

**Chapter Organizing Call  
Tuesday, January 13, 2009  
Meeting Minutes**

1. Welcome

**Paulina Migalska (SEA National)** welcomed attendees to the call.

2. Opening Round Introductions / Participants share their burning questions/updates for the dialogue and/or New Year's resolutions

**John Romano (SEA-Miami exploratory group)**

The city of Miami decided to support nonprofit organizations through a half-a-million grant. Through this grant, John hopes to capitalize on this interest in supporting non-profits and spark interest in social enterprise by building a SEA-Miami Chapter.

John recently came back from California where he participated in dialogue with the academic side of social enterprise through the United States Association of Small Business Entrepreneurship (USASBE).

New Year's resolution: stay healthy and stay in service to all human beings.

**Anne Wunderli (SEA-Boston exploratory group)**

Anne just met with representatives from Brandeis University in Medford, MA and hopes that some sort of cooperation between the university the SEA-Boston will breathe air into the chapter building initiative. Prior to the meeting, Anne had a very useful conversation with Chris Miller of SEA-St. Louis.

**John Herron (SEA-Mid-Atlantic Chapter)**

The chapter had a couple of initial meetings recently, one in DC and one in Baltimore. It became apparent to the chapter leadership that the audiences in DC and Baltimore might be different and thus a different approach might be needed for each group.

**Daniel Allen (SEA-Chicago Chapter)**

The chapter is ready to elect its first board of directors. Congratulations SEA-Chicago!

The chapter is planning an L3C event on January 27 at one of the main business clubs in Chicago. Since the state of Illinois is working on adopting its own L3C resolution, the event will be attended by one of the state's senators.

New Year's resolution: Not to make resolutions one is not able to keep ☺

3. Content:

a. Brief description of SEA chapter program (**not necessary**)

b. Discussion of issues raised during the introduction

**John Romano** asked participants about whether or not they know anything on the new administration's plans to create some sort of executive level support of social enterprise.

Paulina remarked of two possibilities she is aware of: (1) A social entrepreneurship Agency within the Corporation for National and Community Service, and/or (2) a White House Office of Social Entrepreneurship.

Anne recommends a Social Edge article to the group:

<http://www.socialedge.org/blogs/dr-o/archive/2008/11/12/obama-promises-social-entrepreneurship-agency>

c. Updates from SEA:

i. Social Enterprise Summit 2009:

a) Dialogue session on social enterprise funding

SEA is planning a number of dialogue sessions designed to get the field talking on current hot topics. One session will be on the topic of finding common ground between funders and social enterprise. SEA would ultimately like to develop an action guide for funders.

b) Informal Chapter gathering

SEA chapter leaders and organizers are invited to spearhead informal gatherings of their local membership base at the Summit in New Orleans. SEA has reserved a number of restaurants for "Summit dine-arounds" in New Orleans. Planning a chapter gathering during one of those events is a great opportunity to network and the Summit Social Network is a great place to do it.

Anne Wunderli and John Herron might explore this possibility.

c) Summit Social Network

If you are coming to the Summit in New Orleans and haven't yet created (1) your own profile and (2) a profile for your chapter, please do so ASAP. If you are planning to organize an informal gathering of your chapter, view the Summit calendar for detail on "Summit dine-arounds" available. If a particular location suits you particularly, please let Paulina know at [paulina@se-alliance.org](mailto:paulina@se-alliance.org) so we can change the description accordingly.

ii. Social Enterprise Summit 2011 – Call for proposals (**new agenda item**)

SEA will soon be soliciting proposals for the location of the Social Enterprise Summit 2011. SEA board and staff have a strong preference for a location in the mid-west. Interested chapters are invited to request more information by email from Paulina at [paulina@se-alliance.org](mailto:paulina@se-alliance.org).

iii. SEA's new 3-yr Strategic Plan

SEA is at an important stage of building its infrastructure, both hard (i.e. establishing an office in Washington, DC) and soft (i.e. clarifying its value proposition). As the result of a recent strategic planning process, SEA will be focusing on two new priorities, information and advocacy, in order to build the field (inclusive of SEA chapters). SEA plans to share the the new strategic plan with chapter leaders and organizers before it is shared with the general membership at the Summit in New Orleans.

iv. SEA is interested in gathering input from chapter leaders and organizers on:

a) News & information sources they use on a regular basis

John Romano – Google Alerts / USASBE division track

Anne Wunderli – Social edge / Ashoka / SSRI

John Herron – SEA Listserve / other pertaining to his line of business

b) How is the current economy affecting the business of their own and/or their local social enterprises

**John Herron** – Harbor City Services is really suffering from loss of pricing pressure (many recently unemployed are engaging in the moving business, one of his main business lines). Commodities prices are affecting his business (i.e., recycling) as well. John is also worried about possible loss of Foundation support/giving to local social enterprises since they've lost a lot their money in the current downturn in the economy.

**John Romano** – sees that the notion of volunteerism has been affected as lots of people are in their survival mode. This trend is particularly troubling as volunteer time and talent is decreasing at a time when we need it most. How are other chapter leaders and organizers striking the balance between staying active in their communities (inclusive of chapter building) and concentrating on making a living?

John Herron – it is certainly not easy. When you are under pricing pressure, your ability to focus on broader spectrum can be strained.

Anne Wunderli – as chapter leader we have a “luxury” of waiting the worst of the downturn out if necessary.

Daniel – different organization cope with the situation differently. It's not monolithic but he agrees with Anne to a point.

**Anne Wunderli** – In some ways a little too soon to tell in terms of donations. Pine Street in has not been affected thus far but this may change as state funding decreases in the upcoming months.

One social enterprise in MA in the business of institutional furniture production has lost its ability to cover its operating costs entirely.

**Daniel Allen** – Some nonprofits are really feeling the pinch since fundraising is low. On the other hand, one musical nonprofit he is aware of is doing just fine as ticket sales are actually up. Overall organizations are concerned but many are doing great.

**John Romano** – organization are anticipating hardships in the near future.

4. Closing round feedback – feedback on the meeting/final thoughts/agenda items for next meeting

**Daniel Allen** – will definitely submit a proposal for the 2011 Summit location.