

Motion re: Off site budget

At our telephonic meeting on Thursday, I am going to propose the following motion relating to our upcoming meeting in New Orleans. This was discussed at the co-co meeting last week, so some of you heard about it there.

Move that we authorize a budget over-run beyond the level we authorized in February, 2011, for our our January 2012 meeting in New Orleans. We understand that those planning the logistics of our visit will continue to seek all reasonable ways to minimize our costs while maintaining the effectiveness and safety of our meeting.

Background & rationale:

When the board voted last February to meet in New Orleans we were concerned about the costs of meeting outside of Boston. Our vote at that time was that we would meet in New Orleans, but the cost of doing so was not to exceed the cost of a meeting in Boston by more than 25%. We did not have any information at that time that let us know that it could our could not be done for a 25% premium. It has turned out that we cannot meet in New Orleans (or I think anyplace outside of Boston) and meet the goal of only exceeding the cost of a Boston meeting by 25%.

Nancy Lawrence & I have worked on the analysis of the expected costs for our meeting in New Orleans versus what it would be in Boston, and that analysis is attached. Bottom line: We are going to exceed the cost of our October meeting by about 40% rather than 25%. The difference in dollars between a 40% over-run and a 25% over-run is around \$4300. For those of you who were on the co-co call, this is a larger over-run than I discussed last week. The additional costs versus what we discussed on the coco call are the estimated taxes on our hotel and the costs of renting cars rather than 15 passenger vans because of safety concerns.

After working with this quite a bit, I don't think that we can do any meeting outside of Boston for only a 25% premium unless we have a significantly less costly alternative to hotel rooms for our lodging and hotel meeting space for our meeting. The drivers of the increased costs meeting offsite are:

- Airfare - We have quite a few more people who must travel when we do not meet in Boston
- Food - We are able to eat much more economically when we can have food brought in rather than eating at the hotel.
- Internet access & Audio Visual support - We have to set up internet access for the board meeting and have our microphones set up for recording. The hotels charge a pretty high price for this.
- Transportation - If we are going to meet with the local churches and get out into the city we are visiting, we need transportation. On the plus side, the meals we eat away from the hotels are cheaper.

We have several ideas for ways that we may be able to bring down the costs of our meeting in New Orleans somewhat, and we will of course pursue them. Also, some of the costs in the workbook are estimates, so the actual spending could be slightly more or less.