

Notes from Fourth Dolphin-Human Interaction Meeting held on March 10, 2017 at the New Thought Center of Hawaii

Summary

This was the fourth meeting to be held. The focus of the meeting was for each of the spokespeople from the three working sub-groups to share with the main group their progress to date, and to obtain feedback.

Despite busy schedules resulting in many daily distractions, it is clear there is a core constituency of concerned stakeholders whom believe it IS possible to attain the “Irresistible Agreement” and who are committed to seeing this process through.

As always, all the information gathered at the meetings is made publically available. Please follow the following link to gain access to all the documents and recordings.

<https://www.dropbox.com/sh/766tsj8s8cc0ua2/AADuFG7VtQoc1NuubijwyAnUa?dl=0>

The Space of Collaboration and Respect

It has become evident that the synergy amongst the group and those stakeholders whom are participating in this process has significantly improved. There is a definite sense of willingness to listen to and respect the views of others.

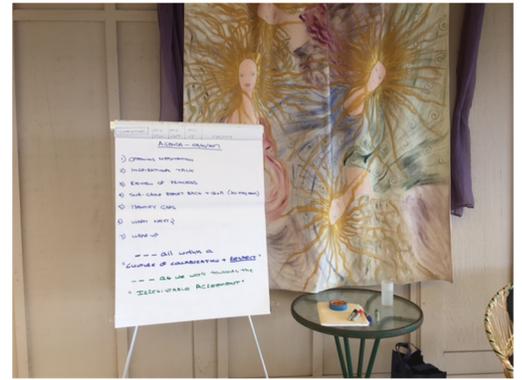


Musicians Laura and Kiala wrote songs of inspiration for the meeting and played these whilst the group gathered. The opening song may be listened to [here](#).

Trish Regan from “Dolphinville” opened the meeting with a [meditation](#) followed by an [inspirational talk](#) on her own experiences with the dolphins. Her story represents the goal of this process, namely, how to listen with respect and how to come to a solution which serves all parties’ interests.

Agenda

The main focus of the meeting was to provide an opportunity for each of the three sub-groups to provide feedback to the main group, and to solicit input from the other group members. The sub-groups' reports do not form part of these meeting notes as they did not feel they were sufficiently complete to distribute them yet. Instead, the feedback solicited will be incorporated into each of the groups' documents.



Stakeholders Identified and those Present in the Meeting

Stakeholder	Present at Oct 15, 2016	Present at Nov 30, 2016	Present at Jan 2, 2017	Present at Mar 10, 2017
Total Present	52	37	38	17
NOAA	0	0	0	0
DLNR	0	0	0	0
"Dolphinville"	33	30	29 (+1 by proxy)	12
Boat/Commercial Operators	5	1	2 (+ 1 by proxy)	0
Those effected financially by the proposals	23	7?	6 (+1 by proxy)	5
Local Hawaiians	0 (represented by 1 proxy)	0 (represented by 3 proxy)	1 (+1 by proxy)	0 (+2 by proxy)
Chamber of Commerce	1	1	1	0
Captive Dolphin Group	0	0	0	0
Independent Scientists	2	4	4	0
Dolphins under care	1	1	1	0
Other	?	7	10	5

A smaller group was present for this meeting. This was mostly due to the meeting being held during the day on a weekday during the busiest tourist season in Hawaii. Discussion took place on finding an alternative venue which may be available in the evenings to enable others to also attend.

However, it was noted that the spokespersons for the groups were present and thus the "quality" of the group was high resulting in useful feedback and additional forward momentum.

Education Sub-Group

The education sub-group had had several meetings. The output so far was impressive.

The following questions arose from the floor:

1. Clarify the difference between following and chasing behavior
2. Clarify the differences between diving and playing, and pursuit behaviors.
3. What is acceptable human behavior?
4. What is normal dolphin behavior? How do we agree upon this?
5. Is there room for compromise? This is becoming an important question as we move from the denial phase to the acceptance phase of the change process.
6. How do we come to an agreement of definitions?
7. Recording and posting videos for education purposes would be a powerful means of educating others
8. Keep all educational material as simple as possible; keep it clear

Science Sub-Group

The science sub-group had completed and posted an online survey called Hawaii Island Dolphin Initiative.

See <http://dolphinsurvey.org/>

Suggestions from the main group included:

1. Include input from the boat operators' surveys
2. As this initiative progresses, the survey may need to drive funding (such as GoFundMe)
3. The initial objective of the survey is to determine whether the number of spinner dolphins is increasing or decreasing.
4. Include in the survey:
 - a. Water clarity
 - b. Presence of other craft
 - c. Location – open ocean or bay
5. What does “in close proximity” mean in the survey?
6. It was agreed that a Web site was the next logical step in moving this initiative forward. The Science Group agreed to drive the development of a site, with the assistance of the other sub-groups.

Hawaiian Cultural Sub-Group

Unfortunately due to an emergency call, Dr. Laura Moire was not able to be at the meeting to present the progress from the Hawaiian Cultural sub-group. However, she did share after the meeting that quite a bit of work had been done around these issues and that she would be in a position to share this information in due course.

Gaps

The meeting reviewed progress to date and where the gaps were which needed to be addressed. It was acknowledged that the culture of collaboration and respect that had been developed helped the group in identifying and addressing areas that may not typically be comfortable.

As a whole, the group has largely moved out of the **Denial** phase (“I want no changes!”) to a more accommodating **Acceptance** phase (“What can we do to be a part of the solution and not part of the problem?”)

The next step in the change process is the **Action** phase. It was also here that most gaps currently exist.

The following topics were raised for future discussion:

By Lanny Sinkin:

- What does this “Irresistible Agreement” look like?
- The Vision needs to be clearly articulated, together with a budget and form of financing determined.
- This would best be explored by the Education sub-group.
- The preferred outcome is self-regulation instead of legislation

By Uncle V:

- Need to explore further the impact of boat activity and how best to address this
- This extends through to the larger topic of commercial boating activities and the impact groups have on the environment
- It may be useful to explore community forums where on-the-ground stakeholders become more active in ensuring a successful outcome

By Nigel Patterson (facilitator):

- In order to obtain buy-in for the “Irresistible Agreement” non-participating stakeholders need to be encouraged to engage in the process.
- These include representatives from NOAA and DLNR, including their respective enforcement officers.
- Continue to invite as many differing stakeholder groups into each meeting.

Next Meeting Date

It was agreed that 4 weeks was the optimal time between meetings.

The next meeting will be targeted for **the week of April 10, 2017.**

At this meeting, the three sub-groups will be requested to submit their respective proposals which will begin to form the basis on which to build the “Irresistible Agreement”.

In addition, similar initiatives are taking place on the other Hawaiian Islands and their input will also form part of the final document.