

# **WPWA FUND-RAISING PLAN**

25 June 2009

## **FRAMEWORK**

This Wood-Pawcatuck Watershed Association Fund-Raising Plan (Plan) shall be part of WPWA's strategic plan and it shall be tied directly to WPWA's annual budget and shall be updated annually at the time that the new budget is prepared for the forthcoming year. The Plan and the Budget shall be directly linked at two key points:

1. The annual Budget projects the revenue needed by WPWA for the forthcoming year. This projection includes revenue expected from internal sources such as various accounts and the house rental. The revenue projected by the Budget to be derived from all sources other than the aforementioned internal sources shall become the income goal for the annual Plan.
2. The annual Budget and the Plan shall utilize the same donor sectors, as follows: Membership; Annual Fund Appeal; Business and Corporate Giving; Major Gifts from Individuals; Foundation Grants; Government Grants and Contracts, and Planned Giving. The funding goal set for each donor sector in the Plan, which shall be based on the revenue received from each donor sector in the previous Budget, shall become the income projection for each donor sector in the annual Budget.
3. WPWA's fund-raising activities shall be conducted under the aegis and leadership of the Fund-Raising Committee (Committee), which shall be a three-or-more-member standing committee of the Board of Trustees (the Board) appointed by the President from volunteers. The Committee shall be staffed by the WPWA staff working under the direction of the Executive Director (ED).

## **GENERAL**

1. All Board members are expected to contribute to WPWA's fund-raising activities, either by participating in one or more of its fund-raising activities, or by making direct resource contributions. Participation may take the form of: a) make fund-raising phone calls or write fund-raising letters; b) meet personally with individual, corporate or institutional potential donors to raise money; c) organize or sponsor or help organize or sponsor one or more individual fund-raising activities or programs; d) help run one or more of them, or, e) make other types of contributions, to include, but not be limited to the preparation or contribution of foods and other refreshments for parties. Resource contributions shall consist of financial donations that are larger than the average individual donation or very significant contributions of time. Trustees who are not Committee members should notify the ED of how he or she would like to participate.
2. The Board Development Committee (BDC) shall actively seek to recruit Board members who have fund-raising experience and are willing and capable of raising large sums of money, or who are willing to make fund-raising phone calls or meet with individual, corporate or institutional potential donors to raise money. It shall be a top priority objective of the BDC to develop a Board which has, at all times, at least one member who has fund-raising experience or who is able and willing to try to raise large sums of

money. It shall also be a priority objective of the BDC to develop a Board which always has at least three members who are willing to make fund-raising phone calls or meet with the aforementioned potential donors to raise money. All candidates interviewed by the BDC for Board membership shall be informed that some sort of fund-raising activity, such as described above, is expected of all members, and all candidates shall be queried concerning the type of fund-raising activity they would be interested in participating in.

## **MEMBERSHIP**

According to the 2007 US Census population estimates, there are 49,603 households in Washington County; the county includes Narragansett, which is not in the watershed, and North Kingstown, only a small sliver of which is in the watershed. The watershed includes much of West Greenwich and some of East Greenwich, towns that are not in Washington County, as well as North Stonington and parts of Stonington and Voluntown in Connecticut. Cause & Effect estimates that approximately 31,200 of the households in Washington County have annual income of more than \$50,000 and therefore probably have the capacity to purchase an individual or family membership in WPWA. Jonathan W. Howard of Cause & Effect, says that an ambitious membership target for WPWA in Washington County would be approximately 1,000 households or about 3.2 percent of the county's households.

1. WPWA's 10-year membership goal shall be the enrollment of two percent of households in the watershed with an annual income of at least \$75,000. The ED shall develop a table containing an estimate, based on the latest US Census data, of the number of such households in each municipality in the watershed. The ED shall, by September, 2009 develop annual targets for increasing membership on a town-by-town basis that are designed to achieve the 10-year membership enrollment goal. Cause & Effect says that a fund-raising industry rule-of-thumb is that four percent of the households that are asked to become members will actually do so. Households can be asked more than once.
2. The ED shall undertake to acquire names of potential new members from Board and staff members, volunteers, other individuals and available lists maintained by organizations in the watershed. Whenever the ED acquires 50 new names, or monthly, whichever comes first, the President and ED shall send personally-addressed letters to each new potential member describing WPWA, setting forth the advantages of membership and asking that they join. The ED shall report to the Board annually concerning this effort.
3. The ED shall report to the Board by the end of September, 2009 concerning the availability and cost of commercial lists of households in the watershed containing annual income data. The Board should consider the feasibility of purchasing such lists.
4. Research endorsed by the Association of Fund Raising Professionals demonstrates that NGO members and others who have previously donated to the organization, in general, increase their level of giving if they are thanked for their previous financial support. Therefore, every April, in preparation for the annual membership drive, those Trustees who volunteer to do so, shall each telephone at least 10 WPWA members from a list prepared by the ED of those members who were the largest donors the previous year. Members will not be asked for money during these calls which will be made for the sole purpose of thanking donors for their past support and to chat very briefly about WPWA's

objectives and principal current activities. The ED shall also make as many such phone calls as possible. Every effort must be made to personally chat with the member being called and to avoid leaving voice messages. These calls must be completed before the annual membership renewal letters are mailed in May. The mailing of personally-addressed letters, signed by the ED and the president, thanking members for their past support shall be coordinated by the ED with the fund-raising phone calls.

5. Annually in May, personally addressed membership renewal letters signed by the ED and the President shall be mailed to all active members.
6. At the same time, a personally addressed appeal letter to rejoin WPWA and signed by the ED and the President shall be mailed to everyone who had been a member of WPWA within the past 10 years.
7. Within six weeks, the ED shall mail and/or e-mail personally-addressed reminders to active and former members provided e-mail can be used together with mail in such a way that the attendant work-load and cost decreases. In 2009, e-mail addresses for 30-50% of members were available. In 2009, the ED shall develop a procedure to combine e-mailing and mailing reminders to all current and former members, as appropriate and possible, provided the cost and workload of sending them out decreases. Efforts to acquire e-mail addresses for current and former members shall continue.
8. Within one month of the adoption of this Plan the ED shall address the need, the practicability, and the economic feasibility of acquiring new software to a) improve the management of WPWA's current lists; and b) that would enable WPWA to easily merge its lists with newly acquired lists.

## **ANNUAL GENERAL FUND APPEAL**

1. By mid-November of every year, a personally-addressed letter signed by the President and the ED shall be mailed to the broadest possible list of donors, active members or not, individuals, businesses and corporations in and out of the watershed, that briefly reviews the year's achievements by WPWA and appeals for financial assistance.
2. After the general fund appeal has been mailed, those Trustees who volunteer to do so shall each telephone at least 10 appeal letter recipients who they know personally, if possible, in order to ask them to give to WPWA, and that they increase the amount they gave the previous year by whatever amount, however small. The ED shall also phone as many letter recipients as possible.
3. It has been shown by research by the Association of Fund Raising Professionals that donors who are personally thanked immediately after receipt of their donation, usually give more the next time. Therefore, every person who donates \$50.00 or more in response to the general fund appeal should be personally thanked by telephone by a Trustee, if possible, or by the ED, within 36 hours of the donation's receipt. A mechanism to coordinate thank-you phone calls will be developed and implemented by the ED.

4. By mid-December of every year, a personally-addressed reminder signed by the President and the ED shall be mailed and/or e-mailed to the aforementioned list subject to the cost and work-load restrictions stipulated in ¶4, MEMBERSHIP.
5. After two cycles of conducting the annual fund appeal as set forth in ¶s 1 and 2 above, the ED shall report to the Board concerning the productivity of mailing the annual fund appeal letter in mid-November followed by a reminder in mid-December.

## **BUSINESSES IN THE WATERSHED**

1. The Committee, assisted by the ED, shall, in 2009, assemble a list of at least 20 businesses, including professional organizations such as law offices and doctors' offices, located in the watershed, that are not now members or donors, to whom annual funding appeals can be sent. Names shall be obtained from directories, board and staff members, tax rolls and other sources. This list of businesses shall be expanded in future years to be as comprehensive as possible consistent with considerations of practicability and fund-raising success.
2. The ED shall assist the Committee develop and implement a program under which appeal letters signed by the President and the ED will be written to 10 of the aforementioned new businesses and personal telephone calls will be made by members of the Committee to the other 10, both approaches to be made at the time of the Annual General Fund Appeal.
3. By the first week of December a personally addressed reminder signed by the President and the ED shall be mailed and/or e-mailed to the new list of businesses subject to the cost and work-load restrictions stipulated in ¶4, MEMBERSHIP.
4. The ED shall report annually to the Board concerning this undertaking, and in particular, the comparative success of written vs. personal appeals.

## **CORPORATIONS**

For the most part, WPWA does not have an active corporate fund-raising program. Within four months of adoption of this Plan, the Committee with the assistance of the ED, shall identify five Rhode Island corporations to be targeted for donations of \$1,000 or more annually. Each of the corporations identified shall be contacted by letter signed by the ED and the President and approached personally by the ED accompanied, by a Committee member. In the future, a list of corporate donors shall be maintained and the donors on the list shall be regularly and actively cultivated by the Committee assisted by the ED. Furthermore, going forward, the Committee assisted by the ED will actively endeavor to expand the list of regular corporate donors. The ED shall in December 2009 report to the Board concerning his efforts to develop a list of corporate donors and the resulting level of corporate giving. In the future, the ED shall report to the Board concerning the maintenance and expansion of the list of corporations targeted for donations.

***NOTE: This activity, while remaining a permanent part of this Plan, shall not be implemented in 2009 because the economic recession minimizes the potential financial return for effort expended.***

## **INDIVIDUALS (MAJOR GIFTS)**

WPWA's fund-raising activities targeted to individuals has been erratic and off and on over the years, but substantial funding has been received from a few individual donors. WPWA must make an effort to regularize and systematize its fund-raising targeted to affluent individuals and potential major-gift donors. For the purposes of this Plan, major gifts are defined as gifts of more than \$250.00. According to Cause & Effect, about four good prospects are needed for each successful major gift.

1. Therefore, an effort must be undertaken, upon adoption of this Plan, to develop a list of affluent individuals resident in the watershed who have not been major donors to WPWA in the past. The Committee with the assistance of other Trustees, if available, shall assist the ED in the development of such a list.
2. When a potential major gift donor or affluent individual has been identified, he/she shall be contacted by letter signed by the ED and the President.
3. A personal appointment involving a Trustee volunteer and/or the ED shall be scheduled ASAP with each potential major gift donor, if possible. The personal visit should include an informative brochure describing WPWA's mission and the programs and activities.
4. The ED shall maintain an updated list of individuals in this category, whether or not they donate, and will annually undertake to expand the list in succeeding years.

## **FAMILY FOUNDATIONS**

WPWA has received very significant levels of funding from two family foundations located in the watershed, the Horace A. Kimball Foundation and the Lattner Family Foundation.

- 1 The WPWA shall not fail to apply annually to each of these foundations, during each foundation's regular grant application cycle and shall report to the Board concerning these grant applications.
2. It is critically important that the Committee and the ED ensure that the Kimball and Lattner Foundations are kept fully up to date concerning WPWA's programs and activities and how the funding provided by each foundation is being spent. The President and the ED should seek to meet with representatives of each foundation at least twice annually in a variety of venues in order to keep them fully briefed. The ED shall report to the Board concerning these activities.
3. The Committee should make every effort, with the assistance of the ED to expand the number of family foundations that can be relied upon as regular financial supporters of WPWA's policies and programs. Specifically, the Committee shall seek support from the

Chafee Family Foundation during 2009. It shall be the objective of the WPWA to expand its list of donor family foundations by one every year.

## **MAJOR FOUNDATIONS**

1. Within three months of the adoption of this Plan the Committee, with the assistance of the ED, shall develop a list of 10 foundations, focusing on Rhode Island, Connecticut and New England foundations, that can be approached for operational, programmatic, or project financial support during their current or next funding cycle. This effort shall include a review of all foundations that have provided funding in the past and all foundations that have been approached but did not provide funding. Publications listing foundations and web sites listing sources of foundation giving for environmental NGO's shall be principal resources for the development of a foundations list.
2. Once a list of 10 foundations whose articulated funding policies identify either the environment or the New England geographical area, the ED, with the assistance of the Committee, shall submit grant requests to each.
3. The ED shall submit grant requests to at least 10 foundations annually.

## **GOVERNMENT/NGO's**

The federal government has become a major source of large grants to recent and current WPWA projects. The National Resource Conservation Service (NRCS) and the US Fish and Wildlife Service (USFWS) have provided a total of \$472,000 directly to the Shannock Fishway Restoration Project. Another \$35,000 in federal funds have been contributed to the Shannock Project by Save the Bay and Trout Unlimited. Furthermore, the Switch Road Public Access Project received about \$24,000 in direct federal funding and another \$60,000 in federal transportation monies through RIDOT. NRCS and USFWS also provided a total of another \$86,000 to the Bradford Fish Ladder Project.

1. The WPWA shall continue its successful practice of seeking grants and contracts from Federal and State agencies. The ED and the Committee, with the assistance of the RI Rivers Council and national organizations dedicated to the support of watershed groups and environmental NGO's, shall aggressively seek contract or grant funding from Federal government agencies. The ED and the Committee shall continue to cooperate with and participate in the RI Land and Water Partnership to optimize fund-raising potential.
2. The WPWA should continue to maintain its active involvement with, and close relationship to the RI Rivers Council, the RI Coastal Resources Management Council, and the RI Department of Environmental Management in order to remain positioned for the receipt of available State funding.

## **PLANNED GIVING**

The WPWA shall establish in 2009 a gift-planning program under which arrangements will be developed so future gifts can be made in various formats and various forms, including cash, various types of securities, or real property.

1. As a first step toward development of a gift planning program, WPWA will invite an expert on planned giving to make a presentation to the Board, either at a regular business meeting or a special board meeting before September, 2009.
2. The next step will be the establishment of a Legacy Society. Within one month of the Board's introduction to planned giving, the President and the ED shall send a joint letter inviting a selection of WPWA's most loyal members and supporters to join the Legacy Society with a view toward creating a Society with 15 founding members. They will be invited to a presentation by an expert of how they can make or plan for future gifts to WPWA. In order to join the Legacy Society, a donor must pledge to make a future bequest or other gift to WPWA.
3. Once the Legacy Society has been established with at least 15 members who have pledged to make planned gifts, the President, the Committee and the ED will host it at a special party only for Society members which shall become an annual event.
4. The Committee and the ED shall thereafter strive to annually increase the membership of the Legacy Society.

## **FUND RAISING EVENTS**

1. WPWA should conduct a special fund-raising event during the warm season in a venue such as the garden of Ed and Linda Wood, where guests would be served wine and nibbles to hear a speaker or speakers concerning critical environmental issues. The Committee would take the lead organizing and running such events, or work with a reliable volunteer to do so. It is important that contributions be solicited from all guests, either before or after the event.
2. A small gathering of best donors and most loyal members and volunteers should be held at a Watershed location that WPWA has helped protect, been involved with, or that is particularly important ecologically. There would be a speaker who addresses WPWA's site-related action or an issue relevant to the ecology of the site
3. WPWA should consider an annual fund-raising house party where refreshments would be served and a well-known speaker would be invited to speak to the guests concerning an issue of concern.
4. WPWA should hold at least one party at a Board member's home to thank major contributors. No overt fund-raising activity would be conducted at this event. The Committee would organize and run events such as enumerated in ¶s 2 and 3 with the assistance of the ED.

## **OTHER SPECIAL ACTIVITIES**

WPWA had very limited fund-raising success in the past with the several Pawcatuck River rowing regattas it sponsored. Participation was enthusiastic, but only a few hundred dollars in entry fees were ever raised by each event while an enormous amount of time was required to organize and run them.

WPWA's fund-raising experience with its wet paint art auctions held for a number of years at the Carolina Mill was also qualified. The events were successful and well attended, with several grossing more than \$10,000 each, but never netting more than \$7,000 for WPWA. The amount of staff time needed to put them together was crushing.

It is fair to say that, based on the experiences cited above and on others as well, special events such as these, are not worth the trouble **as fund raisers**. They generate very small amounts of money for the staff time involved. Such events are best held for their promotional or educational value but not for their fund-raising productivity.

1. WPWA recently cooperated with, and participated in the Hop Arts festival. An estimated total of five hours of staff time were expended on preparations for our participation, partially in the expectation of attracting new members or funding. While WPWA generated a \$350.00 fiscal agency fee from Hop Arts, there is no record that our participation resulted in either a single new member or new donations. However, provided the use of staff time remains minimal, WPWA should continue to participate in Hop Arts as a means of broadening public exposure and connecting with an important part of the community.
2. Before sponsoring an event such as a kayak race, a fishing derby, or something similar to the aforementioned, **as a fund-raising event**, the ED should seek to determine the amount of time to put the event together against the projected amount of money they will raise. Thirty hours spent writing grants or meeting with Corporate charitable giving officers will unquestionably raise more money than the 30 or more hours that will be spent putting on one of these events. These events have value beyond their fund-raising potential and may be better held for purposes other than fund-raising.

## **UTILIZATION OF CAMPUS**

The ED should explore the fund-raising potential to be derived from renting our facilities to local and other organizations for functions.

1. Care must be taken that stringent guidelines and regulations must be established and strictly enforced to prevent any damage to WPWA buildings, facilities and grounds. At minimum, all costs incurred in the renting of WPWA facilities must be paid by the renter unless specifically and previously waived by the Board. The ED must diligently guard against such activities becoming money losers rather than money raisers.

## **WEB SITE**

The new web site should be designed to optimize the marketing of the organization by attracting as much traffic as possible to the web site, heightening WPWA's public profile, and maximizing fund-raising capabilities.



## **LITERATURE**

WPWA should publish an attractive, impressive-looking brochure that can be used when appealing to businesses and corporations. The brochure should describe WPWA's mission, our major accomplishments, set forth future objectives and list our major donors and donations of the past three to five years and it should have attractive graphics. The ED, with the assistance of the Committee should review all the existing printed literature currently published by WPWA.

ACTIVITY		LEADERSHIP	EXECUTION	SUPPORT	COMPLETION	ANNUAL EST. STAFF TIME
<b>MEMBERSHIP</b>						
1	Membership Expansion	Ex. Dir.	Staff	-----	On-Going	8 hours
2	Name Acquisition	F.R. Com. Chair	Exec. Dir.	Staff	Thru-Out Year	4 hours
3	Commercial List Review	Ex. Dir.	Staff	-----	30 Sept. 2009	3 hours
4	Thank-You Calls	F.R. Com. Chair	Trustee Volunteers	ED+Staff	30 April Annually	18 hours
5	Membership Renewals	Ex. Dir.	Staff.	-----	15 May Annually	8 hours
6	Rejoin Membership	Ex. Dir.	Staff	-----	15 May Annually	7 hours
7	Membership Reminders	Ex. Dir.	Staff		30 June Annually	9 hours
8	Software Analysis	President	Exec. Dir.	Staff	31 July 2009	3 hours
<b>ANNUAL GENERAL FUND APPEAL</b>						
1	Appeal Letter	F.R. Com. Chair	Pres + Ex. Dir.	Staff	15 Nov. Annually	8 hours
2	Appeal Phone Calls	President	Trustee Volunteers	ED+Staff	20-30 Nov Annually	12 hours
3	Thank You Phone Calls	Ex. Dir.	Trustee Volunteers	Staff	Scheduled by ED	12 hours
4	Appeal Reminder Letter	Ex. Dir.	Staff		15 Dec Annually	8 hours
5	Appeal Analysis	President	Ex. Dir.	Staff	Jan 2011 Bd Mtg	3 hours
<b>BUSINESSES IN THE WATERSHED</b>						
1	Compile Names of Businesses	F.R. Com. Chair	Ex Dir	Staff	1 Oct Annually	3 hours
2	Pgm. of Calls & Ltrs. to Businesses	F.R. Com. Chair	Pres, F.R. Com+ ED	Staff	1-15 Nov Annually	4 hours
3	Reminder Letters	F.R. Com. Chair	Ex. Dir.	Staff	10 Dec Annually	5 hours
4	Ex. Dir's. Report & Analysis to Board	President	Ex. Dir.	Staff	Jan Bd Mtg Ann	3 hours
<b>CORPORATIONS (DEFERRED IN 2009)</b>						

ACTIVITY		LEADERSHIP	EXECUTION	SUPPORT	COMPLETION	ANNUAL EST. STAFF TIME
<b>INDIVIDUALS (MAJOR GIFTS)</b>						
1	Compile List of Individuals	F.R. Com.	ED+Trustee Volunteers	ED+Staff	Thru-Out Year	4 hours
2	Appeal Letter to Individual	F.R. Com. Chair	Pres. + Ex. Dir.	Staff	≤ 30 Days of ¶1	3 hours
3	Personal Appointment if Possible	Pres+F.R. Com Chair	Pres. + Ex. Dir.	Staff	ASAP After ¶2	8 hours
4	Maintenance of Updated List	F.R. Com. Chair	Ex. Dir.	Staff	Thru Out Year	2 hour
<b>FAMILY FOUNDATIONS</b>						
1	Apply to Lattner & Kimball Annually	F.R. Com. Chair	Ex. Dir.	Staff	Grant Deadline	7 hours
2	Meet With & Brief Lattner & Kimball	F.R. Com. Chair	Ex. Dir.	Staff	≥ Twice Annually	7 hours
3	Increase Family Foundation Support; Explore Chafee Foundation	F.R. Com. Chair	Ex. Dir.	Staff	Thru-Out Year	4 hours
<b>MAJOR FOUNDATIONS</b>						
1	Compile List of Foundations	F.R. Com. Chair	Ex. Dir.	Staff	30 Sept 2009	4 hours
2	Write Grant Proposals to Each	F.R. Com. Chair	Ex. Dir.	Staff	Grant Deadline	20 hours
3	Continued Aggressive Grant Writing	F.R. Com. Chair	Ex. Dir.	Staff	Same As ¶s1 & 2	N/A
<b>GOVERNMENT/NGOS</b>						
1	Seek & Write Govt. Grants & Contracts	F.R. Com. + Ex. Dir.	Ex. Dir.	Staff	On-Going Annually	45 hours
2	Maintain Organizational Network	President	Ex. Dir.	Staff	On-Going Annually	40 hours
<b>PLANNED GIVING</b>						
1	Expert Presentation to Board	President	Ex. Dir.	Staff	30 Sept. 2009	1 hour
2	Establishment of Legacy Society	Pres. + F.R. Com.	Pres. + Ex. Dir.	Staff	31 Oct 2009	2 hours
3	Legacy Society Briefing/Party(ies)	F.R. Com. Chair	Ex. Dir.	Staff	Jan-Feb 2010	6 hours

ACTIVITY		LEADERSHIP	EXECUTION	SUPPORT	COMPLETION	ANNUAL EST. STAFF TIME
4	Expand Legacy Society Membership	Pres + F.R. Com	Ex. Dir.	Staff	On-Going Annually	3 hours
<b>FUND RAISING EVENTS</b>						
1	Outdoor Fund Raising Event	Pres. + F.R. Com.	F.R. Com + Volunteer	ED+Staff	June-Sept Annually	12 hours
2	Small Site Gathering	Pres + Ex. Dir	F.R. Com.		May - Oct Annually	12 hours
3	Fund Raising House Party	Pres. + F.R. Com.	F.R. Com + Volunteer	ED+Staff	Sept-Mar Annually	12 hours
4	Big Donors Thank You Party	Pres. + F.R. Com.	Ex. Dir.	Staff	Sept-Mar Annually	12 hours
<b>OTHER SPECIAL ACTIVITIES</b>						
1	Schedule Hop Arts Participation	Ex. Dir.	Staff		As Appropriate	3 hours
2	Analysis of Proposed Special Event	President	Ex. Dir.	Staff	As Appropriate	2 hours
<b>UTILIZATION OF CAMPUS</b>						
1	Develop Guidelines and Regulations	President	Ex. Dir.	Staff	As Appropriate	3 hours
<b>WEB SITE</b>						
	Optimize Web Site for Marketing	Web Site Committee	Ex. Dir.	Staff	Coordinate With Website Comm.	8 hours
<b>LITERATURE</b>						
	Develop Fund-Raising Brochure(s)	Pres+F.R. Com Chair	Ex. Dir.	Staff	12/31/09 & on	18 hours