



2019 Board Retreat Planning session

January 29, 2019 12:00 – 1:30PM

Portland Downtown office

549 Congress Street

Board members present: Kim Volk, Kim Farrar, Denine Leeman, Bob Keegan, Sue-Ellen McClain

Guest: Mary Budd, Starboard Leadership Consulting

Staff present: Casey Gilbert, Amy Geren, Adam MacDonald, Taffy Eaton

Minute 1. Welcome, background and introductions. Casey welcomed everyone and reminded those present that we are in year 4 of our current Strategic Plan and it is time to begin planning for the next 5-year plan. Casey discovered a document which outlines the Guiding Principles of PD (while going through some files in the basement!) and they seem to be a good place to start. The Board might want to consider whether the current VEGA (Vitality, Experience, Growth and Advocacy) should remain the pillars of the Strategic Plan or do they want to consider making changes?

- Introductions were made along with what company they represent and some background on each Board member's history with PD
- Mary commented that she is very impressed with the current Strategic Plan. She hopes to help keep the new plan aligned with the PD mission and vision. The scope of the planning process is yet to take shape.

Minute 2. Outline of retreat: Mary asked for a basic outline and timeline

A. Tuesday Feb. 12th, 1 – 5PM

- Mary would like to address Mission and Vision statements.
- Kim Volk reminded us that it is the Property Owner that we are working for. Mary added that we might need to add the “for whom” part to the Mission Statement.
- Amy added that PD is a 501c4
- Kim Farrar added that promoting tourism is essentially an attempt to bring people downtown. We don't need to do that any longer, as people are coming in droves. Casey added that Visit Portland is the organization responsible for tourism promotion.
- Adam mentioned that “Clean, Safe and Vibrant” is our focus. The current Mission Statement is a little broad – seemingly like we are doing everything for everybody. It needs to be clarified.
- Denine said that we are here to benefit the whole downtown and users of downtown. Building owners benefit when their suites are full, the streets are clean and parking is available.
- Casey added that PD has 3 purposes according to the original Article of Incorporation.
 - i. To represent the business, cultural, and residential community in the on-going development and management of downtown Portland;
 - ii. To create a safer, cleaner, well-managed downtown area so that Portland can successfully compete as an environment in which to live, do business, shop, and visit;
 - iii. To stimulate commercial, retail, tourist, and cultural activities through improved marketing and promotional initiatives, which enhance the image of downtown Portland.

Things were very different downtown when the Original Articles of Incorporation were written. The original Bylaws were written when PD was incorporated.

- Sue-Ellen McClain agreed that the verbiage needs changing, not the actual statement. Maybe change “tourism” to “visitors”. Mary added that the conversation with the Board is about “who” PD serves.

B. Wednesday Feb. 13th, 8:00AM – 12:00PM. Mary will coordinate the conversation throughout the morning, allowing time at the end for wrap-up.

C. Casey reminded Mary that staff is here to assist Mary in any way she needs

Minute 3. Vision – Mary said that the Vision is what it looks like once the mission has been achieved. 3-5 sentences. The Vision should be the grandest idea of what's possible. It should be a wide brushstroke and can also be your elevator pitch. Mary suggests showing Board members what has been accomplished on the current Strategic Plan. Staff will put together a presentation for the retreat. Board members can brainstorm at the retreat but are not being asked to write the Vision Statement.

Minute 4. VEGA – Kim Volk would like to grow the capacity of the current footprint and the support needed to maintain the footprint.

- Sue-Ellen McClain thinks Growth is not the current word to describe “improving the delivery of services” type of progress. If we include “Growth”, how do we define it? It suggests geographic growth. Mary suggested it will be an aspect of PD’s work. Kim Farrar suggested we deemphasize “growth”, use “evolving” instead.
- Casey reminded everyone that we are limited by our budget, so there will be natural constraints as to what we can do.
- Mary reminded everyone that a Strategic Plan is more overarching and that an Annual Action Plan should be developed to support the Strategic Plan initiatives
- Denine suggested that since we are different than 5 years ago, we do not need to keep VEGA
- Kim Volk suggested we continue reaching out to Property Owners about what PD does. The 2017 Annual report was the first effective communication to Property Owners.
- Sue-Ellen McClain added that maybe “Outreach” becomes a pillar.
- Denine noted that Amy’s position was specifically designed to reach out to Property Owners.
- Adam added that PD is a very misunderstood organization. It’s hard to explain what PD does because we are involved in every facet of downtown.
- Denine reminded everyone that the building owners on the incorporation documents got involved because downtown needed help in 1992.
- Casey added that Property Owners come together to invest money in downtown because they want to and need to. We wouldn’t have planters, banners and other downtown beautification if not for PD but people think it’s the City’s investment and execution.
- Adam added that PD is an events heavy organization. Are the events in service to the mission? People see PD as the producer of Old Port Festival, Merry Madness, Downtown Worker Appreciation Day, etc rather than all of our clean and safe programs.
- Sue-Ellen McClain suggested that communication, outreach and education should be a focus of the new Strategic Plan.
- Casey added that the Board should look closely at events and programs to determine if they are all viable, in-line with our mission and producing the outcomes that we want.
- Sue-Ellen McClain believes that of the current 4 Strategic Plan categories, Advocacy and Experience should remain. We should discuss Vitality because that encompasses events. Perhaps eliminate Growth or make it a sub-section of another.

Casey thanked everyone for attending and adjourned the meeting at 1:35.

Respectfully submitted,
Taffy Eaton, Recorder