Outcomes & Action Items

1. There is a need to have clear, well articulated job descriptions, including roles, responsibilities and expectations, for board members. This is needed so that existing board members are acting upon and behaving according to a specified protocol, and so that prospective board members can fully understand their commitment as a board member prior to agreeing to serve.
   a. Once a clear board job description exists, the job description of the Executive Director should be reviewed and amended accordingly, if necessary.
2. There is the need to have a discussion on the topic of board member accountability. Specifically, what does "being accountable" mean at the board level, and how do we hold each other accountable for fulfilling our board job description, and for those things we volunteer to do on behalf of the board and/or organization.
3. There is the need to create a board policy that describes the criteria by which a board decision can be reopened for discussion. It is bad board governance to revisit board decisions at the request of an absent (during the decision-making process) board member, but there are times when a decision may need to be reopened, and there needs to be a protocol for doing so.
4. There is the need to create a board policy that describes annual giving by members of the board to the organization, which is above and beyond member dues and annual appeal. For fund development, there needs to be 100% giving at the board level—prospective donors take note of this as an important criteria in assessing commitment on behalf of the volunteer board, and this sum can further be used as leverage in fundraising activities. The expectation to give must be clear to board members, and needs to be incorporated into the board job description as a clear expectation for prospects considering service.
5. There is the need to define a prioritized "To Do List" (in essence, a short version Action Plan) for board and staff regarding organizational development, strategic planning, fund development, and board development. It is recognized that there is much to do, and that a well thought out way forward will help us get there.
6. There is the need to create a policy that defines access to the Board Website. While initially created for board use, the resources there may need to be accessed by staff, and by volunteers serving on committees and/or engaged in WPWA activities. We need to define who can have access to those resources.

1. IT'S A PROCESS NOT AN ACTION
- FUND RAISING --- is a task,
- Fund Development is a PROCESS that lays out how raising funds will occur.
  - Brings together a particular cause and donors willing to invest in that cause.
  - The goal is to acquire donors of time and money who stay with the charity.
  - This is done through the process of relationship building.
  - Fund development nurtures loyalty and lifetime value.
  - It's not the one-time gift, it's the long-term giving that matters.
  - Create a Fund Development Plan.

2. NOT EVERYONE CARES
- Don't universalize your passion.
- Do not try to convince them. That's offensive.
- Instead, find those who share the same passion.

3. IDENTIFY THE PREDISPOSED
- Those you suspect might have interests similar to your cause or organization
- If the person (or organization, business, etc.) expresses interest, that gives you permission to move towards them being a prospect.

4. PEOPLE GIVE TO WHAT INTERESTS THEM
- It's not what your selling, it's what I want to buy.
- Donors receive more requests than ever before; they are more discerning now as a result.
- They expect more and we need to understand better what it is they expect.
- Communications must be stronger (not louder or longer) so that our request can be distinguished from the others. The level of intimacy in the relationship with the donor (or prospect) is critical.

5. WHAT DONORS WANT
- To Realize Their Dreams Through Your Organization.
- Donors give through an organization, not to it.
- Donors give to achieve their aspirations.
- It's not about the organization, it's all about the donor. They are the Super Hero.

6. THINK ABOUT LIFETIME VALUE
- Treating Major Donors Differently—too much exclusion alienates donors and could cause loss of long-term, small amount donors.

7. DON'T EXHORT BOARD MEMBERS TO USE PERSONAL CONTACTS TO GET GIFTS.
- That's Trespassing on Personal and Professional Relationships
- Instead, ask them to identify contacts that might be predisposed for further investigation.
- Then have others reach out to those contacts to explore possibilities and thereby avoid crossing the line of trespass.

8. ALL BOARD MEMBERS MUST ENGAGE IN FUND DEVELOPMENT
- Mingle with guests at events.
- Train board members to schmooze, engage in conversation, and provide resulting information.
- Assign board members and staff to speak to specific constituents at events and programs.
- Conduct research.
- Host an event for prospects.
- ALL BOARD MEMBERS MUST GIVE, ANNUALLY, ACCORDING TO THEIR LEVEL OF ABILITY
    - This is above and beyond annual appeal, member dues, etc.
    - This shows full board support to donors
    - This acts as leverage for other funds

9. DONORS ARE CULTIVATED
- Building a friendship on behalf of and for the organization, not a personal one.
- You must decide upon the level of investment for each constituent/constituent category, the desired outcomes of each, and what measures will be used to evaluate the results, for each.
- Do you have sufficient volunteers and staff to accomplish this?
- Most importantly, do you have the resources and desire to sustain the cultivation process to fruition, and then beyond so that constituents are not abandoned after initial success?
- Create a Constituent Cultivation Plan as part of the Fund Development Plan.
- Consider a Loyalty Program—a special offering for those who have been loyal over long periods of time. Regular insider updates, invitations to special events, a solo activity, etc. might be some benefits paid to loyal constituents.
- Consider Affinity Program—these sponsor activities that revolve around the interests of a target constituency. It may include financial giving by the constituents, but definitely focuses on the constituents interests.
    - Could Watershed Watch be considered such?
    - Could we better develop this among lake associations or similar groups so that they are more cohesive and perhaps more financially supportive of monitoring?

10. THERE IS A BODY OF KNOWLEDGE --- USE IT

- Board members and executive directors must become familiar with it.
- Unqualified personal opinions from well-intentioned board members and ill-informed CEOs waste precious time and compromise and organization's limited resources.
- The board has to understand how to raise money, and board members have to accept their obligation to participate.
- SEE THE WPWA LIBRARY LIST ON THE BOARD WEBSITE. Buy a book to read and put in the WPWA Resource Library so other board members and staff can gain knowledge.

11. FORMS A FUND DEVELOPMENT COMMITTEE

- Not responsible for raising the money.
- The committee focuses on governance, without usurping the authority of the board and does not engage in management.
- Staff control the actual business of fundraising, working with individual board members and/or teams of volunteers to accomplish tasks.
- The Executive Director [for WPWA] serves as the chief development officer and designs and manages the fund development process.
- The Executive Director writes the fund development plan, with input of the fund development committee, the board, and other pertinent resources and individuals. This is so because staff will best know the resources, time and otherwise, available and how best to implement the plan of action on a day-to-day basis.
- Every board member must take on a fund development activity. Put the members' names in the plan and together they can hold themselves accountable.

12. TIE FUND DEVELOPMENT TO THE ANNUAL BUDGET

- In developing an annual budget, test the charitable contributions goal by evaluating the organization's capacity and capability to raise money.
- That means figuring out how much the organization is likely to raise, then comparing that to how much is actually wanted.
- Smart organizations adopt a budget based on what can be done, not what is wanted.
- Develop a Gift Table. See page 363 and 364. Use this to help evaluate what is realistic and probable for charitable donations from members over the coming year. Use that in the budget, and to be reflected in fund development goals and activities for the year.

1. MUST HAVE CLEARLY ARTICULATED

- **Vision**—an image of an organization's desired future; where it wants to go and what it will look like when it arrives
- **Values**—how an organization expects to operate and behave. Values are the starting point for everything else.
- **Mission**—describes what your organization is here to do. It is rare to ever achieve mission.
- **Goals & Objectives**—the milestones expected to be hit before too long. They should be challenging but realistic and achievable.

2. BOARD FUNCTIONS

- <u>Corporate governance is a collective act. Only the board, as a group, has authority</u>.
  - o Individual members, including the chair, have no authority by virtue of their position.
  - o Individual board members has a voice only as part of the group
    - ▪ Dante vs. Joyaux FR Plan example.
    - ▪ Staff often don't understand these distinction either, and then don't enable appropriately or effectively.
    - ▪ **DO WE HAVE POLICIES STATING THIS? SHOULD WE?**
  - o The board functions as a collective for governance. Period.
- Staff make management decisions, and implement them.
  - o The staff provides the in-depth body of knowledge and best practice. Staff helps identify governance issues and enables the board to talk and decide accordingly.
  - o Staff work with individual board members to carry out specific portions of the fund development (or other) plan, as appropriate for each members level of comfort, expertise and desires.
    - ▪ Dante vs. Annual Appeal letter example
    - ▪ Individual board members are now not doing governance, but are undertaking tasks under the direction and supervision of staff as volunteers.
      - • When a board member, for example, reviews brochure copy, he is a volunteer reporting to the staff person responsible. They are not the copy editor and do not have authority in this case.
    - ▪ **DO WE HAVE POLICIES STATING THIS? SHOULD WE?**
- <u>Board meetings.</u> Do you focus primarily on reports? Do you structure meetings for brevity, avoiding extensive conversation? In the haste to run good meetings, do your committees do most of the talking and then recommend action to the board, which reacts without much talking? The result may be efficient meetings. However, this also produces uninformed, disengaged, and bored boards.
  - o The best boards talk lots about meaningful issues. The best boards do not tolerate the "reports only" format. But, it's safe to listen to reports only; it's less risky. With reports only, there's no confrontation and no accountability.

- o DO NOT revisit decisions made by the board/group because an individual was not at the decision-making meeting. It is everyone's responsibility as a board member to make the organization their priority.
    - ▪ EFFECTIVE ORGANIZATIONS DON'T VIOLATE THE INTEGRITY OF THE GROUP THAT WORKED TOGETHER, EXPLORED ISSUES TOGETHER, AND MADE DECISIONS TOGETHER. Don't revisit group decisions because of one or a few members who didn't attend the decision-making meeting.
- <u>Committees may research and talk</u>, but then they come to the board for extensive conversation, which helps produce good decision-making.
- <u>Decision-making doesn't end with the choice</u>. Then it's time for action. Someone is designated to implement the decision, to take action. Without action there is no decision-making.
- **Accountability—How do you ensure that an individual, board member or staff, is accountable? How do you ensure that the group, board or committee, is accountable?**

3. CONFLICT IS INEVITABLE
- It's part of all human interaction and certainly part of group decision-making.
- Conflict is healthy. It helps keep a group lively and alive. Yet organizations struggle to avoid conflict. Many staff see dissent as a challenge to management's authority. Too many volunteers avoid disagreement as through it were an affront to politeness.
- Dissent helps your organization explore issues, create understanding, develop mutual respect, and learn.
- For change to work, people have to let go of the current reality and accept a new vision. They have to envision the way things are supposed to be in the changed organization.
- Mistakes are painful when they happen, but years later, a collection of mistakes is what is called experiences. Make mistakes. Try new things, innovate, and make more mistakes.

4. HAVE A STRATEGIC PLAN THAT INCLUDES:
   a. Why the organization matters, and what results it produces that make a difference.
   b. Where the organization is going and why in that direction.
   c. How it will get there by doing what.
   d. How much it will cost.
   e. How it all first in with community needs and priorities.
   f. How the organization fits in with other groups in the community.
   g. Who might be interested in the needs met and results produced.
- And that contains clearly articulated:
   a. Statement of values and mission
   b. Description of future vision
   c. Goals (program and infrastructure) for the duration of the plan (3-5 years)
   d. Indicators of success
   e. Strategies or action steps to achieve goals

      f. General time frames and key assignments of responsibility

      g. Multiyear financial projections and/or narrative explaining the financial approach

      h. Process to monitor progress, evaluate performance, and extend the plan.

- Great planning processes engage other volunteers, not just those that serve on the board. All board committees should include nonboard members. A really great development planning process engages donors, prospects and even predisposed.
- **<u>NOTE</u>**: would it be useful to have some retired board members do a "finance white paper" describing past financial trends for WPWA (organizational and functional). Laura, Dante and Harold as leads? Chris must be engaged as lead staff person.

5. BOARD DEVELOPMENT

- Too frequently we ask before people are ready. We invite people to join our boards before they are comfortable with our institution. We even set future direction of the organization without engaging constituents in the dialogue.
- Board members need to understand and commit to such service <u>prior to being nominated</u> to serve. This should be a function of the board development committee. Service should then be enforced by the board and/or relevant committees, and board members that don't or can't fulfill service obligations should resign. Each board member should:

      a. Help identify and cultivate relationships in diverse communities to support the organization as donors, volunteers and advocates.

      b. Give an annual financial contribution to the best of personal ability.

      c. Consider the organization one of your top two or three charitable commitments.

      d. Participate in fund development by taking on various tasks tailored to your comfort and skills.