsworthy.

C: Whether or not we wait until we get more people...I would vote today. That gives enough to get going.

C: Vote today but then in a reasonable period of time, have another meeting with the GA. At that point reaffirm and get the word out to more people.

Q: Funding? t Would you be asking for the up-ahead funding that you identified?

A: How I would do that? I don't know. I might raise money within my own sphere of contacts. Until we need money I'm not worried. I could front the money for the nonprofit then take it back. Greenlight with understanding that we'll brief again in a few weeks. If by

that second meeting, ...I'll check with attorney's about whether it is as easy as I think. I'll comeback with more information. I will not personally receive any moneys from this. Dan has a lot of canvassing experience, probably as much as I do.

C: Get the endorsement of this sounds like a good idea at this meeting and the spokes next Thursday. The different spokes discuss how they can support the proposal. It will be a place to brainstorm, how can we support this/that sort of thing. It is something that happens every week.

C: Does that give you enough time?

A: I'll have more answers than I do today. [If the GA] greenlight's incubation period [and it] becomes part of our culture that it's happening. At that time, we'll be looking like a lean mean machine. Then go to the press conference. The threat of us is huge. Our implementation not so .... But our threat is going to pick up peoples ears. [One time] we [some activists] wanted to get a public utility review board into place. She [council member] went crazy because she knew we could do it, and the next thing she was proposing it herself. Things happen just with the threat. Someone has a local issue, the canvas could go to that turf [the area with the issue] for a period of time.

C: Agree about culture and need to broadcast this. Would there be opportunity at Occupy Love.

C: Do we need an endorsement?

A: Separate function unless occupy says this is a cool idea and we endorse the concept.

C: Would canvassers get more than minimum wage?

A: Yes, more than minimum. Also get a split [of what is collected].

C: Can you put in numbers for the split?

...[missed some]...

Proposal for Consensus: a canvas with an income that will pay for itself, will provide money for Occupy Portland to be used as Occupy wishes, with an understanding that you need time to puts parts together and that it won't finally be proposed until next GA. The vote reflects endorsement of the concept with the target date of staring one month from today with the understanding of the need for transparency in support of Occupy, that we would be going to Spokes Council next week and coming back to GA the following week with a report on progress to be made at that time.

Passed: Unanimous consent.

Agenda Item: Treasurer for Vigil:

Proposal (from a Vigil participant): At the Anitcamping Vigil, there is nobody, no accountability to take up collections. There is no one directly responsible for treasurer money. There was an incident where someone gave someone [at the vigil] a donation, was collecting donations....but they're keeping it for themselves. Propose that since... Mary is gone, who did financial stuff...you got a bunch of poor people arguing about who collects the money. Since it's an Occupy site, there should be a treasurer for City Hall...[mention of 99]...I'm bringing it to GA that he be the person. 99 and Jose are doing it. For trouble to not start – keep trouble from starting.

Q: Didn't Jose set up a separate humanity hub that is taking donations for his cause and on line. How will that be separated?

A: When it is online or internet access ... that is Jose's field. When it comes to people directly donating, [when someone asks] "Who do I see to give something to?" who do you point at? Everyone pretty much says go to 99. Want to make it official to stop things from happening.

C: Because movement got burned in the camps with person who [took off with] a lot of money, I'm not sure the movement should endorse a treasurer, if the function is already happening.

R: But it's broken when someone took the money. Took over \$50. There is no one who can appoint a treasurer.

Q: Is the mood of the majority, that people at the vigil would be accepting of a body separate from them appointing [a treasurer for] them? Seems like they would want to do that from within.

A: The only thing that would come across is conflict: "Oh you want to hold the money, your calling me a thief!"

Q: We have a pretty simple situation, we can support ourselves or say we are too fucked up to support ourselves. Some asshole fucked the people out, so we should say that. The only way we can say that is that 99 is the treasurer. Are we scared of the feedback?

C: This is something that has been going sense the vigil has been going on. Should you take donations. If someone comes up and gives money, what are you going to do? How do you monitor it? I've seen people standing here ...and give people a \$20 bill. I think it's a good idea to have a conversation with those down there. Are we going to make a decision that those moneys go to 99 and then 99 ... that is what I have seen happening down there. Ideally there is the culture down there that this money goes to 99 and as a group we determine how the money would be spent. Mary, who had been providing resources on her own dime, went to the GA and asked for a certain amount of funds for the donations. It was okayed for those funds to go to Mary. She is no longer there so that is defunct as far as her place in doing that. Having her and 99 and others discuss: "Do you want to take on that responsibility and take it on from Mary?" Now 99 and Jose are down there, pass on that responsibility ...working with her.... Consult with her to determine how they want to take donations.

C: There are three "We Pays." Maybe it's just an onsite things. Both are responsible individuals, both are equal. I was down there when 99 received a contribution and he'll send someone off to the store. The person who took it was not one of the....I'm not sure how to say it....part of the social life. I have money to give, who do I give it to. [Need] a person that someone can point and say who [it goes to].

C: The ability to do that would give some credence to the vigil as an organization.

Proposal for Consensus: Recognizing the autonomy of the vigil, the GA's consensus view is that it would be good for the vigil to have a point person to handle money received at the Vigil and that 99 and Jose would be good people to serve that function.

Passed: Unanimous consent.

Agenda Item: Occupy Love, April 19 – 100 tickets for homeless people or those who cannot afford the \$5. Buttons and fliers available to advertise. Please get involved in promoting. A moderator is still needed for the Q&A Skype session with the director. They'll show the movie and moderate for audience questions. Moderator would decide who is speaking next or rephrase questions so they are more understandable. A few names have come up. Ani would be great.

Announcements:

For the past 1.5 months we've been having a meeting for the protest - we are trying to organize a positive protest march, pro-humanity (PRO-Test). Trying to find positive things about the past 10,000 years of humanity: what we came from to, what we have achieved. Have been doing every Saturday at 5:00 pm. The group is small so far. We have a promotion of Albina Community Bank, they will give us cards to hand out. Also, Greenworks will be happy to put advertising out. Free advertising to those who don't get advertising. A celebration of humanity at the end. No date or time so far.

Don't come here next Thursday. Move tomorrow, Saturday, and Sunday, then clean.