

Welcome

Succession Planning Workshop Series
Introduction - Wednesday, October 18, 2023

PCLB
THE PETER AND CARMEN LUCIA BUCK FOUNDATION



CONNECTICUT
Land Conservation Council

Today's Learning Objectives



Defining Succession Planning and why it's important



Familiarize with the language of Succession Planning



Consider how Succession Planning interrelates with aspects of land trust work



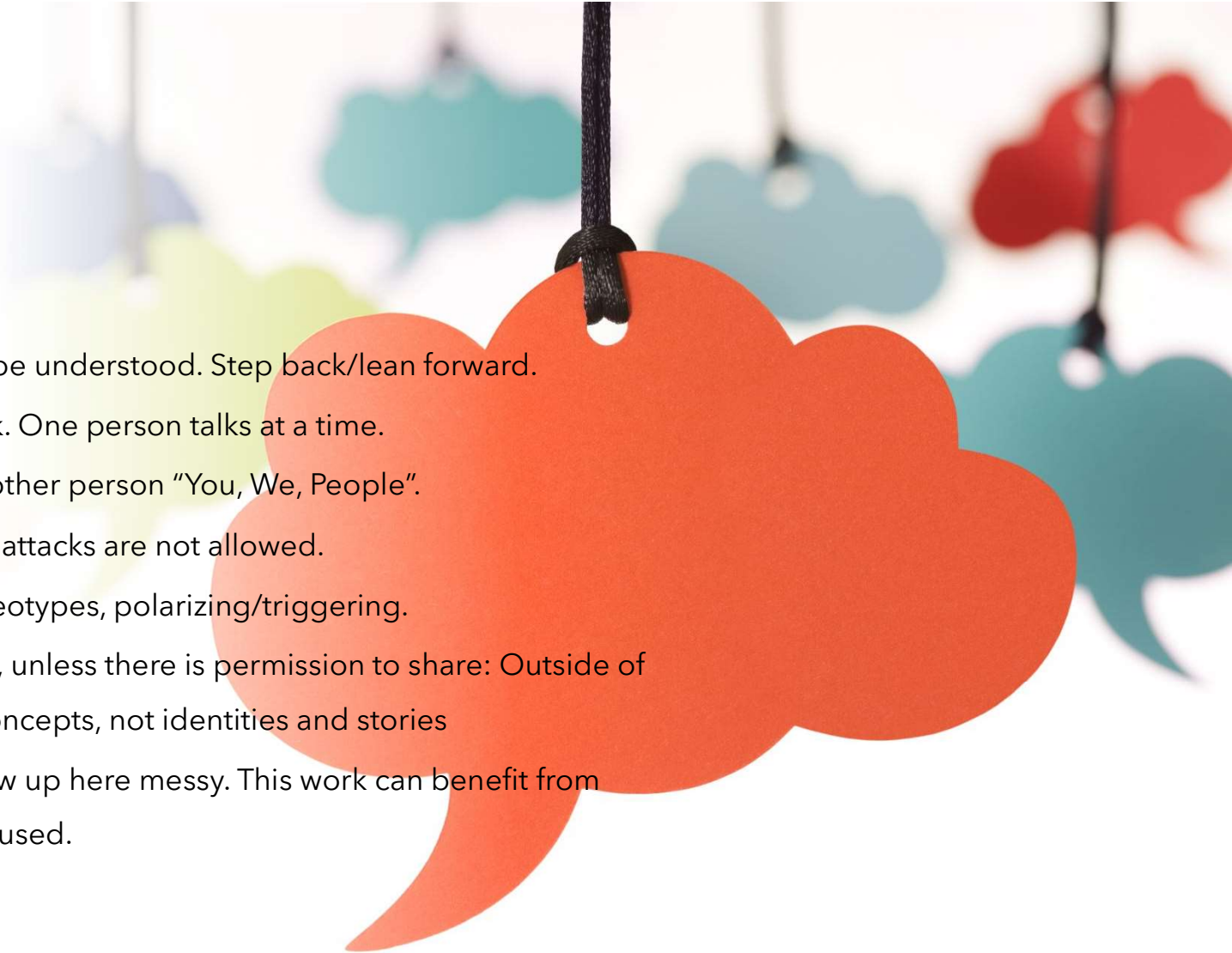
Take a quick glance: Common methodologies and tools



Get ready for our in-person day on Oct 25th, when we'll dive into the work!

Ground Rules

- Listen actively and with respect.
- Seek first to understand, then to be understood. Step back/lean forward.
- Each person gets a chance to talk. One person talks at a time.
- Speak for yourself "I", not as any other person "You, We, People".
- It is OK to disagree, but personal attacks are not allowed.
- Words matter: Avoid jargon, stereotypes, polarizing/triggering.
- Personal stories stay in the group, unless there is permission to share: Outside of this space, share thoughts and concepts, not identities and stories
- Give yourself the freedom to show up here messy. This work can benefit from exploration before becoming focused.



What is meant by Succession Planning?

All of an organization's leadership and key positions will need to transition at some point

- Board
- Officers
- Committees
- Staff
- Volunteers



Why is Succession Planning important?

- Perpetuity + Board's role
- Bringing in fresh perspectives
- Community outreach and openness
- Avoiding burnout
- Navigating normal and unexpected turnover
- Continuity of service
- Opportunities to celebrate service and say thank you
- Engaging people in the organization in different ways

Note: Succession planning is harder the longer you put it off...

Common Challenges

- Lack of clarity / No organizational strategy, shared vision or values
- Lack of board turnover / Leaders' departure plans are unclear
- Roles and responsibilities of leaders not well understood
- Board members bring people they know onto the board, not tied to needs for skills/competencies
- One person handpicks the successor, responsibility for this not shared by the board
- Two people want same role, organization doesn't want to lose either of them
- Despite title/role change, departing leader stays in the role or otherwise impacts the perceived authority of the new leader
- There's no time! Doing this right requires time for analysis, recruitment, and attention to transition



Land Trust Boards: Governance + Personnel



Succession Planning may be needed for both of these roles...

Succession planning and... Strategic planning

- Start with Culture, Values and Vision (The Why)
- The Details matter too: Strategic Goals and Implementation Plans
- Knowing organizational culture and goals helps
 - Identify needs in both governance and personnel roles
 - Target recruitment
 - Communicate to prospects and while onboarding



Succession Planning and... Institutional knowledge



TRANSFER



CONTINUITY



BOARD AND
PERSONNEL

Succession planning and... Diversity/inclusion



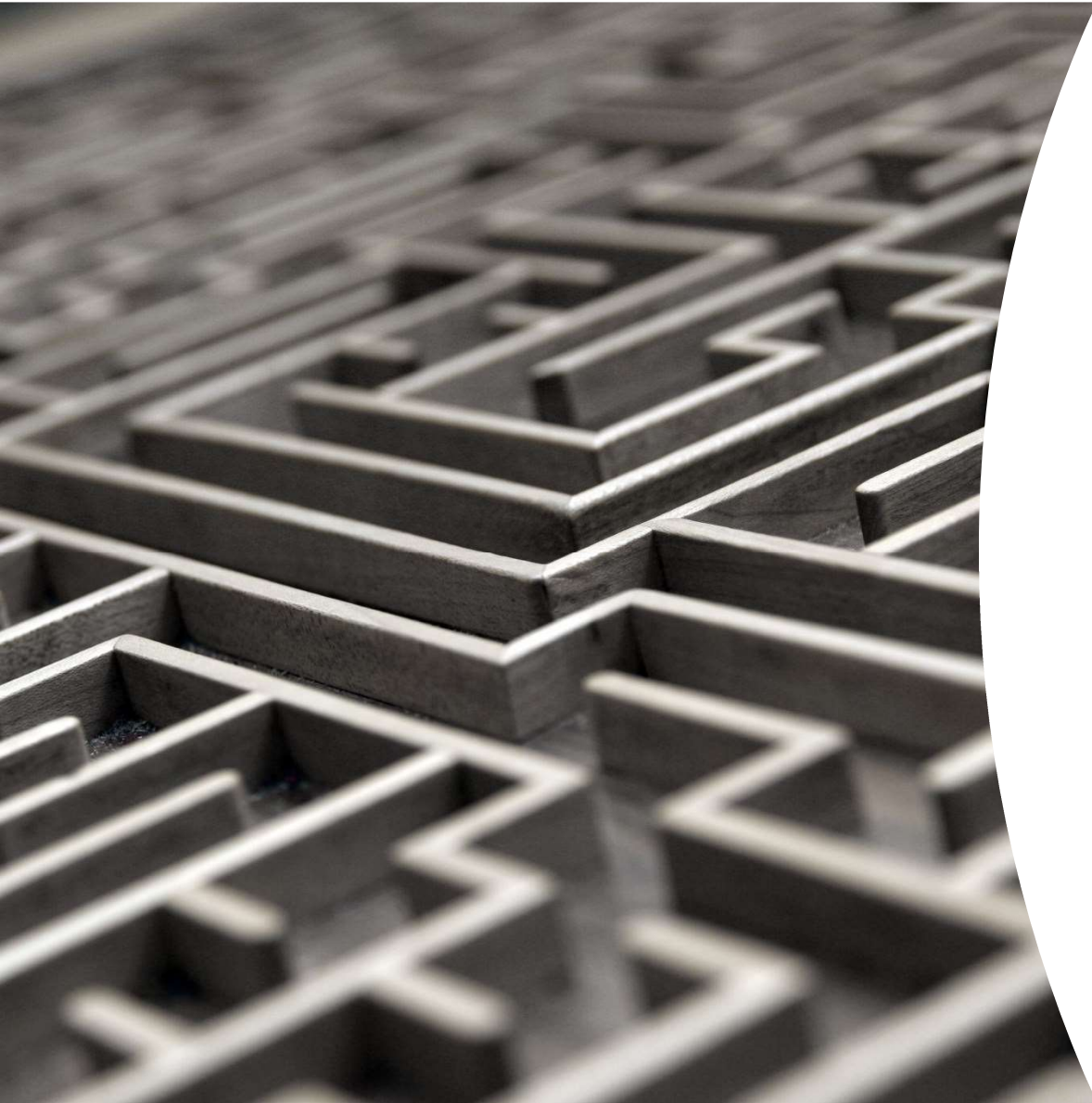
NEW PERSPECTIVES



COMMUNITY/STAKEHOLDER
REPRESENTATION



ORGANIZATIONAL GROWTH
AND RESPONSIVENESS



Term limits

- Why?
- Why not?
 - Scarcity of volunteers
 - Lack of time for recruitment
 - Onus of onboarding and transitions
- Managing the obstacles
 - Committee
 - Process
 - Documentation



Who is primarily responsible for Succession Planning?

- Nominating Committee, Executive Committee, Governance Committee
- When? Earlier better
- Continuous
- With an eye towards ending terms
- Strategic Plan
- Using tools and regular processes

Board assessment/ Inventory / Matrix



Informed by organizational strategy, values



Qualify the current board's strengths, skills, desirable attributes, demographics



Identify gaps for recruiting



Help identify gaps that will be left when current members leave



Help with drafting job descriptions



Help distinguish governance and personnel functions

Recruiting Tools for Clarity and Setting Expectations

- Job Descriptions
- Advertisements – where? Open call? More specific?
- Open meetings
- Committee membership / volunteer opportunities
- Interviews / vetting
- Introducing to the larger group

Onboarding / Orientation / Training / Mentors

- Board Manual
- Orientation meetings
- Tour of the properties
- Introduction to committees/roles
- Outside training
- Mentoring
- Socials
- Setting the expectation for ongoing learning and growth



Discussion



How does your organization handle board succession? Who does it, and at what time(s)?



What tools/methodologies have you used, and what was the result?

A Practice, not an Event

Conversations about leadership transitions are normal and happen openly at board meetings

Smooth leadership transitions happen, not occasionally

Past leaders are celebrated

New people are welcomed and empowered

Knowledge is transferred and shared

Critical information is documented and accessible

Roles and expectations are understood

Board structure evolves over time to meet needs

Organizational trust and flexibility

Next steps and Homework

Wednesday, October 25th - 9am - 1pm

Identifying culture and values; matrix and other analyses
Creating process and a recruitment plan

Homework:

- ✓ Strategic planning documents
- ✓ Mission, vision, values
- ✓ What your org is already doing vis a vis succession planning, any assessment or recruitment tools
- ✓ Current job descriptions or other descriptions for leadership roles (bylaws, committees)
- ✓ List of current board members, officers, staff

Meeting reflection

What resonated with you today?

What are you more aware of as a result of our discussion?

What worked well/what did you appreciate about today's meeting?

"I wonder if we might try....?"

