OpenAFS Governance

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Legal issues

- OpenAFS doesn't exist
  - Can't have assets or intellectual property
  - Can't accept or hold money
  - Can't own domain names
  - Can't sign contracts or MoUs
  - Can't provide liability protection

OpenAFS governance today

- Gatekeepers
  - 3 of various stripes
- Elders
  - 4 commercial, 3 academic
- Elders promote and fundraise
- Gatekeepers foster code, manage releases
- At least that was the theory

OpenAFS governance today (really)

- Elders concept has not played out nicely.
- Gatekeeper concept has worked better but not perfectly.
- Gatekeepers end up coordinating everything, including fundraising and community relations.
- Some things slip through the cracks.

OpenAFS governance tomorrow (or later)

- Non-profit charitable foundation
  - Open source development continues
  - No licensing changes
  - Foundation can accept tax-deductable contributions of money and intellectual property
- But there's no money for us to actually start yet

No trademark

- Efforts to secure the AFS trademark or a relicenseable right to it from IBM have failed so far
  - Relicensing allows kAFS to **BE** kAFS
  - If the protocol isn't AFS, what is it?
- Not all avenues exhausted
  - No immediate progress expected

No money

- Current economic climate not favorable to beginning the foundation
- Software Freedom Conservancy offers an “out”

The conservancy approach

- An umbrella organization to shepherd resources for projects with “no home”.
- Willing to consider an application from OpenAFS to join the members it already represents.
- Works closely with the Software Freedom Law Center, which already has agreed to represent OpenAFS.
- And membership may help with our trademark issue.

The foundation's mission

The whole point is:

Keep the software free and support a standardized protocol!

The foundation's mission

- Developer of open-source technology which makes use of AFS and related protocols
  - Maintainer of a version control repository
- Stewardship of strategic direction
  - A set of guiding principles will need to be agreed on by the community
- Community-building and outreach efforts

The foundation's mission

- Create value for public benefit
  - Promoting the further adoption of OpenAFS.
    - Otherwise, all the rest is for naught.
  - Help deliver products
    - Both via free open-source implementation and by helping other protocol implementors.
    - Also provide an umbrella for related projects.

The foundation's mission

- Holder of related intellectual property
  - Trademarking of logos, mascot
  - Assigned copyrights on works
- Recruiting and growing new contributors
  - Summer of Code
  - Computer Science student senior projects
- Maintainer of infrastructure for the advancement of these goals

Incorporating the Foundation

- Until there's money, implementation is on hold.
- Pending resolution of trademark issues, no name is yet proposed

Who we serve

- Users and administrators
  - The people who are using the software.
  - Just want it to work.
- Developers
  - Moving the software forward.
- Support providers
  - Providing for the needs of their customers.

Foundation framework

- A board of directors for legal purposes
  - As their final act, the Elders will craft a governance plan with ongoing community feedback.
- An advisory council for technical purposes
- Gatekeepers to manage the source

Technical advisory council

- Representation from different constituencies:
  - sponsor members
  - peers
  - community

Project Leaders

- A revised title: call Gatekeepers what they are.
- Some responsibilities removed:
  - Architectural and major user-visible changes would need to be approved by the Technical Advisory Council.
  - Protocol standardization is outside the OpenAFS project entirely.
- Remaining responsibilities can be delegated as desired by the project leaders.

Project Leader Selection

- At the start, the existing gatekeepers would become project leaders.
- The Technical Advisory Council would be empowered to:
  - add new project leaders, with the consent of the Board.
  - remove existing leaders, after public disclosure and with consent of the Board.

Project Leader Status

- Project Leaders would be non-voting Technical Advisory Council members.
- The Foundation would be authorized to cover expenses incurred in the duties of being a Project Leader, to the extent feasible.

Meantime

- Development continues.
- Needs still exist today.
- If you can contribute in ways we can accept today, please do.

New opportunities

- Public release planning meetings
  - Via the OpenAFS jabber channel
  - In advance of stable releases always, and development releases when large changes are planned
- Migrating from CVS to git.
- New channel for patch review: gerrit.
- Improved communication
  - New community newsletter, better sharing of reports and meeting minutes.

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Questions?