

WPWA Task Force on Fund Development

P. August

Charge: Aland asked that I “define the charge for what will become a standing committee focused on Fund Development for WPWA”

Premises and Context:

1. Dante Ionata spent many years studying the fund development process. He interviewed many professional fundraisers and created a detailed fund development plan for WPWA. Dante provided wise input to the recommendations I am making here.
2. The compilation of Dante and WPWA Board members on fund raising can be found on the Board Documents repository at Board Documents | Committees | Fundraising | 2009 WPWA Fund Raising Plan
3. Dante’s report and my personal observations from serving on many Boards leads me to conclude there is no magic bullet or simple solution to fund development. The process and the activities are well known. Dante’s report lays them out very well.
4. “Special Project” funding has carried the WPWA for the last decade or so. Most recently this has been the dam removal project. Prior to that it was a funding stream that Harold Ward secured and donated to the organization for his work on statewide water issues.

Recommendations:

1. **Leadership.** We need a single person to take ownership of fund raising and to make it his/her primary responsibility. This can be staff, a Board member, a volunteer, or a paid fund raiser. This person must be the “Champion” for fund raising for the organization. Until we have this person in charge, we are rudderless.
 - a. One way to fill this position would be (i) solicit for volunteers among existing Board members. (ii) redefine obligations of current staff to take this on, (iii) recruit someone new to the Board to fill this role, or (iv) hire new staff to perform this function.
2. **Team.** The Leader must assemble his/her team that will allow him/her to achieve success. The team can be Board members, volunteers, staff, or a combination.
3. **Priorities.** There are many ways to proceed. First, the leader and team should carefully review the existing fund raising plan, revise as they see fit, and adopt it. Initial activities might focus on low-hanging fruit first that have the highest \$\$ return in the shortest period of time. My rank order might be:
 - a. Cultivate corporate donors among businesses in the watershed.
 - b. Nurture existing funding sources (Lattner) and identify new sources.
 - c. Be vigilant for “special project” opportunities that will yield significant funding for WPWA operations, be mission central, and make good use of WPWA staff and Board resources.
 - d. Continue to build “annual appeal” solicitations.

- e. Start building membership. This is a long-term process that will not yield large amounts of new money fast but could in a period of years.
- f. Implement simple new small initiatives that will yield income, for example renting the campus, soda/munchies sales from office on weekends, etc.
- g. Explore new approaches that we have not done such as Planned Giving in wills.