

Fifteen Years. The Joomla community has a lot to be proud of.

Clichés are hard to avoid.

It was the best of times, it was the worst of times? No, not really.

In truth, it feels mostly like an “in between” time. As a software project we are somewhere between late stage Beta and the first Release Candidate of the next major version of Joomla.

As a community, we are relegated to an experience of relationships lived almost entirely online.

This presents challenges where conferences, sprints, and user groups have been central to our interactions for the better part of a decade. However, I have been blessed with conversations with some of the grey beards among us that remind me of how infrequently the earliest contributors were able to meet in person.

Is this “back to the future”? Perhaps. I lived the days of 1.5, 1.6, and 1.7 from the outside looking in. I was not connected to the community yet. I barely knew the community existed. I didn't really meet anyone in Joomla until just before 3.0. My first event was not until 2013. So I live those early days through the stories of those of you that were there. If you are part of the group able to tell those stories, thank you for your many years of contributions. If you are a new, welcome! We are so glad that you are here.

I pause to reflect, because I want to honor the past and thank those that lived it. I also want to acknowledge that the ideas and the tools that got us to where we are today should be evaluated to see if they can get us to where we need to go.

I think the current climate gives us a chance to refactor. What are we doing that is unsustainable or unmaintainable? What needs greater clarity? What needs to be simplified?

The Open Source Matters Board of Directors has been doing a great deal of this kind of work on a tactical level. I know that each board member represents many, many volunteers that work alongside them for countless hours within their departments. I mention them as leaders to honor them and to honor the volunteers they work with. Please know that on a personal level I am so grateful for the hard work that each person in the community contributes to make the project a success.

Thank you Marco and the whole production team for your amazing efforts to get us up to late stage beta. I feel terrible even saying this. There is a consistent rumble of “what's next?” already happening. Your team lives the tension of being in the trenches solving today's problems while looking ahead to what the future holds. This assures that we won't be resting on your laurels when we get to “stable”. Here is to J4! - and beyond ;)

Hugh has been doing incredible work reigniting the legal and finance area. He has been

reconnecting with existing sponsors and nurturing relationships with new ones. In the meantime there has been an amazing amount of behind the scenes effort to gather and organize the information needed for these areas to be functioning far more effectively.

Marianela I am excited to be working with you not just in marketing Joomla, but also in supporting the partners and sponsors without whom the project would not be possible. I am inspired by your enthusiasm, your professionalism, and your creativity.

I am grateful to continue partnering with Radek as Open Source Matters newest Treasurer. He and I have been working closely together to greatly increase financial transparency within the board and the community. In addition, we are also documenting the entire transition process for both of our roles to enable future board members to be more effective right after they take office.

I want to thank Elisa, Djamel, and Eric for their service on the board. They are the outgoing Vice President, Department Chair for Events, and Department Chair for Marketing respectively. Eric and Djamel, 2020 certainly represents the most challenging year of any of our lifetimes in trying to coordinate marketing and events. Your work in these areas is very much appreciated.

Elisa, your contributions are still felt. The initiatives that you created are still an active part of our conversations on the board. This is a testament to the significance of those contributions. It is also a testament to what must be the most graceful leadership transition in recent memory. You solicited excellent talent for your succession. You shared with everyone where and how you are most effectively able to volunteer within the project into the future. And, you provided a game plan for those of us still on the board to make the most your contributions.

Elisa, you have created a model that moves our election process from one of the victor and the vanquished to one of gratitude. I am thankful every time someone puts their name forward to serve as a leader. So, thank you to those that put their names forward and were not selected. Thank you Justine for stepping into this important role.

I am missing about half the board members and entire departments. My mentions above are not meant to be exhaustive. They are the parties with whom I have either worked most closely in the last three months or whose efforts have been most visible to me personally. There are of course thousands of other contributions that I am either unaware of or neglecting to mention. I am thankful for all of it.

On a personal level, getting to serve within Joomla is a privilege. Open source is not a government mandate, it is not a corporate bottom line. It is good that we offer to each other and to the world. It is a commons that each one of us has the opportunity to foul or to improve. Thank you so much for all of you that are making the community and software better every day.