

Strategic Planning Meeting Notes -- April 1, 2016
Everett, WA

Attendance:

Kathleen Eaton (Snohomish), Int. Pres.	Margaret Morris (Yakima), Treasurer
John Strong (Yakima), Secretary	Carolyn (Dode) Carlson (Snohomish)
Sandy Atkinson (Thurston)	Bob Taylor (Lewis)
Linda Bergquist (Whatcom), VP Northwest	Chris Allen (Island)
Patricia Bosh (Cowlitz)	Meralee Nash (Pierce)
Nicole Martini (WSU MG Program Leader)	Patty Kerston (Snohomish)
Barbara Porter (Grays Harbor)	Terry Rice (Grant-Adams)
Julia Turney (San Juan)	Rhonda Welling (Asotin)

Getting underway about ten minutes early with a lot to accomplish, Kathleen opened the meeting and introduced Patty Kerston, who welcomed the group and made introductions of Snohomish County MGs who helped host our meeting. Further introductory remarks were made by Kathleen, who then presented our facilitator for the day, Bruce Lackney, of 501 Commons.

Setting the tone, Bruce urged us to strap in and hold on, since a lot is before us to accomplish. A strategic plan is necessary to get all in our organization “behind the bus and pushing it forward”. Without clarity of mission and goals, and the definition of steps to accomplish them, a group such as ours will likely find itself in opposing efforts, and limiting our progress.

There are three main types of Boards: Governance, Hybrid, and Volunteer. While there are important differences, all three share the primary duties of:

- Setting the strategic direction for the organization,
- Developing policies, procedures and protocols, and
- Oversight and budget.

Using the analogy of a tree, Bruce described the relationships of an organization’s plan. The group’s Values and Mission are its roots; the Bylaws its trunk; Policies, Procedures and Protocols are its branches; and Goals and Objectives its fruit. Nourishing the tree is Funding – the rain.

A 45 minute exercise of brain storming, analysis and whittling down choices brought us to a set of six values we believe are at the root of our Foundation: Honesty, Communication, Collaboration, Leadership, Resource, and Service.

With those in mind, we developed our mission: “We share best practices with foundations, and support the state MG conference.”

After a ten minute break, work began to delve deeper into the process of developing a strategic plan. We started with a look at our Competitive Landscape. Lists were made and revised of our perceived Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities, and Threats (SWOT). Next steps were to develop goals to address our weaknesses and threats, while using our strengths and opportunities.

A dozen goals made the initial list:

1. Address funding sources / streams.
2. Involve all counties in the state foundation.
3. Create a communication plan.
4. Create relevance to local county foundations.
5. Provide alternate means to attend meetings.
6. Promote regional meetings.
7. Create educational seminars of best practices for foundations.
8. Explore corporate membership / sponsorship.
9. Discuss board models.
10. Make our organizations more valuable.
11. Develop workshops, fairs, collaborative sessions, and networking.
12. Improve the structure of the state conference.

It was advised that no more than four or five goals could be developed into objectives at one time. But it is important that as some are finished or under way, others on the list could rise to the top, and new goals be established. We chose to begin with goals 1, 2, 3, 12, and 9.

We had time in this meeting to set out three objectives, including step(s) for accomplishing each, along with person(s) responsible, timeline, resources, and metric to show completion.

Goal 1: Address funding sources / streams.

Objective 1.1: Setup endowment.

Objective 1.2: Investigate corporate sponsorships

Objective 1.3: Design collaborative endowment plan with counties

Objective 1.4: Explore individual donation mechanisms to support WSU MG program.

Kathleen will be the responsible person.

Report on progress at October meeting of the MGFWS board

Goal 2: Create Communication Plan.

Objective 2.1: Create committee to draft plan

Responsible will be Dode, Meralee, Nicole, and John

A plan will be presented at the June 20 meeting of the MGFWS board meeting.

Goal 3: Improve the structure of the state conference.

Objective 3.1: Create committee to develop options

Responsible: Sandy, Patricia, Kathleen, Judy, (and John and Chris Bailey if available).

Report back at October 21 meeting.

With only twenty minutes left in our allotted time, Bruce urged us to look at the level of Decision-Making Authority (DMA). Boards work better when DMA is pushed down. When members at the lower levels of an organization can make decisions about issues in their scope of influence and responsibility, progress is quicker and more effective, and members are happier and more involved and invested.

After a productive session, we adjourned at 2:00pm, heading home to begin implementation of our strategic plan.