**OFA XWG Meeting Minutes**

**June 8, 2017**

**11am Mountain**

1. Roll Call (present in **bold**):

Board Members:

**At-Large / Jason Gunthorpe**

At-Large / Bob Noseworthy

Broadcom / Eddie Wai

**Cray/Paul Grun**

HPE / Andy Riebs

Huawei / Daqi Ren

IBM / Bernard Metzler

Intel / Jim Pappas (Divya Kolar)

Jump Trading / Christoph Lameter

LANL / Susan Coulter

**LLNL / Matt Leininger**

Mellanox / Gilad Shainer (**Bill Lee**)

**NetApp / David Dale**

**Oak Ridge / Scott Atchley**

Oracle / David Brean

Sandia / Chris Beggio (**Michael Aguilar**)

Unisys / Lilia Weber

**Also present:**

**OFA / Jim Ryan**

**Intel / Sean Hefty**

**Summary/conclusions and ARs:**

* Budget: taking some line items to the next level of detail
  + Row 21, Secure Document Repository: resolved to continue using
  + Row 22, Hosting Fees: some investigation needed, details to follow
  + Row 23, Web Site Maintenance: we believe Ken Strandberg is worth the cost
  + Row 25, Bank Service Charges: part of our reliance on the Linux Foundation, which we believe is cost-effective. Consider it now as a requirement for budget purposes
* Big ticket items
  + Row 10, Maintainer/Support: expecting details to justify our current placeholder of $10,000
    - Expect further detail ASAP
  + Row 11, OS Services NRE: concluded we have no interest in funding this for the next budget cycle. Keep this on record for future consideration
  + Row 12, Training: Concluded we have no interest in funding this for the next budget cycle. Keep it in mind for the next round
  + Row 27, Contract Services Director: in discussion, nothing new at this point
    - Expect further detail ASAP
* New OFA Projects: The general idea is to find ways to improve our relationship with the open community
  + Two specific projects have been suggested at a high-level, no details:
    - UAPI
    - Peer direct
  + Significant discussion as to how to make these projects happen
    - One significant thread was the voluntary contributor process the OFA has long used. The success of the OFI WG in the last couple of years was offered as a proof case this is possible.
    - There was a strong argument the funding models of SIGs like OpenSFS may be needed to make significant development project possible
    - There was a strong argument the OFA doesn’t add anything to the general process of the open community for identifying the need for doing development for a specific project
      * ***Net, net: this seemed like it was close to resolution, but not enough to consider this “resolved”***

**Agenda:**

* Approve the minutes
* Budget: Take some items to the next level of detail
* How do we begin to understand “big ticket items”?
* New OFA projects

**Approve the minutes motion by Scott, second by Bill; unanimous**

**Budget: Take some items to the next level of detail:**

* Row 21, Secure Document Repository: Bill investigated and concluded we will continue until a better solution has been identified. In addition to online files, paper documents are held at Nereus. A nomenclature issue may exist between the terms “XWG” vs. “Board” in the repository
* Row 22, Hosting Fees: Bill got the SLA and confirmed hosting fee is $199/month for a server we rent, collocated with other servers for backup. Some felt this was high compared to most server rental. It is not clear if this is only available through Ken. In any case, Bill investigate or delegate to Jim.
* Row 23, Web Site Maintenance: web site maint is via Ken or administrator. update content, manage list serves. Perhaps change the name to “IT Support”
* Row 25, Bank Service Charges: based on further investigation, Bill understand these are fees we pay for Linux Foundation business management services, not “bank service charges” as such. We believe we get good value for money with the LF services (row 26) LF. The combination of rows 25 and 26, which is the correct view, remains cost-effective and should be viewed as required.

**How do we begin to understand “big ticket items”?**

* Row 10, Maintainer/Support: waiting for input from Christoph Lameter for specific elements to justify the placeholder $10,000 request.
* Row 11, OS Services NRE:
  + Bill explained this was put in from discussion of possible activities for SW development that no member company was willing to do.
  + Paul asked whether there is any appetite for spending money like this? Seems no one is interested in doing so – whole idea of the Alliance is we supply resources for things that matter to us.
  + Therefore, we concluded we would defer for now but keep it as a line item.
  + Note: Jason continues to believe some form of sponsored or managed development could be of value to members
* Row 12, Training Program Expense:
  + OFA has funded training program development in the past on a SOW basis. The first topic or subject matter was RDMA networks. Some success initially, but nothing now is happening.
  + There were questions about the target audience and the topics to prioritize. Paul explained training was developed originally for verbs for developers. There was consideration for a companion course for administrators, but that never happened. There is consideration now for training for OFIWG, providers and/or expanding verbs training and making it current. Original training was designed to be delivered in-class, but, of course, other forms of delivery exist.
  + Actual cost of development was about $25K for the original training, but Paul (who was involved with the training development) said it was a bargain, not likely to happen again.
  + Fundamental question: is training something the OFA should do? If so, what should we budget for it? Big question is whether the industry would value the initiative by the OFA. We did not hear a strong statement of support for this to be a core activity. This will be marked as not being pursued in the 2018 budget
* Row 27, Contract Services, Director: discussions going on now or soon, no nothing to report at this time
* Next steps, more information on rows 10 and 27 will be forthcoming. Expect this to be ready for Board discussion reasonably soon, well ahead of our normal timing

**New OFA Projects**

* In general, we are looking for ways to improve our relationship with the open community. One possibility is to take on projects others may not be willing to fund. Possibly: “peer direct” or “UAPI”.
* Two questions: (1) are the topics above the best and (2) If we choose to do this, what is the process? On process:
  + Paul’s initial thought was to use the TAC, which had been a successful incubator for the OFIWG. However, in discussion it seemed it’d be faster to have this started in the XWG, develop a new WG with a specified charter, project, scope, budget, etc. and then send this to the Board.
  + There was significant discussion as to whether the OFA needed to actually fund such projects. One thought was the success of the OFIWG is an existence proof funding isn’t needed. However, importantly, the significant investment of time, effort and remarkable skills on the part of Sean Hefty, which was allowed and supported by Intel is, in essence, a contribution. Again, this is the sort of investment that has historically worked for the OFA – member companies contributing to what is important to them.
    - A significant element of the success of OFIWG is the fact it was designed from the outset to listen to the needs of users, not developers, and every action of Sean and others was consistent with that. This is noteworthy, generally, but a good example of what’s needed for “peer direct” to succeed – it must be based on user requirements.
    - If the OFA is unable to get such a contribution, almost by definition the project is a poor choice
    - There was some discussion re the OFVWG which doesn’t help the minutes much, but which speaks to the general issue of charter, how to choose projects, and so on.
    - There was also discussion regarding what could be considered a “standing” WG meaning one which has no sunset provision, vs. one that is task-specific. The argument was in favor of the latter, at least in this discussion
* ***Key question seems to be whether the OpenSFS example is some sort of “best practice” vs. what we think is a successful voluntary resource model, as demonstrated by the OFIWG experience***