

**Tentative Agenda and Notes for March 2009 Meeting**

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### **Opening Thoughts**

As I drove to last months meeting 5 people emailed me to say they could not attend that night. Of those five three stated that Tuesday nights are a tough night for them to make it to the meeting. It would seem that we need to pick a new night to meet. I sent out an email on the list to solicit suggestions for a new meeting time and want to encourage all of you to respond.

There is a lot to talk over! The Chinook Foundation as some of you know gave COIMC a grant to Cover DNC expenses and I feel sure that we could get another from them to help COIMC on a number of fronts; namely, promotions, servers, an organizational membership in DOM, and other needs and programs. COIMC is the perfect vehicle for Denver as a community to go to for news and information that is outside or unreported by the mainstream press. Even though we are limited to \$4,000.00 from this foundation that is money that could go along way in making COIMC a real force in the not-so-mainstream world of Colorado activism.

I am more than willing to write the grant and have had considerable experience in this area. I need your help. I would also like to point out that the Chinook Foundation grant will look good in the future for COIMC as we pursue other grant moneys-which even in these financially uncertain times are out there. So having said this please read the attachments that came with this document and let yourself dream. Dream of what we could be, of what COIMC is potentially able to be, of what we all collectively can do and achieve for our community and our world. Then come to the next meeting and help bring that dream, that vision, into reality.

The meetings have only just begun to be regular and while it might seem that progress is slow all long journeys begin with small steps and we have made a lot of small steps. With a little perseverance and some funding—which is not far off thanks to all of your work—COIMC is closer than you may think to making some great leaps!

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## **Tentative Agenda and Notes for March 2009 Meeting**

### **Agenda**

Reading of Last Months Minutes—in this case January

Financial Report

Final Wording on Policy Statements

One, and Two Year Goals

Press Association Membership

Chinook Foundation Grant

- Equipment—Server

- Programs

- Community Outreach

Recap of Site Activity in the Past Month

- Offensive Posts

- Contributions over the Past Month

- Search for a local Web Master—we should send a rep to the local Drupal meeting

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### **Reading of Last Months Minutes**

The meeting was held at Denver Open Media (DOM) located at the corner of 7<sup>th</sup> St. and Kalamath.

### **Opening Introductions, email and contact list, Consensus based Decision Making**

We started at 6:30 and went till 9:00pm.

Attendees: Phillip Reynes  
Coudley Coit  
Fran Rew  
Remy Kachadovrain  
Tina Braxton  
Doug Johnson  
Paula Bard  
Tony Snowcross  
Nathan Coe – Attended via web cast from Durango

We passed out a contact list so that people could get email out to each other and communicate better. As the contact list was passed out we discussed the concept of consensus driven decision making upon which IMC's across the country are commuted to using. Each attendee spoke about there intrests and what brought them to COIMC

Coudy Coit – Reporting and camera work, he has a strong interest in police issues, judicial issues and works in the springs area.

Fran Rew – Video and Topic-Walk walks

Remy Kachadovrain – Writing, audio and video experience and radio personality from KGNU Has a great deal of historical knowledge about COIMC.

Tina Braxton – workers justice and labor issues

Doug Johnson – Server issues and tech support he to has a wealth of historical knowledge about COIMC

Paula Bard – Photography and writing she has worked with Copwatch in Denver and has interest in photo journalism and police/social justice issues

Phillip Reynes – prison reform activist and environmental activist and writer

Tony Snowcross – DOM director with a strong interest in open media

Nathan Coe – Environmentalist aan d social activist from Durango attended via web cast

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### **Server Issues and Web Site Issues**

Doug is our server tech expert. He was asked and said he was willing to be our tech man for the server. He is not a Drupal expert and so we still need a web master with drupal experience for that aspect. It was hoped that if Doug would handle the server issues we could continue to rely on Ringo for Drupal help and look for local Drupal assistance—there is a drupal users group that meets at DOM on the last Tuesday of each month so we will contact them to see who can or would be willing to help locally.

Doug agreed to look at the server after the meeting to see what could be done about getting the site back up on the web. He then told us how old and outdated the server is and so he was asked what the cost was in getting a new one. \$800.00 for a good one and if we wanted more reliability and other benefits maybe \$1,200.00.

This seemed reasonable and doable to the group and consensus was reached that we should get a new server. \$180.00 dollars was pledged by the members of the meeting and we are going to check to see if any DNC money is left. At this point we had checks and so it was asked if anyone could serve as treasurer. Tina Braxton offered and the group reached consensus that she will be our new treasurer.

The need for a local web master was also discussed. Consensus was reached that a search for one should be started.

Consensus was also reached that an About us section should be added to the menu with our posted Principles of Unity, Mission Statement, and Editorial Policies along with other contact information once these things are finalized.

### **Principles of Unity**

Principles of unity were discussed. Consensus was reached that we affirm agreement with the national principles of unity for IMC but that COIMC needs to refine these to fit us. All agreed to read the principles of unity in the supporting info packet and continue discussion next month.

### **Mission Statements**

Mission Statements were discussed. Consensus was reached that we affirm agreement with the national Mission Statement for IMC but that COIMC needs to refine these to fit us. All agreed to read the mission statements in the supporting info packet and continue discussion next month. Consensus was reached that COIMC should be an organization that meets the needs of all of Colorado and not just Denver.

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### **Editorial Policies**

Consensus was reached that all of us needed to read through the policies in the information packet and come back to this next month.

### **Consensus on where we would like to see COIMC in the Future**

Three and six month goals were discussed. Consensus was reached on both.

#### ***3 month Goals***

Consensus was reached on the following goals.

- A consensus on a Principles of Unity Statement, A Mission Statement, and a editorial Policy.
- Input on what people have liked and disliked about COIMC
- An assessment of the talent and areas of interest of meeting participants.
- The establishment of an outreach plan to help groups be more aware of what COIMC is about and how we and they can work together. See the next section

#### ***6 month Goals***

Consensus was reached on the following six month goals.

- The establishment of an editorial and site administrator work Group with its own email list (it would be open to all)
- The establishment of a technical work group to implement the goals in the peace above and to work on improving the site in other areas.
- Other working groups as the collective deems needed.
- The addition of an About Us Tab on the front page menu with a clear Statement of Unity, a Mission Statement and our Editorial Policies. The inclusion in the Contact Us Tab with how to get on the general mailing list and other list that we may establish
- The addition of a donate to COIMC tab and the establishment of a paypal account for people to do so.
- To join the Colorado Pres Association (I may have the name wrong) so we can credential reporters. The cost is a \$300.00 fee plus an individual fee that is nominal.

### **Consensus on what can be done to Increase Submissions quality and volume**

Consensus was reached that COIMC needs to involve more community groups and individuals and that an outreach effort needs to be made. To this end Remy, Tina Paula Phil and Doug agreed to put together a list of groups who we would like to have more from on the pages of COIMC. The topic will be discussed more at the next meeting. The tentative aim will be to put together a presentation and an email as well as follow up with personal contact.

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The meeting was adjourned at 8:45pm

Next meeting will be at DOM on February 17<sup>th</sup> at 6:30pm.

## **Financial Report**

It is important that COIMC do a much better job of record keeping as we go forward.

## **Last years Budget**

What follows is what we know of last years budget.

From: lynne <lynnesprague@yahoo.com>

Subject: Re: Last Year's Budget

To: "Ringo" <ringo@coimc.org>, tinabraxton@yahoo.com

Date: Thursday, February 19, 2009, 10:39 PM

We obtained 1200 from our single fundraiser and spent about 800 of it on various pre-DNC activities (renting space at the mercury cafe, securing various equipment for the computer lab at el centro and our biggest expense was the computers that tony got refurbished for the open lab at DOM.

i can't give you specifics on amounts-RMPJC has that, but i understand they've been slow in getting us figures.

-L

ps. i sit on the grant-making committee at chinook-i'll be able to explain not having hard figures and why...

## **Current Funds Available to COIMC**

From Tina Braxton

Good news! We actually have more money than we thought we had. The business manager for RMPJC reports our balance is \$325.00.

## **Synopses**

It turns out that COIMC has more then we thought. The \$325.00 does not include funds raised at our January meeting so my best guess is we are closer to \$400.00.

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### **Final Wording on Policy Statements**

So far no one has sent me there versions of the three policy statements that we discussed in our January meeting. Consensus was however reached as to what should be included. Below I have listed my rewrite and I hope others have looked at this. If you have send it to me or come to the March meeting so we can all see it. We will need these as part of the grant application as well as for the resons discussed at the previous meetings.

### **Principles of Unity**

All Colorado Indymedia members and working groups are not-for-profit. All volunteers donate their time and have agreed to receive no personal monetary gain. In other words, nobody gets paid.

- All working groups recognize the importance of process to social change and are committed to the development of non-hierarchical and anti-authoritarian relationships, from interpersonal relationships to group dynamics. Therefore, they shall organize themselves collectively and be committed to the principle of consensus decision-making and the development of a direct, participatory democratic process that is transparent to those involved.
- All working groups recognize that the contribution of an individual's labor is a prerequisite for participation in the decision making process of a working group or at a Colorado Indymedia general meeting. Individuals who are not committing tangible labor to a Colorado Indymedia working group are encouraged to share their views but may not "block" a consensus.
- All working groups are committed to caring for one another and their respective communities both collectively and as individuals and will promote the sharing of resources including knowledge, skills and equipment.
- Whenever possible, all working groups shall be committed to the use of free software and open source code, in order to develop the digital infrastructure, and to increase the independence of themselves by not relying on proprietary software.
- **Openness:** All working groups shall be committed to the principle of human equality, and shall not discriminate based upon race, spiritual belief, gender, age, class or sexual identity. Working groups are committed to the ideal of building diversity within their activities.

I hope that this looks good to all and welcome any feedback please feel free to review the National guidelines and then write your own.

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### **Mission Statement**

To encourage a world where globalization is not about homogeneity and exploitation, but rather, about diversity and cooperation.

- To cover local events that are ignored or poorly covered by corporate media.
- To provide edited audio, video, and print stories of the above on the internet for independent media outlets and the general public.
- To facilitate the networking and coordination for the coverage of local events as well as gather information about events to cover.
- To provide links to alternative media, activist, and research groups.
- To seek out and provide coverage underscoring the global nature of people's struggles for social, economic, and environmental justice directly from their perspective.
- To offer community classes for training in internet and media skills.
- To serve as and encourage, facilitate, and support the creation of independent news gathering and organizations dedicated to independent non-corporate reporting.

### **Editorial Policy**

#### **Introduction**

The Open Publishing Newswire is an essential aspect of the Indymedia project and Colorado Indymedia Center (COIMC). It was set-up to provide a globally accessible space for anyone to quickly self-publish breaking news, articles, commentary, digital photos and audio.

COIMC itself is composed of several working groups. From these all-volunteer groups, people volunteer to moderate the newswire. Presently, moderating requires at least a daily commitment, by any given moderator. In the last year and a half, the COIMC's Open Publishing Newswire has been besieged with neo-nazi postings, Spam and other items and commentary which are far away from what the Newswire is meant to be: namely vital space of progressive and radical breaking news, commentary, articles, and announcements.

There are no easy or perfect solutions to moderating an open newswire, rich with a healthy diversity of views. COIMC has come to a consensus on the following guidelines to help us decide what postings are appropriate and what are not. We believe that these guidelines will help to make the moderating process a clearer one for COIMC volunteers, for anyone who self-publishes, and finally an unencumbered, useful and open newswire for readers worldwide.

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We especially encourage individuals to publish:

- Well researched, timely articles
- Eyewitness accounts of progressive actions and demonstrations
- Coverage not just of Denver City and metro area issues but any issue relevant to Colorado and the region we occupy in the country
- Media analysis
- Investigative reports exposing injustice
- Stories on events affecting underrepresented groups
- Media produced from within underrepresented groups
- Local stories with national or global significance
- Stories on people or projects working towards social and economic justice
- Original, underreported stories of local, regional, national, or global importance.

### **When May A Post Be Deleted?**

An "open publishing" system is founded, fundamentally, on trust. The editors of and participants in this project trust that other participants will use the newswire to publish news, or, at the least, intelligent and insightful commentary. But as COIMC's popularity has grown, so has the abuse of our open publishing system..

Some of the abuse seems to be juvenile in nature; and in other cases it amounts to a deliberate attempt to destroy the project. What's more, an unsystematic and adhoc moderation policy may have confused other readers, who might not be aware of what constitutes abuse and what constitutes news.

The COIMC editorial collective, in order to maintain the integrity of the newswire and the media commons it creates for our community of participants, may delete posts to the Newswire when the content disregards the guidelines that have been put in place (see below).

While we try to avoid deleting posts as much as possible, the following types of items will merit close scrutiny and may be deleted:

- Spam posting; i.e., post deliberately designed to disrupt the newswire and its basic ability to function. These are posts that are deemed to be devoid of content or analysis and appear to be published with the sole purpose of disruption. An example of this kind of post would be one that advertises discount shoes or one that sells products or services and is an advertisement.
- Posts the author has requested requested be deleted—note that if you post anonymously we have no way to know who the author is and will not be able to delete the post if you request it..
- Posts which are obviously incorrect or misleading. This includes attempts to spread

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disinformation or to impersonate another individual. For example, if you post an article written by someone else and with your byline this is misleading and will be deleted.

- Posts that contain generalized and negative assertions about any race, nation, creed, class, ethnic group, sexual orientation, etc.
- Posts that advocate the mass physical elimination of a specific race, nation, creed, class, ethnic group, sexual orientation, etc, or that link to websites that advocate the same. There have been several post by Nazi groups or sympathisers posted on the Newswire which contained a link to a neo-Nazi websites and was accordingly deleted. That said, while we deeply abhor both racism and anti-Semitism, such opposition does not automatically entail the complete or partial acceptance of the national agenda of any particular state.
- Posts that treat the newswire as a personal ?bulletin board? with non-political or socially irreverent content directed at one or another newswire participants. There are several comments on the Newswire that fall under this category regularly.
- Unreadable formats (i.e. photos posted as text), Posts titled "test.", duplicate posts (including duplicate photographs), Advertising of products or for-profit services, Pornography, excepting sexually explicit satire.

Within the above guidelines, we welcome posts that disagree with the opinions held by the editors of this website.

### **Review**

COIMC will annually review comments that have been deleted, and further the COIMC collective will review this policy, as well as a sampling of posts deleted during the previous year. We would also like to emphasize that if any collective member disagrees with the deleting of any post, he or she may contact the editorial listserver or request to discuss the matter at a General Meeting.

### **Contacting Us**

Members of the Colorado Indymedia collective do their best to moderate the newswire in the manner described above. However, sometimes we miss something, and sometimes we make mistakes. We welcome anyone to email the web list if they have a comment our question about newswire moderation: [http://mail.coimc.org/mailman/listinfo/all\\_coimc.org](http://mail.coimc.org/mailman/listinfo/all_coimc.org)

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### **One, and Two Year Goals**

Serious discussion needs to take place here in order to move forward not only with the grant processes but also to allow COIMC to make decisions and move forward on a more result oriented way. We reached consensus at the January meeting that as we move forward we need to try as much as possible or practical to do things and take actions that have measurable and or at least visible outcomes for COIMC. To this end longer term goals are vital.

### **Press Association Membership**

COIMC reached consensus that we want this and as it turns out it will be good for the grant process not just the Chinook Foundation but others as well.

### **Chinook Foundation Grant**

Please see the attached grant guidelines and application.

### **Equipment—Server**

We need a new server we can get one for as little as \$800.00 and it may be advisable to spend more say \$1,200.00.

### **Programs**

I have no idea what we would call these programs or of a time line these are just things that have been discussed in one form or another by me(Phil), Tina, Cordley and Tony.

- DOM Organizational Membership
- The training of people by DOM in return for content
- The training of people in other groups (Denver Copwatch for example) in return for content
- The making of equipment and production facilities available to the above
- The eventual establishment of a reporter pool to cover breaking news

### **Community Outreach**

COIMC reached consensus that we need to actively find ways to both increase participation—i.e.,submissions—in Denver and from around the state and also make participation in COIMC easier for those living far away from Denver.

COIMC also can do some kind of fund raising e any ideas or thoughts about it to the meeting. Several

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people have expressed a desire to do this and so please bring your thoughts about this to the meeting. I was not here when we did the pre-DNC event but whatever it was it seemed to work so if anyone was involved in that it would be great to hear about it first hand..

## **Recap of Site Activity in the Past Month**

COIMC has had a number of new post from people coming to the site. Some have been very well written—Robert Weller's post spring to mind—and this is a good development. Seventeen new people have signed up for user names and while a good number of these are potential Spammers some are not and this is also encouraging.

There has only been one Spam post so Spam seems to be under control and it was only up for a few hours before it was seen and deleted.

## **Offensive Posts**

I have been post in a set of editorial guidelines but in the future when a post is deleted I would like to propose that we leave the title up and then in the space where the post was we put a link to the above mentioned editorial guidelines.

## **Contributions over the Past Month**

Six post over the past month made it to the front page and there where about 38 posts that where made to the newswire since our January Meeting. This is good! Having said this votes on posts still seem to be marginal and more needs to be done in terms of outreach to increase readership.

## **Search for a local Web Master**

No new information here. Let's keep looking!