

March Board Meeting Minutes

Date: March 26, 2026

Board members in attendance: Loki Donahue, Susan Freeman, Josh Franks, Rob Heskett, Javonne Green, Beverly Jurenko

Not in attendance: Lauren Clark

A quorum is established

Facilitated by: Sara Ness

Additional attendees: Jenesis Nicolaiesen, Melisa Gonzalez, Caitie Picot, Diana McCall

Meeting held online via Zoom and in person at the United Way Building in Conference Room 1, In Asheville, NC, USA from 4:00pm-5:30pm

Meeting Purpose

Define the board's purpose and strategic focus.

Key Takeaways

- **Strong Financials & Fundraising Pipeline:** 2025 revenue hit \$801k (nearly double 2024), and a \$1.4M pending grant pipeline is advancing with anchor partners Stand Together and Dogwood.
- **Major Staffing Changes:** The Mothership program is being restructured after its director's departure. The Training Director role is filled, but another key staff member is resigning.
- **Board's Proposed Strategic Focus:** The board is exploring a shift from reactive oversight to proactive strategy, focusing on long-term revenue, board expansion (e.g., a lawyer), and deeper staff integration via fractals.
- **New Leadership Model:** The board is testing a non-hierarchical leadership model for four months, rotating meeting facilitation to distribute leadership and avoid a single-point-of-failure succession plan.

Topics

Executive Director Update

- **Impact Stories:**
 - A seeker with housing instability was accommodated via phone to join their regular connection practice, reinforcing the community as a "home base."

- An older seeker came out during a practice using the prompt "something I owe to myself."
- Catalyst Nathan hosted his first event for families of incarcerated people, demonstrating the program's value as a supportive container.
- **Fundraising & Financials:**
 - **2025 Revenue:** \$801k, nearly doubling 2024's figure.
 - **Pending Grants:** \$1.4M pipeline for the Catalyst Program, a research study, and center resourcing.
 - **Anchor Partners:**
 - **Dogwood:** Invited to the next stage of their "Stronger Organizations" funding pool.
 - **Stand Together:** A 3-year relationship is evolving toward direct investment.
 - **New Support:** Mitchell Gomez (volunteer) is building a small-to-mid-level donor engine and making foundation introductions.
- **Staffing & Programming:**
 - **Hiring:** Reed Andree (they/them) is the new Training Director.
 - **Departures:**
 - Lauren Vermillion (Mothership Director) departed after an HR improvement process.
 - Adrian Engstrom (Europe-based) resigned, effective May 1st.
 - **Mothership Program:** Impact metrics are down. The program is being restructured internally, and the Tender Wolf Council is launching to provide support.
 - **Catalyst Program:** Now in month three, the program is gathering feedback and will undergo redesign ("flying the plane while building it").
 - **Sociocracy Implementation:** The new governance model is meeting its need but has kinks. A pro bono consultant, John Buck, is providing support.

Fractal Updates

- **Finance:**
 - The budget is on track with no red flags.
 - Received a \$100k grant from Stand Together.
- **Legal:**
 - Robert is stepping down from the committee to focus on facilitation; a volunteer legal counsel is needed.
 - Stand Together is providing pro bono support for Catalyst and chapter agreements.
- **Fundraising:**
 - There was a motion to create a Fundraising Committee. There was a vote; the result was approval. The committee is officially formed (Susan, Rob, Melisa).
- **Healing Ops:**
 - This fractal needs a board member. Javonne expressed interest.

Defining the Board's Purpose

- **Core Question:** What does the spirit of SEEK need from the board?
- **Key Themes from Discussion:**
 - **Strategic Focus:** Shift from reactive oversight to proactive strategy.
 - **Long-Term Revenue:** Develop a sustainable revenue model beyond grants.
 - **Strategic Plan Execution:** Track progress on existing goals (e.g., national voice via research).
 - **Board Expansion & Diversity:**
 - Recruit members with specific expertise, like a lawyer for risk management.
 - Increase board diversity to reflect SEEK's mission.
 - Use fractals as a low-commitment entry point for potential board members.
 - **Staff & Board Cohesion:**
 - Increase board member participation in fractals to foster synergy.
 - Improve communication to make fractal meeting schedules accessible.
 - **Outreach:**
 - Re-engage inactive seekers to understand their needs.
 - Tell SEEK's impact story more effectively to donors.

New Board Member Blueprints

- Javonne Green
- Rob Z Heskett

Next Steps

- **Susan, Beverly, & Diana:** Form a committee to synthesize board purpose feedback and propose recommendations.
- **Javonne Green:** Facilitate the next board meeting.
- **Melisa:** Email board members for 990 submission info (due next Friday).
- **Sara Ness:** Share Zoom login with Jen and Melisa for future meetings.
- **Jen:**
 - Create a Notion page with fractal meeting schedules.
 - Collaborate with Bearden website to publish board minutes.
- **Board Members:**
 - Confirm availability for Mycelial Momentum (Oct 11 or 18).
 - Consider joining the Healing Ops fractal.