



E-PARCC

COLLABORATIVE GOVERNANCE INITIATIVE

Syracuse University

Maxwell School of Citizenship and Public Affairs

Program for the Advancement of Research on Conflict and Collaboration

Pioneer Scouts of Rose Ravine

CASE

Section One: Overview

Pioneer Scouts of Rose Ravine (Rose Ravine) is a private nonprofit organization that provides a wide range of educational and social programs for girls between the ages of five and seventeen. It is one of 150 local councils that are part of the Pioneer Scouts of America movement (PSUSA). It is locally incorporated and thus has its own board, staff and decision making structures, but is dependent on PSUSA for certification and programming materials. Consequently, Rose Ravine operates independently, but PSUSA holds a veto power over all major decisions. Rose Ravine and PSUSA are committed to the national mission of “encouraging strength and integrity and making the world a better place one girl at a time.” This is achieved through:

“providing opportunities for fun, fellowship and development. Pioneer Scouts offers a wide range of developmental experiences such as community service, cultural exploration, natural emersion and field-based learning. Pioneer Scouts helps girls achieve the best that they can be through teaching the knowledge, skills and values necessary to change the world.”

The Rose Ravine council was chartered in 1962 and serves fifteen counties that comprise most of the south central region of Illinois. Each county is composed of a number of troops which are affiliated with various schools, churches and community groups. These troops are staffed by over 1,500 adult volunteers and serve more than 3,000 girls annually.

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Rose Ravine manages two properties. The first is seventeen acres located on the outskirts of Flowerton, the largest city in the council region. This property houses the Pioneer Scouts headquarters. Located in a former John Deere farm implement dealership, the property was acquired five years previously with the hopes of expanding into a joint office space/ programming area for troops in the council. The second property is the prize of the council. Camp Edmonton is located 15 miles east of the city on 283 acres. The camp is used by troops throughout the region for educational programming and outdoor adventure. Because the camp is owned outright by the council, groups are able to have a first rate camp experience without much cost.

Staff

Pioneer Scouts is an organization with a strong culture. The vast majority of staff both locally and nationally are former Pioneer Scouts. For women who grew up and were shaped by their experiences in a Pioneer Scouts troop, working for Pioneer Scouts is the climax of their professional ambitions. This leads to a context in which women move from council to council as professional opportunities arise and carry with them the Pioneer Scouts way. For those at Rose Ravine, there is a shared commitment to service, learning, natural engagement and women's development. However, the senior staff are more committed to Pioneer Scouts as the mechanism to achieve these goals. Newer staff are more likely to come from a broader nonprofit management background and to be open to different ways of achieving the mission.

Rose Ravine Council employs 19 full- and part-time staff. This staff is led by a senior leadership team of four individuals:

- Executive Director: Debbie O'Flanigan. O'Flanigan is a career Pioneer Scout. She has been the director of Rose Ravine for 5 years but has spent her entire adult life working for Pioneer Scouts. She is well liked but uses a very hands-off management philosophy. Her plan is to retire from this position in 3-5 years.
- Development Director: Marti Delroy. Delroy has spent her entire career in corporate America. She was looking for a change and sees this as a retirement job. She is the second highest paid employee after O'Flanigan. While this is her first professional fundraising job, she has done a lot of volunteer fundraising for the local humane society. She is socially well connected.
- Human Resources Director: Jane Carter. Carter has worked for Rose Ravine for over a decade. She started as sales coordinator for the cupcake program, but has risen through the ranks to her current position.
- Director of Program Services: Sandy Cruise. Cruise is more than a little abrasive. The program staff which she oversees does not particularly enjoy working with her. However, her "by the books" approach and command and control philosophy means that she gets things done. She is effective because she works through the programmatic staff. When she works with volunteers directly, she is less effective.

The remaining staff can be divided into two groups. The first, overseen by Cruise, consists of six programmatic staff: a store manager who oversees the sale of uniforms, books and other supplies to troops; a training coordinator who ensures that adult volunteers have the required training to lead their troops; two membership coordinators who handle the recruitment and general support for the troops; and two program managers who assist troops with offering educational programs. The programmatic staff at Rose Ravine is one of the smallest in the nation. Based on PSUSA standards, a council of this size would be expected to have four membership coordinators and four program managers. Tight budgets have kept Rose Ravine from increasing their programmatic staff, and the council has been surprisingly effective at meeting volunteer and girl needs.

The second group is comprised of nine staff members. A registration coordinator, office manager, IT specialist/ graphic designer and secretary provide general administrative support. A special events coordinator oversees major council-wide fundraising events. The council owns a significant amount of property that is overseen by a property manager stationed at the council headquarters and a ranger who lives on-site at the camp. Lastly, two staff have been hired in recent years that have helped the organization make significant progress in achieving their organizational goals. Amanda Brown serves as the marketing coordinator. Brown has a master's degree in communication and a lot of natural talent. She has helped raise the profile of Rose Ravine as one of the premier youth organizations in the area. Leslie Manicotti works as the Cupcake Sales Coordinator. In this role, she is responsible for managing the cupcake sales process from start to finish. She graduated from a liberal arts college with degrees in dance and business management. This entry-level position is her first job out of college. Fortunately for the agency, she has excelled. As a result of her effort, cupcake sales have surged helping to offset years of lagging revenue.

Finances

The organization has an annual operating budget of less than one million dollars. This revenue comes from three major sources. First, about 5% comes from grants and individual contributions. Rose Ravine has a handful of dedicated donors who give small amounts (\$500-\$1,000) on a regular basis. This money is unrestricted and can be used for any use by the agency. However, the largest portion of this 5% of revenue comes from dedicated grants. These grants are program specific and must be spent on the program for which they were acquired.

The second 5% comes from program service revenue. Each girl who participates in the Pioneer Scouts program must pay an annual fee of \$10. A small portion of this is retained by her troop, but the remainder goes to the Rose Ravine council where it is used for program support and scholarships. Pioneer Scouts is dedicated to the idea that every girl should have a scouting opportunity. Consequently, girls who are unable to pay the membership fee can apply for a scholarship. These scholarships are funded based on the membership fees of other girls. Given the rural nature of Rose Ravine, some counties have upward of 80% of their girls paying a subsidized rate.

Lastly, 90% of the operating revenue comes from cupcake sales. Pioneer Scouts encourage their girls to sell cupcakes door to door as a leadership development opportunity. These cupcakes have developed quite a reputation and many people look forward to “Pioneer Cupcake Time.” The girls can win prizes based on their sales and troops that sell the most get additional funds for development activities during the year. The remainder of the funds go to Rose Ravine Council to support the majority of their expenses. Rose Ravine sells their cupcakes for fifty cents less per box than neighboring councils enabling them to attract customers from surrounding counties.

Looking to the Future

While Rose Ravine has been able to remain stable in their cupcake sales in recent years thanks to the initiative of Manicotti, they are fighting against a wave of change. First, Pioneer Scouts nationally has seen a pretty steady decline. National membership dropped from 2.8 million girls to 2.2 million in less than 10 years. Pioneer Scouts is competing in an environment where scouting is not only seen as less relevant but in which the competition for youth attention has grown. Rose Ravine has not been spared from this change. While membership in rural areas has remained stable, they have experienced a drop in participation in urban areas as girls move to a wider range of athletic and other development activities.

Second, the environment for resources has become more competitive. A major drop in the stock market last year has dried philanthropic donations to a trickle. At the national level, Pioneer Scouts has seen a 20% decline from last year’s level. Rose Ravine has been quiet about how this change has impacted their council. However, given that the only nonprofit organizations to have maintained funding at a national level are basic services nonprofits (e.g. food, shelter, health), it is unlikely that Rose Ravine has not been impacted.

Despite these negative trends, there is a lot of excitement in the council now. The council is preparing to celebrate its 50th anniversary. This is seen as an opportunity to not only raise funds outside of the normal fundraising cycle but also to celebrate the tremendous contributions of the Pioneer Scouts of Rose Ravine over the past five decade. Moreover, there is hope that this celebration will renew interest in Pioneer Scouts for years to come.

Decision Point 1: Given what you know about the agency and the changes in the environment, what recommendations would you provide for ensuring a future for Pioneer Scouts. Be sure to consider human resource, economic, and organizational changes.

Section 2: Conflict in the agency

PSUSA has announced an initiative to reduce the number of councils nationally. Councils across America will be merging to reduce overhead cost and provide for a more fiscally sound organization. While some are disappointed that Rose Ravine will cease to exist in its current form, there is optimism about its future. Rose Ravine has made plans to merge with the Buffalo Bluffs council immediately to its south. Buffalo Bluffs is often considered to be the most well managed council in the state with strong leadership and a six month reserve of operating revenue. Moreover, the large geographic size of the region will necessitate field offices including the maintenance of the current office outside of Flowerton.

Consequently, Rose Ravine has decided to invest more than \$1 million to renovate the council's headquarters. The new headquarters will feature an enlarged store and better customer service to serve the troops in the region. Staff will have expanded office space including private offices to enable them to meet with community volunteers about sensitive subjects. Most importantly, the council will convert a barn facility located on the property into an event space. This will serve as a hub for "low-ropes" programming for the troops and a possible revenue source if it is utilized by outside organizations. The exterior of the building is being redesigned to establish the building as a signature piece of architecture for the region. The new building will be a source of pride for the organization.

Yet, despite this pride and optimism, not all is proceeding well within the organization. For one, O'Flanigan is increasingly absent from the organization. She has been diagnosed with fibromyalgia which makes mobility difficult and painful. She is scheduled to work from home for one day per week. However, her absence from the office has become much more common. If she has been travelling for work, which was a regular occurrence, she will be absent for most of the next week as she recovered. If there is an evening board meeting, she will not come into the office until that evening. She is no longer active with the volunteers and, by many staff accounts, is absent 30% of the time. The board remains unaware of her attendance problems and thus is unable to step in to resolve the conflicts that this created.

O'Flanigan's absence influenced the organization in two ways. First, O'Flanigan played an important role in the organization. She served a unifying presence and a source of calm in the face of change. Things were peaceful when she was there and meetings proceeded smoothly. When she was gone, interpersonal conflicts arose and productivity grounded to a halt. For her direct reports, this was particularly problematic. For example, in Brown's role of overseeing the annual fundraising gala, she was told that some decisions such as the event location or award recipients were not to be made without approval by the executive director. However when the time came to make these decisions O'Flanigan was unreachable. This delay sidetracked the marketing of the gala and significantly reduced its profitability.

Second, O'Flanigan's absence creates a power vacuum that stunts both productivity and morale. Technically in O'Flanigan's absence, Carter and Cruise share power but Carter has no interest in

directing the organization. Unfortunately, Cruise embraces the unbridled power she feels in O’Flanigan’s absence. Under Cruise, the office is managed as an adhocracy. She regularly changes policy depending on her mood and the employees affected by the decision. Moreover, her demeanor regularly offends staff and volunteers alike.

Cruise is a loyal Pioneer Scout and is dedicated to the organization but lacks interpersonal finesse. Her past jobs had all been task focused with minimal requirements for interaction with other people, but her love of Pioneer Scouts had drawn her to the organization. She is an ideal program manager when it came to dismissing a volunteer. She is direct, policy-based and no nonsense, but when working collegially these traits chaff others. At an annual training of volunteers for the entire council designed to celebrate and encourage volunteers for the future, she stood up and announced “If any of the staff get out of line, you tell me.” This gruff and out of place announcement chaffed the staff for weeks to come.

Board Challenges

Despite these problems, the board was either unable or unwilling to intervene. While the board consists of ten members, most are symbolic. The true power in the board rests with the four person executive council. They include:

- Sally Wagner: Wagner is the board president and local member of the school board. She is the public face of the board and the most active administrator. This fits well with her desire to be seen as a community leader.
- Kelly Boswell: Boswell has a PhD in counseling and had recently retired from her position as director of counseling for the local school district. The staff consider Boswell as largely disengaged and unfriendly in her interaction with council employees.
- Liz Snedeger: Snedeger is the opposite of Boswell. She is the nicest and kindest person with whom the staff could interact. She had spent her career running an urban development nonprofit and has recently moved into government consulting. She is a lifelong Pioneer Scout and has a great love of the organization because of the difference it made in her life. However, this commitment makes her myopic. She is unable to see the challenges that the organization faces and unwilling to make any hard decisions that would detract from the organization in the short-term.
- Mick Salson: Salson is an accountant by profession and serves as the board’s treasurer. While he is a competent accountant, his busy schedule keeps him from being a proactive member of the board.

Decision Point 2: The organization faces a number of human resource challenges to be successful in achieving its mission. As an entry or mid-level staff person in this organization, how would you effectively address the staffing issues that you have observed?

It was this executive council that would make three decisions that would lead the organization into its most challenging time.

First, the board provided little oversight of O'Flanigan. While they were actively involved early in her tenure with Rose Ravine, she has not had a performance evaluation in over three years. They are unaware of her chronic absenteeism and of the personnel conflicts within the organization. The board participates actively in special events and council celebrations but are disconnected from day to day operations.

Second, it was the board's decision to hire Delroy as the Director of Development. While Delroy technically reports to O'Flanigan, it is common knowledge that she is an employee of the board. She is a close personal friend of Wagner which helps insulate her from O'Flanigan's direction. However, more importantly, Delroy has not been effective in her position. She is the second highest paid employee in the organization but has been unable to raise enough funds to cover her salary in her three years of employment with Rose Ravine. She often fails to follow up with major donors and delegates special events fundraising to lower employees.

Lastly, the board made the decision to renovate the Rose Ravine headquarters. The one million dollar project was an ambitious nonprofit undertaking in even the best of times. To the board the project made sense given the pending merger with the Buffalo Bluffs council and the need for a regional headquarters. The board conducted a feasibility study which suggested that the council could not raise the funds. However, blind commitment to the organization caused them to go ahead despite the findings of the study. Additionally, the economy soured after the study was conducted making fundraising even more difficult.

It is under these conditions that the organization has come to face its greatest crisis.

Section 3: A Crisis Unfolds

At this point in Rose Ravine's history there had been two decisions that had set direction for the future of the organization. The first came in August 2006 when the Pioneer Scouts of American announced plans to consolidate councils nationwide. The decision to merge Rose Ravine with the fiscally and managerially strong Buffalo Bluffs council in southwestern Illinois signaled a sign of optimism for the future of the organization. With this as a basis, Rose Ravine announced plans in January of 2008 to build a state of the art regional headquarters for Pioneer Scouts. The new facility would mix office, commercial and programming space to enable pioneer scouts with a seamless scouting experience. The board set an aggressive timeline for the new building. They had already secured debt financing and began construction in February of 2008.

Merger Troubles

The first major setback for the organization came in September 2008, only one month after the construction had been complete. As part of the merger process between Rose Ravine and Buffalo Bluffs, the councils had begun sharing greater programmatic and financial information to facilitate complete unification in the summer of 2009. Through this process, Buffalo Bluffs first learned of Rose Ravine's mounting debt. This included the 1 million dollar loan secured to renovate the Rose Ravine headquarters and an additional 500 thousand dollars of accumulated debt stemming from years of operating in the red. The Buffalo Bluffs board was surprised by this debt and the realization that it could hamper the newly merged council for years to come. The Buffalo Bluffs board decided to send O'Flanigan a clear message, "Eliminate the debt or the merger will not take place."

O'Flanigan was shocked by the sudden roadblock in the merger. She had previously considered the merger negotiations as pro forma and believed that because PSUSA had mandated it, that the merger was destined to take place. However, PSUSA was unwilling to force a member council to merge when such a merger would risk its long-term health.

Decision Point 3: The organization must find a strategy to stem the tide of financial loss and facilitate a merger to ensure ongoing support from PSUSA. What strategies would you recommend to O'Flanigan to facilitate the merger and/or financial stability?

O'Flanigan asked her other senior administrators to begin an aggressive fundraising campaign but the unwillingness of senior leaders to share the breakdown in negotiations with other staff or volunteers resulted in little momentum toward increased fundraising. The senior staff focused their attention on fundraising but they were ill equipped and too overworked to make any real progress. Additionally, they were unwilling to consider the one source of income that could turn around the agencies finances: The sale of Camp Edmonton. As a result, the merger progress between Rose Ravine and Buffalo Bluffs had officially ended by the middle of October with no alternative plan in sight.

Staff Turnover

This financial loss was made even worse by staff turnover. Between O'Flanigan's absenteeism and Cruise's aggressive behavior, morale at the agency was at an all-time low. Several staff had left to pursue jobs at other agencies, thus staff turnover came to a head in October and November of 2008. In October, Manicotti was given a position as a development officer for a major university. Given the opportunities for growth and increased pay, she quickly took it. Shortly thereafter, Brown was offered a position as director of marketing for a national professional association. The position would have been attractive in the best of situations, but given the increasingly negative work environment, Brown decided to accept the position. When she gave O'Flanigan her two-week's notice, she was offered a 25% raise to stay with the organization. When she declined the offer, O'Flanigan told her, "Leave immediately. You don't need to put in your two weeks."

Brown and Manicotti had been the saviors of the organization. While their tenure was still one of negative cash flow, together they had been successful in ramping the cupcake program. During a few years of their tenure they had almost broken even, and would have brought the organization into the black were it not for aggressive spending.

Decision Point 4: While the loss of talented staff is a real threat to an organization, it can also be a source of opportunity as open positions lead to opportunities for cost savings, refreshing ideas brought by new staff or reorganization of existing responsibilities. What strategies should the organization utilize in the absence of Brown and Manicotti to help the organization move forward?

Upon their departure, the executive board decided to not replace them but rather to assign their responsibilities to existing already overburdened staff. As a result, cupcake sales dropped from \$848,000 to \$640,000; a financial loss that was certainly the nail in the coffin of the negotiations.

Decision Point 5: The mounting debt finally caught the attention of the board who decided to act to replace O’Flanigan. How should her dismissal be handled and what should be the process for securing new leadership?

When the staff came back in January of 2009, after an extended two week Christmas vacation, all of the conflicts within the organization were coming to a head. The board announced that O’Flanigan would be retiring. They had worked out an agreement with PSUSA that, given her current health conditions and her long term of service to Pioneer Scouts, she would be awarded her full pension. However, there was no pretext that her departure was friendly. When Wagner made the announcement to the staff, she made it perfectly clear that O’Flanigan had been negligent in her management of the organization and that “As a result of Debbie’s struggles, the organization is faced with some challenging economic times ahead.” Cruise was given a raise and appointed acting executive director until the board reached a conclusion on how to proceed.

One of Cruise’s initial suggestions for raising funds had further polarized the agency. One of the counties within the council had previously received a \$100,000 bequest to “advance scouting within the county.” The interest off of this account had been used to fund scholarships for Pioneer Scouts in that county and to provide advanced programming such as field trips and guest speakers that would not have been possible for such a poor county without the bequest. Cruise argued that without Rose Ravine, the scouts of that county would not receive the same level of support and consequently using the bequest to pay operating revenue for the council did “advance scouting within the county.” Other staff believed that such a use was outside of the intent of the donor and that the funds should be restricted to county-level needs. The bequest was managed outside the council and it became clear that such a use was impossible, but the conflict over the bequest created further tension among the staff.

The Interim Director

This tension continued for a few weeks when PSUSA notified Wagner and the board that they were sending an interim director to assist with the organization. The interim director was Bethany Carol. Carol was a professional interim director who traveled from council to council to help out when there were gaps in leadership or when difficult decisions needed to be made. Despite her heavy salary requirements, the Rose Ravine board welcomed her involvement as it enabled them to return to their more customary hands off role.

Decision Point 6: As Carol, what would be your first acts as interim director? What effect would you hope that these changes would bring in the long term health of the organization?

Carol lost no time immersing herself in the organization. This included three acts that she considered to be long overdue: 1) Reconnecting with Buffalo Bluffs, 2) Informing the staff of the current state of the organization, and 3) Developing a strategy to turn the organization around.

There had been no real communication between Buffalo Bluffs and Rose Ravine since the negotiations had abruptly ended 3 months earlier. While PSUSA had been aware of the impasse, they had little knowledge of how intractable it had become. One of Carol's first acts as interim director had been to reach out to Buffalo Bluffs to see if the merger could be salvaged. Carol learned that Buffalo Bluffs was open to merging, but that it required a positive balance sheet. She quickly came to the calculation that the only way save the organization financially was to sell Camp Edmonton and use the revenue to pay off the debts of the agency. However, when she went to the board, she was told that such a decision was "impossible" and that the "scouts would not have it." While Carol had the support of PSUSA, the board had fiduciary responsibility for the property and could not be made to sell it.

The second problem that Carol sought to rectify was the lack of communication within the agency. While the senior executives had been aware of the financial problems, the majority of the staff at Rose Ravine was still under the impression that the merger with Buffalo Bluffs was proceeding as planned. This continued as late as February of 2009. Given the volunteer nature of the board, many of the staff had heard gossip about the agencies financial problems from the volunteers they were supposed to be supervising. However, none of them were aware of the severity of the problem or the need for systematic changes within the organization. In fact, they were still all being told that they would be receiving pay increases at their next performance evaluation. When the staff was finally told in February that the merger would not go through, Carol bemoaned, "I need to tell you that the merger with Buffalo Bluffs will not be occurring because of our council's debt. I thought it was important for you to know so that you can plan for the future, but as directed by the board you are not allowed to tell the volunteers that the merger is off. There is a legitimate concern that this information will further hamper the board's ability to fundraise and that support for the organization will decline among volunteers."

Lastly, Carol needed to find a way to turn the organization around. Without the board's willingness to sell Camp Edmonton, Carol reached out to Pioneer Scouts of Central Illinois (PSCI), the council immediately north of Rose Ravine. Perhaps if a merger could be brokered between the two, the council and its assets could be saved. Negotiations with PSCI began in February but had come to a similar stalemate as Buffalo Bluffs by the end of March. Carol's one success was to get PSCI to agree to serve the pioneer scouts in the Rose Ravine region. While PSCI was unwilling to entertain a "merger," they did acquiesce to a "realignment" in which they would manage the troops within Rose Ravine's district without accepting Rose Ravine's assets or debt. This would ensure that Pioneer Scouts would continue in the area even if the Rose Ravine council did not.

Carol announced this plan to the staff in March of 2009 and began the process of preparing the troops for the transition. Throughout March and April, Carol and the program staff held town hall meetings throughout the counties to inform them of the pending realignment with PSCI and to answer questions about the transition. For the troops, the impact would be minimal. While they might need to travel further to purchase Pioneer Scout supplies and their resources would be sent from Springfield rather than Flowerton, the troops would continue to have the same programmatic requirements and in some cases might even receive greater programmatic support if PSCI increased the programmatic staff to the levels suggested by PSUSA. However, this didn't nullify the anger felt by the volunteers and scouts throughout the region. In many cases, the town hall meetings erupted into open hostility as volunteers expressed their feelings that they had been lied to and their frustration about the future's uncertainty. While it was now clear that Rose Ravine and PSCI would realign, what that realignment looked like was still being negotiated.

Decision Point 7: As Carol, while entering into negotiations with PSCI, what would be your strategy? What issues would be most important to successfully resolve and are there any compromises which you would be unwilling to make.

The Final Days

It was difficult for the programmatic staff to counter the volunteer's emotions because they were having the same experience. When staff were first told of the realignment with PSCI, they were told that it was likely that all staff would be kept and that they would become employees of PSCI with all of their benefits and time of service honored. However, it quickly became clear that this would not happen. In late April, the staff was called into one-on-one meetings with Carol to notify them of their future with Pioneer Scouts. For those staff with administrative appointments, they would not be retained by PSCI. While this news was bad, it was made worse by the discovery that Rose Ravine was not required to pay into the state unemployment fund and thus the terminated staff would receive no unemployment compensation or severance pay. The staff that were programmatic in nature because they served volunteer training, support and educational needs were told that they would be retained by PSCI and would continue to work with their existing counties. All staff were then told that they would not be

receiving raises and that they would need to use up all of their personal and vacation days as they would not be paid for them upon their transfer or termination.

Morale was also low because of the cost-saving measures pursued by the agency. Carol realized early on that cost-saving measures would be needed to sustain the council until the realignment. There were four staff who were eligible for early retirement because of their age and length of service with Pioneer Scouts. These staff were released early with full benefits paid by PSUSA to free up operational funds. The remaining staff were then encouraged to telecommute on Fridays to save resources associated with cooling the building. However the need to keep computers on so that staff could log in remotely minimized the savings associated with this plan. When telecommuting failed to produce any real financial savings, staff were furloughed 1 day per week and their pay was cut by 3/5ths. The remaining staff stayed with the organization because of a commitment to the Pioneer Scouts mission and because of lack of other opportunities in the tight job market, but their enthusiasm for the work waned. It was one thing to lose pay but it was made even worse by the fact that the goalpost was constantly moving. Each day they felt as though they were told something different about their future within the organization.

This continued until July when staff was told that PSCI would be making dramatic changes in the organization and none of the staff would be retained. Since many of the staff were out of the office using up their vacation days, they were notified of their immediate termination over the phone. Carol and a few other administrative staff were retained to close the office and settle outstanding financial commitments.

Epilogue:

On August 29, 2009 the Rose Ravine Board of Directors met to vote on the dissolution of Rose Ravine Council. Four of the counties broke from Rose Ravine to align with councils in Missouri and Kentucky. The remaining councils are now serviced by PSCI. PSCI opened up a new council center in downtown Flowerton and the troops report that the support they receive is equal to or better than the support they received by Rose Ravine.

In January of 2010 the Nature Conservancy, a national environmental nonprofit, bought Camp Edmonton for \$1,000,000, a value far lower than its appraised value. The Nature Conservancy donated the property to the Illinois Division of Forestry to ensure that it would continue to serve a public interest. The funds from the sale were used to pay off all unsecured debt and legal expenses associated with the dissolution of Rose Ravine.

The Rose Ravine headquarters sat empty until May of 2014 when it was sold to the Illinois Division of Forestry. The headquarters was purchased using federal funds. The barn that was originally redesigned to be used as educational space now houses the Division's research boats and vehicles. The office space enabled the Division of Forestry to combine two previously separate offices: the research bureau and fish welfare agency. Little sign remains of the almost fifty year old council.

Timeline

August 2006: Pioneer Girls of America announces plans to consolidate councils and announces Rose Ravine will consolidate with the Southern Illinois council.

January 2008: Announcement of new building

February 2008: Building begins

August 2008: Building finished

November 2009: Key staff leave the organization

January 2009: Staff notified of financial difficulties

January 2009: CEO Retired

February 2009: Interim hired

February 2009: Staff find out about the failure of the merger

March 2009: Scouts and volunteers find out about failure of the merger

April 2009: Central Illinois council to take 1/3 of staff and membership

April to July 2009: Employees unsure of who will be retained

August 29, 2009: Board votes on dissolution of the council- 4 county's move to Kentucky

January 2010: Nature Conservancy buys Camp Edmonton and turns the property over to the Illinois Division of Forestry.

Major Actors and Acronyms

- Rose Ravine: The Rose Ravine Council of Pioneer Scouts
- Buffalo Bluffs: The Pioneer Scouts Council located south of Rose Ravine
- PSUSA: Pioneer Scouts USA, the national governing body for Pioneer Scouts
- Debbie O'Flanigan: Executive Director
- Marti Delroy: Development Director
- Jane Carter: Human Resources Director
- Sandy Cruise: Director of Program Services
- Amanda Brown: Marketing Coordinator.
- Leslie Manicotti: Cupcake Sales Coordinator
- Sally Wagner: Board president and local member of the school board
- Kelly Boswell: Board member and retired director of counseling
- Liz Snedeger: Board member and government consultant
- Mick Salson: Board treasurer and accountant
- Bethany Carol: Interim Executive Director of Rose Ravine appointed by PSUSA
- PSCI: Pioneer Scouts of Central Illinois, the council located north of Rose Ravine