

# FLOAT CONFERENCE

**Board Meeting #22**  
**October 8, 2019 | 2 pm - 3:30 pm PST**

## *Quorum Present*

### **Present:**

- Ashkahn Jahromi (President) / Graham Talley
- Kevin McCulloch / Jake Resch
- Jesse Ratner-Decle
- Andy Larson (Treasurer)
- Matthew Smith
- Tom Fine
- Roy Vore (Incoming Board Member)
- Kim Hannan (Incoming Board Member)
- James Harder (Incoming Board Member)
- Jocelyn Jester (Operations Team)
- Esther Paul (Operations Team)

### **Absent:**

- Gloria Morris (Secretary)
  - Sean Lavery
  - Jamie Phillips
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### **Agenda:**

- 1. Vote to approve last meeting's minutes (Official Vote)**
  - 2. General updates**
  - 3. Introductions of New Board Members**
  - 4. Update on Finances**
  - 5. Discussion of the event**
  - 6. City Submissions for 2020**
  - 7. Closing Comments**
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### **1 - Vote to Approve Last Meeting's Minutes**

**Vote on Minutes from Sept 17 meeting:** *Unanimous Approval*

## **2 - General Updates**

Ashkahn sent out the Doodle Poll to find the best time for us to meet. He is still working on making the best decision for this. Ashkahn may need to reach out to a few people to see if their schedule is flexible at all.

## **Conference Functionality**

The Operations Team (Ashkahn, Jocelyn, Kevin, and Jake) are thinking that it may make sense to have less full board meetings and more subcommittee meetings. For probably the next few months, we will continue to have two full board meetings a month. Then we will probably move to doing a full board meeting about once a month, with the subcommittees meeting once or twice a month, depending on their functions at that time.

## **3 - Introduction of New Board Members**

Hello! To Roy Vore, James Harder, and Kim Hannan!

## **4 - Update on Financials**

Our budget issues ended up settling pretty well. Our sponsorships and ticket sales ended up being higher than we had planned. And we were able to make some last minute choices that helped us to end up with enough in the bank to help us get through the end of the year and into the pre-sale tickets next year.

Final financials are still being gathered and will be released shortly.

## **5 - Discussion of the Events**

Debrief of 2019's Float Conference.

Ashkahn first wants to say that the Float Conference went really well all together and that he is very proud of us for pulling this off.

### **Venue/location**

- We loved having the venue staff available to help with things. In the past, we basically had to rent or borrow everything and have staff to do all tasks (like organize food and chairs/tables.)
- Many people were thrilled that various events were in the same building - the convenience of networking and the ability to run up to hotel rooms to get little mini-breaks in.
- Having a restaurant/bar in the building really helped to add organic meetings and community feelings.
- Hotel having specific rules - we learned that there are certain things that we should ask more diligently ahead of. (Things like not being able to attach anything to the walls and not being allowed to put water in the tanks.)
- Being downtown - some people recognized that being downtown was why the hotel was expensive; some people took it as a little vacation opportunity. Made having a venue like Lucky Strike much more likely and close.
- Ashkahn wants to revisit the option of doing the conference outside of a hotel type setting - maybe in a university campus?

- A lot of thoughts about the convenience of having the benefits of having the hotel staff and the closeness of events. There's such a benefit of being in a little bubble.
- Other thoughts on a university being less realistic to be the right fit in each new city.
- Some people missed the food carts. Perhaps this is something we can incorporate into the Friday Party?
- Closeness to nearby restaurants and bars is important and helps with organic networking.

## Talks

- Many survey comments suggested that there were too many research talks. There was also a discussion on the Float Collective that research talks are a bit redundant.
- Balance is key. Business Operations; how to be successful; business development, etc.
- How can we put together helpful business talks?
- Should we do an official Call for Speakers? Perhaps have potential speakers submit a video.
- A suggestion to have keynotes and breakouts. Ashkahn reminds us about the structural changes that we discussed last year - mixing the "Activities" with the talks.
- There aren't a lot of research programs for benefits for teachers, first responders, etc. How can we get talks on these types of things?
- Several comments that we should be more formal and transparent about the speaker applications. It might be a good idea to be more active on the website and social media to keep the masses informed.

## Parties

- Some people weren't thrilled with the arcade and loudness of Lucky Strike - like maybe 2 comments.
- Ashkahn had the best night of his whole life at Lucky Strike.
- Breakout sessions / more opportunities to network in smaller groups might make it easier for introverts.
- Thoughts to find an event space that has some nooks and quieter places. It was loud, but the conversations were flowing.
- Samana was extremely well set up to host the Friday Party - we will have to make sure that we find a nice space for this next year.

## Miscellaneous Comments

- Ashkahn mentions that our payroll was a small fraction of the payroll costs Float On paid in the last few years due to the smaller staff needed being in a hotel and the ability to have volunteers.
- Graham mentions that its easiest to blame the cost on not being able to purchase or attend something. (From a marketing standpoint)
- Schedule structure - Ashkahn is curious how people felt about the lengths of breaks and lunches, start and end times, etc.
  - Kim really liked the balance and flow. She was impressed with us staying on schedule.
  - Ashkahn really likes the 2 hour lunches.
  - Graham says he didn't hear any negative comments about breaks and conversations.
- We talked last year about shifting which days the conference are on. Like moving into the week, and ending on Saturday instead - giving people Sunday to travel home.

- Kim heard that some people were hindered by having to close their centers during the week.
- Roy is one of the folks that had to leave on Sunday afternoon.
- Roy suggests that we could add specialty sessions (focused topics - researchers; marketing; etc) on Sunday from 9-noon or so, which still allows people to go home on Sunday.
- Ashkahn is interested in sending a survey to ask attendees what they want - schedule structure, days of the week, cost of hotels, etc.
- Graham liked the standing tables in the back. He didn't like the house lights. It was also difficult to not have the double doors between the conference and the lobby area. (general agreement)

### **Sponsors**

- Jocelyn heard that the spacing was a bit tight, especially in the Marketplace area.
- Jocelyn heard that some people wanted to see more vendors.
- Kim heard that some sponsors were a bit bummed that they didn't get to see many of the talks - this is kind of their own priority.

### **6 - City Submissions for Next Year**

The deadline to submit is next week - so make sure to read through those submissions.

### **7 - Closing Comments**

Ashkahn is going to finalize our next board meeting time in the next few days and will let us know. .

### **Next Meeting: TBD**

*Meeting Adjourned: 3:30 pm*