Basement Organizing Documentation

A place to document the process of collective decision making and organization in the Basement.

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Meetings

2025 04 10

Meeting '102' - April 10, 2025

Meeting in main room @ 7pm on thursday

Agenda

- bookkeeping: quantify the regular financial contributions made by basement participants
- spring cleaning: plan to clear our junk that nobody wants. mark what we want to keep (deadline?)   - keep clear passage to boiler room, electrical panel, sewer lines
- asbestos abatement !!! we've got quotes, we may need to prepare the space and we need to set a date
- p: let's move from hedgedoc to bookstack. I think the difficulty of using our wiki system is a major friction point for onboarding and for everyone (or at least me). I am willing to migrate our existing wiki pages there. hedgedoc is not wiki software. it is a web-based markdown editor and thus has no built-in structure. we have no way to search our wiki. we already have bookstack running on https://wiki.woodbine.nyc/ and I've been trying it out.
- jonah: formalize (temporary) consensus model
- anything else?
- sunday dinner hosted by basement!

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Announcements (No discussion. Post-meeting breakout possible)

Attendees

Local - jonah , daniel

Remote - n/a

Minutes

Bookkeeping: None of the attendees at this week's meeting make regular financial contributions to woodbine. Online Jonah requested financial contribution details from members, but nobody responded. No other basement "members" have notified us about their contributions.

Consensus model (WIP draft)

Abatement / spring cleaning

LP has: - A grey bin on the wire shelves   - A weird vintage saw   - A vacuum chamber   - A vacuum pump

- deadline for cleaning out is next thursday
- we will action item clean next wednesday

2022 09 19

2022-09-19 7:05pm

agenda

Checkin Jonathan, Will, Devin, Steffi she/they, Julien, Josh, Ioan, Myf
Regrets Brandon

Add whatever you want here

goals

jonathan - make home goods, get resin out of the bedroom

myf - facilitate people to do cool things. personally more software kind of person. want to use the cnc machine at some point. nycmesh, self-host more services in the space.

will — when i started here, nothing was in the back of the space, was going unused. summer spent building this cnc machine, get a router and special parts on it. will be able to host different print heads, including pnuematic extruder. large icosahedron building for leds lights and damp plants. Started documenting on https://www.are.na/will-lockett/denial-utilities . Want to explore think-tank/studio ideas, maybe more teaching or studio or factory. Mitch talks about 'neighborhood utilities', but also want to provide context on *why* we want to provide tooling.

myf - what are our differences? as a new hackerspace, we are different because we are part of a community/political space as well

steffi - neighborhood aspect is interesting. workshops in montreal that helped reduce fear of opening computers, fixing them

meetings schedule

maybe later, also we should have food at meetings

our relationship with other projects at woodbine?

concept of woodbine - experimental hub for autonomy. How do we facilitate and experiment with autonomy.

* the gym - self-hosted workout tracking
* food pantry - community food pantry software
* wednesday movie night
* karaoke at gotscheer on saturday
* sunday yoga
* sunday dinner
* monday yoga
* drawing classes
* sewing class
* clothing swaps / free store
* birthday party host (occaisionaly)
* theory talks (politics)
* offer lodgings to comrades
* soccer team

How can we build a relationship with the rest of woodbine?

* writing signs to invite commentary
* making a diorama / dollhouse of the main floor, and giving people agency to "what do you want upstairs to look like?"
    * fun workshop?
* hacker parties! leds, decorations, "warp core" elevator
* people making art down here, and spread it upstairs (maybe in phone booths)
* we can present (nycmesh workshop, digital autonomy)
    * cryptoparty?
* we can run workshops
* cook dinner
* faciliate scheduling for gym / soccer league
    * @loan + @myf
* helping groups form: organized channels of communication—group chats.

infra walkthrough?

* set up autonomous computational infastructure
https://hackerspace.zone/Main_Page#
    * check our homepage for links to what we host

* goal to be on our own hardware in the space
  * goal to be on 'resource constrained' device

chat chat
  * matrix/discord exist
  * irc/scuttlebutt not yet etc...
  * i dont want to make an account with our homeserver, just link to the channel
  * i do not want to be forced to use someone elses platform
  * bridges to cli clients, print out the entire emoji reactions as text

name of the space / domain name
* woodhack
* thought it was hackbine
* woodbine hackerspace
* subdomain?
    * https://basement.woodbine.nyc
      * -1.
      * lower level.
      * underground.
      * berlin.
      * purgatory.
      * imaginary.
      * enclave.
      * hackerspace.
      * create.
      * lab.
    * https://hatch.woodbine.nyc
      * organic, to create something
* if we dont predefine what it is, people will
* we are not a shed or garage
* in ssb, you name yourself, but also other people can name you. what is displayed is configurable

* physical infrastructure
    * networking @myf
      * woodbine nycmesh is pi-powered!
        * 7 device limit currently, needs work
        * jeff geerling?
        * have experimented with it as main network uplink
    * 3d printing hello!
    * laser cutting
    * cnc machining
    * electronic bay
    * ventilation
    * humidity
    * air quality
      * box fan + hepa? - @jedahan (https://cleanaircrew.org/box-fan-filters/)
      * get/build a filter for that

* monitoring in the space
    * project boxes vs up-for-grabs boxes
* workshops
    * 3d printing workshop
    * intro to arduino
    * intro to raspberry pi

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* money ideas
    * for ventilation, supplies, etc
    * TABLE for next meeting
    * membership?
    * woodbine has been a free space for everything
        * survival on grants for now
* inventory management system
    * TABLE

What are the basement space expectations?

Woodworking shop? Not sure, lets invite the people who use it to join us. Jessie and others seem happy we are using the woodworking space.

Painting Studio? Mitch promised Vanessa would 'deal with it' by finding other storage space

Elevator Space? Food pantry storage and receiving. Needs to stay clear. Maybe we can help organize by building storage and bins?

Between elevator + woodworking? can be moved

Maybe can move toxic stuff to the front since there are vent shafts. Also sink might make sense in the front by the boiler.

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what are you working on?

jonathan - 3d printers in the space. stopped being class coordinator at resistor.

will - building trusses for the icosahedrons, want to model ways of organizing/thinking in the physical world. building cnc machine. interested in playing team-building board games. probably need more fun names than 'the transactional awareness game'

devon - toy with electronics sometimes. want more LEDs in here.

steffi - IT security hacks group at another space, teaching ourselves cryptography with cryptopals.com

julien - interested in fabric, and learn how to sew

josh - perpetually long list of projects, heading back to SF in a month. Want to complete an explorable explainer on a-weighting / acoustics in the ear canal (inspired by brett victor interactivity papers).

ioan - want to 3d print a part for my bike. want to build a pair of speakers. up for anything that helps the space

myf - ive been working! heard about this concept about 'digital twin' - mapping every object in the physical world into a digital space, watch them play out / predict behavoir. what is the implication of that, what are the discrepencies and what cannot be captured? to know the weaknesses of that system

8:38

2025 04 24

In attendance: daniel, omni, p, jimmy, micro

Nobody took running notes but here is the outcome of the discussion.

There is a lot of debate around how hazardous asbestos situation in the basement actually is, but regardless of the actual risk it poses, the situation is widely known, newcomers to the space don't feel safe being around it, and it has effectively closed the hacker space since March.

At least one of the directors communicated that they'd prefer we don't raise funds for this particular project but instead focus on getting more basement folks to contribute monthly revenue through recurring donations, and they will fund and handle the abatement. Furthermore, we can kill two birds with one stone by using this as an opportunity to de-clutter the space. Our attitude is that it's been over 2 months and a decision has still not been made about what to do, coupling the abatement with other efforts is more likely to ensure it never gets done, and we are willing to fund and organize the abatement ourselves.

- we want to raise funds to cover or at least contribute to the costs
- we want to meet the abatement people in person to evaluate how competent they seem

Action items:

- p: organize fundraising
- omni & daniel: fill in the gaps on details about quotes acquired so far, & schedule meetings with abatement pros to do a gut check

Proposals

Can be proposed by anyone and consensed on by eligible members.

Consensus Model

Consensus model (WIP draft)

This is a proposal for a Temporary consensus model. The idea would be to use it for the time being, and if passed, in 6 months review our experience with it and decide if we want to continue using it

(from jonah: this is simply a basic implementation of the consensus model/rules from 'consensus' by Peter Gelderloos thank you P for the rec - the things I have added/specified are the 2 meetings to vote rule, and the 3 votes to pass minimum aka a quorum)

- proposals must appear in a written form
    - Anybody has the right to make a proposal (even people without voting rights [on voting rights, see section ... below]).
    - The person who makes a proposal is its sponsor. A proposal must have one sponsor, and may have more than one sponsor.
    - proposals must be added to the agenda before the meeting
- The sponsor will give a live introduction to the proposal, which provides an opportunity for the sponsor to add context and open further discussion.
- ~~only the sponsor has the unilateral right to withdraw a proposal before the voting period is completed.~~
- ~~anyone can bring a proposal, and they must explain their proposal in person.~~ The proposal must have a concrete 'pass or fail' action. An example of a good proposal:
    - "I propose that we build a dust shield around the wood shop, made of plexiglass sheets and screws, using existing money in our budget. me and my friend patricia will contribute the labor and build it over the next 2 weeks"
    - ~~not : "there's too much dust coming from the woodshop and we have to do something" (this is just an agenda item)~~ (we decided this sentence is probably unnecessary)
- anyone that has come to at least 2 in person meetings is allowed to vote (you're allowed to vote during your 3rd meeting)
- voting is counted both during the meeting, and online for anyone with voting power (based on the meeting notes) - the vote count is not finalized until one week later (ie. finalized at the start of the following weekly meeting)

voting proceeds as following:

1. first we count "stand aside votes". stand aside meaning you dont care/arent super in favor of the proposal, but that it doesn't contradict your core principles
2. then we ask if there is a block vote - Block meaning the proposal stops - means it violates a basic tenant of your principles - should essentially be used in cases which you disagree with something to the degree that it passing would mean you would leave the group -

Ideally most votes fail from stand asides and not blocks

3. in order for a proposal to pass it must have at least 3 votes "for"
4. based on the discussion that occurs during the meeting and online afterwards, it may become evident that the proposal is flawed in some way, and could be improved. - Proposals cannot be revised after voting has begun, but a proposal can be withdrawn by the sponsor. - Anybody can create a new, revised and improved proposal

Adopting Bookstack as our Wiki

Person or group submitting

p

Proposal History

- Submission Date: 2025 April 17
- Vote date:
- Vote result:

Motivation

To reduce friction in the creation and retrieval of Basement documentation to the benefit of new and old members alike.

Proposal overview

I propose moving from our current Hedgedoc as our wiki to our existing Bookstack instance.

Details

Background info

The basement has been using Hedgedoc as an improvised wiki since 2022. The recommendation for Hedgedoc was taken from the hackerspace.zone suite of self-hosted software. Hedgedoc is designed to be and works well as a collaborative markdown editor, but we then attempted to build an entire wiki on top of it.

These are the biggest problems with using Hedgedoc as a wiki:

- There is no inherent structure to the collection of documents. All the markdown files live in a single flat folder. If the user clicks the "New Page" button a new file with a name like `Untitled-149.md` is created. The only structure that exists comes from links from one page

to another, so pages are easily orphaned. While this could work for running a website on Hegedoc, this seems like a bad match for the wiki usecase which should be accommodating to newer members who are willing to contribute documentation to the project.

- There is no indexing or search. Information retrieval is extremely arduous in our current setup and it hides away the majority of our corpus of documentation.

Bookstack (a fully-featured wiki software) solves these problems by including search as a feature, and enforcing an information hierarchy of Shelves, Books, Chapters (optional) and Pages. These metaphors would appear to be easily grokable by less technically savvy users, and so far I have found them adequate for organizing documentation.

Additionally, Bookstack has a WYSIWYG editor while also allowing the user to switch to editing the raw markdown. This is more accommodating to less techie users while allowing seasoned hackers to keep writing markdown if they want.

Groups this affects

The Basement Group

Work required

- migrating existing documentation to the new system (Bookstack has a rest api that should hopefully make this a bit less tedious)
- changing our habits to take meeting notes etc in the new wiki

work that was already completed towards this effort:

- micro installed Bookstack on the server in September 2023
- lp conducted a thorough survey of the wiki software landscape in 2024 and concluded that bookstack was the most usable
- p fixed permissions issues and prototyped a structure for

Individual or group doing labor

I (p) am willing to do the data migration.

Money required

This does not cost any additional money to implement, but does depend on the digital ocean droplet that runs our self-hosted stack which I believe costs around $80/mo.

Proposals

I propose moving from using our current Hedgedoc as our wiki to our existing Bookstack instance. Both systems are up and running, so implementing this proposal consists of changing our habits in generating new documentation as well as migrating existing documentation to the new platform. While it might be a bit of work to migrate the historic contents I believe the effort will be worth it even solely for the indexing and search features in the new platform.

This proposal does not say anything about what to do with the existing Hedgedoc instance itself. It's likely still useful in a google doc / cryptpad role.

Comments

Decisions

Proposals that were adopted after reaching consensus.