

Without a reliable stream of donations, Little Longears cannot do the work to which it is dedicated: the rescue, rehabilitation and safe sanctuary of abused, neglected or otherwise unwanted donkeys.

As we take in more and more senior donkeys, many of whom have serious medical and/or behavioral issues, the focus turns more to sanctuary - and costs go up accordingly. Our greatest expenses are all levels of veterinary services - from the routine to the exceptional - and donkey care (hay, feed, etc.).

In 2016, we entered into an agreement with Fund Raising Strategies, Inc. (FRS) for direct mail advertising to increase our revenue stream. We knew that our “overhead” costs in the area of fundraising would increase, and are aware that many donors are watchful for “low” overhead rates. We do not believe the overhead percentage is the primary measure of the success of a non-profit, nor is it the only measure to determine if a non-profit is managing its money wisely.

The presidents and CEOs of **GuideStar**, **Charity Navigator** and the **Better Business Bureau Wise Giving Alliance** initiated a campaign in 2013 to end the Overhead Myth – “the false conception that financial ratios are the sole indicator of nonprofit performance.”

Jacob Harold (GuideStar), Ken Berger (Charity Navigator), and Art Taylor (BBB Wise Giving Alliance) wrote an open letter to the donors of America as part of this campaign, saying in part:

“We write to correct a misconception about what matters when deciding which charity to support. The percent of charity expenses that go to administrative and fundraising costs—commonly referred to as ‘overhead’—is a poor measure of a charity’s performance. We ask you to pay attention to other factors of nonprofit performance: transparency, governance, leadership, and results.”<sup>1</sup>

We are aware that some donors assign a heavy weight to a charity’s “overhead” costs. And after our first year with FRS, as expected, our expenses outweighed our income. However, with each passing year, the balance between expenses and income evens out more and more. We fully expect this trajectory to continue.

We believe that using professional fund raisers is a practical option that ensures we can spend more time tending directly to the donkeys’ care and rehabilitation, and less time on fundraising activities and events. We hope you will agree.

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<sup>1</sup> Charity Navigator, GuideStar, and the BBB Wise Giving Alliance, “The Overhead Myth: Moving toward an Overhead Solution,” June 2013, Open Letter.

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*Note: try this site if you cannot connect: <https://news.cision.com/guidestar/r/bbb-wise-giving-alliance--charity-navigator--and-guidestar-join-forces-to-dispel-the-charity--overhe,c9429255>*

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