



The Arava Institute for Environmental Studies

מכון הערבה ללימודי הסביבה

معهد وادي عربة للدراسات البيئية

מכון הערבה ללימודי הסביבה (ע"ר) מספר 580210375

Protocol – Board of Directors AIES, Arava Institute for Environmental Studies
Ben Or office, Tel Aviv 23/06/08

Members in attendance: Dr. Michael Beyth, Chmn., Roy Kagan, Miriam Segal, Tamar Keinon, Moshe Falkof and David Schwartz
Absent: Shai Shwebber, Ed Hofland, Prof. Eynat Aharonov, Glen Pagelson, David Sugarman, Sr. Hillel Gordin and Mike Nitzan
Invited: David Lehrer, Director and Miriam Sharton, Associate Director

Agenda as sent out:

- 1) Approval of protocol of previous meeting
- 2) Report of implementation of previous decisions
- 3) Director's report
- 4) Work plans for Research and academic departments for next half-year
- 5) Presentation of financial reports
- 6) Acceptance to the BoD of Judge Zoabi
- 7) Election of a new internal auditor
- 8) Misc.

Deliberation

I. Agenda as presented

II. Approval of protocol from the previous meeting

The previous meeting's protocol was accepted

III. Report of implementation of previous decisions

- a. A steering committee was established for alumni activity – apprenticeships, projects, delegations, etc.—members: Sharon Benheim, Miriam Sharton and David Lehrer
- b. A discussion was held concerning the organizational structure. The Exec committee plans to bring a different proposal that reflects the conclusions of the strategic seminar from June 2007.
- c. The Finance committee met on 23.06.08 before the BoD meeting
- d. David Schwartz, Chmn of the Finance committee, called a meeting on 29.04.08. In the plans are a meeting of a focus group with the Ben Or company
- e. A candidate was found in the Arava (but not from Kibbutz Ketura) willing to take the position of internal auditor for salary
- f. Moshe Falkof, Secretary of Kibbutz Ketura, reported that the Kibbutz is ready for a meeting between the Machon and the Kibbutz representatives with lawyers present for a discussion of the agreement between the two parties.

IV. Director's Report

a. Academic Program:

- Spring Semester 2008 has been completed. There were 38 students including academic interns. The semester was influenced by political and security events such as the attacks in Gaza and the terrorist attack in

Jerusalem. The fact that for the first time in many years we had a group of Palestinian students, as a result of the High Court decision, was clearly felt. The Machon staff found itself often needing to calm students after arguments. It is appropriate to note that despite the difficulties, the staff of "Student Life" and Michelle (PELS coordinator) succeeded in coping and completing the semester successfully.

- For the second time since the Intifada we had a trip of water systems in Jordan, Palestine Authority and Israel from May 11 – 15th 2008. This is a unique tour combining study of water sources and environment with the issue of regional cooperation.
- The summer semester opened on June 22 2008 with 8 participants. This is the third year of the summer semester but registration was disappointing. It is not clear why there were so few participants. The fall registration from north America does not appear weak. In any case, we will re-evaluate.
- We have completed writing the draft of the agreement with Ben-Gurion University with the help of Guri Zilcah. We submitted the draft to Shaul Krakover, the dean of the Eilat campus. Shaul will send the draft with his notations to representatives of BGU. The goal is to finalize the agreement before the beginning of the 2008-2009 school year.

b. Alumni (APEN)

- Machon alumni are beginning to organize independently. Meetings of the central committee of Arava Alumin Peace and Environmental Network (APEN) are taking place during the year. The committee organized a workshop about the media with the help of Ben Or in June, and is planning a seminar in 2009. The seminar is scheduled for Feb 5th to 8th 2009.
- Via alumni, the Machon has participated in the "ecolnoa" film festival on May 15 2008 in Jerusalem of environmental films. One of our alumni works on the "ecolnoa" team with our support. Participation in the film festival gives the Machon exposure to other environmental organizations and to local groups.
- Some of our alumni are in delegations and internships abroad this summer in Australia, USA, Jordan (Petra) and Monaco. Most of the trips are financed by the hosts.
- After much time and energy Sharon has completed an alumni data base for the internet. From now on, all alumni and staff can access this data base to find an e-mail address or telephone number of any alumnus. There are 400 entries in the data base.

c. Research Center

- Project PM2.5 under the guidance of Dr. Shmuel Brenner is entering its last year. The data has been collected and now the project members are analyzing the data. A conference is planned for Dec. 1st and 2nd where the results will be presented. The location of the conference will be announced.
- A seminar on research cooperation with Israel, Jordan and the Palestine Authority is scheduled for Sept 9th 2008 in Los Angeles and thereafter in a number of other cities in the US. Dr. Clive Lipchin Director of Research, Dr. Samer Talozzi from Jordan and Dr. Nader Hatib from the Palestine Authority will present cooperative studies between Israel and Arab authorities about environmental issues that transcend borders. The seminar is finance by the Cummings Foundation.
- The Research Center is planning a course in Water resource management in cooperation with the University of Science and Technology of Jordan JUST. The course will be held for the second time and is scheduled for Feb 2009.
- Dr. Elaine Solowey published an article in the famous magazine SCIENCE together with Dr. Salone from Hadassah Hospital and others concerning the date tree from Masada. In addition to the article, Elaine continues with

research in sustainable agriculture with funding from grants from the USA in cooperation with researchers from Jordan (also from JUST). We are planning a course in sustainable agriculture with funding from the Israel Foreign Ministry.

- Clive is working on the GLOWA program, advancing research on the warming effect on the earth on our region. The research is funded by Germany.
- Together with the Science Center Machon Arava will take part in the exploration of the feasibility of the Red Dead Canal. It appears that the Science Center will evaluate the physical components and the Machon will evaluate the social components.
- The Machon is about to employ a Director of the Center for Renewable Energy. We estimate that the director will begin by September. Last September we held a successful course in renewable energy and will follow up with the same course next fall. Dr. Sherman Rosenfeld from Machon Weizman is will present a plan for a masters degree in renewable energy at the next meeting of the steering committee.

d. Environment Youth Initiatives

- Due to late recruitment the opening of the Jewish-Arab Summer Environment Camp has been delayed until summer 2009. In the meantime fundraising has begun for activities beginning fall 2008.
- Rina Kedem Coordinator of Environment Youth Initiatives, is on a fundraising tour in the USA in July to the West Coast. During the time of her trip Mazen Zoabi has been hired in a half-time position.
- Ilan Meallem and David Lehrer are working to raise money for an additional youth program for environmental education in cooperation with the University of Miami via the Wiesel Foundation, who were among the organizers of the Petra Conference.

e. "Sabbaba"

- A meeting was held with representatives of the Northern Arava concerning continuing activity of "Sabbaba". It was decided to only continue to fund the project of green kindergartens with funding from the Freidman Foundation.
- Roey Talbi Sabbaba coordinator initiated a survey about the Samar sand dunes. The dunes are in danger because "Minhal Mekarkay Yisrael plans to announce a tender for a sand quarry. Sabbaba is involved in creating public pressure to stop the tender.

f. General and Fundraising

- The Bike Ride of spring 2008 that took place from May 20th to May 26th was a logistical success. 75 riders thoroughly enjoyed the ride. David Weisberg Director of the supporters of Machon Arava FAI arrived for the beginning of the ride. An additional ride will be held from Nov 11th to 17th 2008. There were fewer participants in the May ride than expected that yielded a smaller income than expected.
- The Machon continues to work with the public relations firm of BenOr. BenOr will begin to operate our website www.arava.org and are helping to write press articles and with organization for fundraising in Israel. David Schwartz a BoD member and chairman of the fundraising committee is working with BenOr on gathering a focus group.
- With the help of Ronen Markovicz our accountant, the Machon has almost completed the process for Clause 46 which will all the Machon to receive donations in Israel and to issue a tax deductible receipt for the donation.
- Gail Osman Director of Development is out on maternity leave. Gigi Srom from Kibbutz Samar is replacing her temporarily until Fail returns.

- The Machon invested in a new computer server and upgraded the programs. The reason for this was the difficulty we had in maintaining outdated equipment as Kibbutz Ketura was upgraded. The new change is expected to solve problems we had with e-mail.
- Fundraising in the USA has slowed down due to the financial situation there. On the other hand there are a number of successes in receiving grants from private foundations.
- Mandy Patankin, a member of the BoT of the Machon, was the emcee of the 60th Anniversary celebration for Israel in Washington D.C. Mandy worked in exposure for Machon Arava into the event. This included having a booth for Machon Arava. David Weisberg and a number of alumni manned the booth and used the opportunity to explain the activity of the Machon to numerous visitors. General and Fundraising

g. Trips abroad

- Dr. Shmuel Brenner and Dr. Clive Lipchin participated in a conference in the Ukraine from May 26th to 28th 2008 and presented the issue of how higher education copes with global environmental problems.
- Miriam Sharton travelled to the NAFSA convention at the end of May 2008 in Washington D.C. the yearly convention of International Studies departments of universities in North America. She was invited to meet with representatives from a number of universities in the US and specifically with those who are our target schools for recruiting students.
- David Lehrer, Dr. Michael Beyth and a number of alumni participated in the Petra Conference June 17th – 19th 2008. The conference was sponsored by the Weisel Foundation for Humanity and King Abdullah the 2nd Foundation for Development and brought together Nobel Peace Prize recipients with educational leaders from the Middle East in order to encourage cooperation and for the advancement of science and regional development.

Decisions and Recommendations on the Director's Report

1 – The Bod sees importance in advancing programs for the establishing of the Center for Renewable Energy and Energy Conservation, appointing a director and the academic activity of Dr. Sherman Rosenfeld.

2 – Due to the cash flow difficulties of the Machon, the Bod Requests from the Exec committee a monthly follow-up and update for the members of the BoD by e-mail. In addition the Machon is requested to increase efforts for fundraising and to reduce expenses.

V. Work Reports Research Center and Academic Dept.

- a. The Research Center and Academic dept. were asked by the BoD to prepare work programs for 2008 within the budget limitations.

Discussion

The reports were sent to the BoD members one day before the meeting

Decision

The discussion was postponed until the next meeting at Ketura. The department directors are requested to participate in the next meeting and present their work plans. (Next meeting BoD 20.08.08).

VI. Presentation of Financial Reports

- a. Due to a mistake in communication. Shiri Cohen and Ronen Markovicz our accountants did not participate in this meeting. The BoD members received an explanation on the drafts of the Financial reports by telephone.

Discussion

The members made certain comments on the draft. The goal is to complete the process of approving the financial reports at the August meeting and to bring them to approval at the Asefa in September.

Decision

The BoD requests that when approving the Financial Reports the Financial Director and the accountant be present.

VII. Acceptance to the Bod of Judge Zoabi

- a. Judge Zoabi was invited to join the BoD of Machon Arava. On May 28th 2008 Judge Zoabi visited the Machon and met with students and staff. The visit was very successful. The judge gave a positive answer to the invitation to join the BoD.

Decision

The BoD is proud to approve the acceptance of Judge Abad Al Rahman Zoabi as a new member.

VIII. Election of Internal Auditor

- a. A proposal was brought to employ Eitan Benyovitz a member of Kibbutz Grofit as the internal auditor. The members who know Eitan acknowledged his ability to fulfill the position. Eitan's resume will be sent to all the members.

Decision

The BoD approved the appointment of Eitan Benyovitz as internal auditor of the Machon. The BoD requests that the Exec comm. arrange for Eitan to participate in an appropriate workshop program.

IX. Misc

- a. Michael noted the inadequate participation of the members of the Board of Directors

Chairman BoD – Dr. Michael Beyth _____ Date: _____

Member BoD - _____ Date: _____

Recorded: David Lehrer