

Board Retreat – August 27, 2017 – Natasha and Pete, Facilitators

Present: Cody Whittle, Gary Siegwarth, Joleen Jansen, Bruce Blair, Chris Grau, Daryl Landsgard, Daryl Bruxvoort, Pat Grau, Sandy Caya

Action Items:

1. **Finalize external vision statement** (Remember, this statement may evolve as the organization grows and changes. You all came up with great nuggets of vision yesterday. Task a board member with combining these bits into a concise vision statement and have them bring the statement to the full board for feedback and eventual approval.)
2. **Digitize your bylaws so they can be shared and edited** (again, your bylaws should work for your organization and accurately represent your structure, but they are also flexible and meant to evolve with the organization. Update your bylaws with the current mission/vision statements, board composition, and committee structure. Have the full board review and give feedback to the bylaws and then share the approved bylaws in the google drive so that any board member can access them.)
3. **Transform CCCAN's activities into SMART Goals** (Have a fundraiser coming up? What a perfect opportunity to make a SMART Goal! One great benefit of SMART Goals that we didn't get to cover at the workshop is that they can be a great tool for organizational sustainability -- if someone develops a SMART Goal for this year's fundraiser and tracks the progress and success in achieving that goal, someone else could easily pickup and run the CCCAN fundraiser for 2018 based on their notes. I have attached a SMART goal template that might be helpful for board members and committees. **Pete & I would recommend that committees develop SMART Goals to to guide their work, and that the Board approve and request updates on Committee SMART Goals.**)

A few takeaways:

- CCCAN has good people and purpose in spades. Now it's time to develop the practices, procedures, and policies to strategically direct those people to work together toward a clearly stated common vision.
- **Recognize and use your strengths as a board and build partnerships to reach goals that require expertise outside of your wheelhouse.** (One example might be hosting field days -- a fine idea, and one that CCCAN has no experience executing. Why not partner with PFI to support a farmer field day rather than reinventing the wheel?)
- **Once you have developed SMART goals it will be important to prioritize them as a board.** Using the mission and vision statements for CCCAN you should be able to evaluate each SMART Goal to decide how well it fits with the organization. What goals are most relevant to CCCAN's work? Start with some low hanging fruit -- goals that are clear and achievable within a reasonable timeline. It might help to select a handful of short term goals and a couple of larger, multi-stage long-term goals. **It is ok to say no to projects! You are an all volunteer board and must be mindful of a realistic workload**

for board members who have full-time jobs; be mindful of distraction from your key goals and overburdening your board members. A fully developed SMART Goal that doesn't fit for 2017 could go into a folder and have greater relevancy a year or two down the line.

And finally, 5 Keys to Nonprofit Success:

1. *Clear Mission and Purpose* - The nonprofit should communicate its mission clearly to all its stakeholders—board, staff, donors, volunteers, partners, and the general public—so that everyone understands its goals and works toward a common purpose. All the nonprofit's programs and operations should be aligned to advance its mission.
2. *Ability to Perform Essential Functions* - Effective nonprofits are able to perform essential functions necessary to fulfill their missions. The authors of *How Effective Nonprofits Work* cite six essential functions:

- Communicate vision and mission -
- Engage and seek stakeholders' input in designing programs, including people who use its services, and serve its target community appropriately
- **Achieve results and track impact against a few key measures, at least through basic means**
- **Manage an active and informed governance structure**
- **Secure resources appropriate to its needs**
- **Plan for the future**

A seventh function is key to effectiveness: making it part of the organization's culture to evolve its programs and operations as it learns from stakeholders, from its assessment of impact, and from new knowledge in its field. In short, the nonprofit should be a learning organization.

3. ***Strong practices, procedures and policies; specifically to***
 - **regulate finance (e.g. yearly audits, financial statements, regular budgets and cash flow statements, range of financial support (both individual donors/grants/etc))**
 - **governance (e.g. strong leadership, board meetings scheduled in advance, regular and ongoing evaluation of programs)**
 - **organizational program development (e.g. a strategic plan is in use, client input is welcomed when offered and sought-after, demonstrated measurable outcomes)**
4. *Good People* - key resource to fulfill nonprofit missions: qualified, skilled, and talented board members, staff, and volunteers. Boards should be diverse, talent-rich, informed, responsible about stewardship, dedicated to the nonprofit and not their self-interest, and, above all, engaged. When nonprofits lack the resources and know-how to recruit and train effective board members, their governance, oversight, and leadership suffer

accordingly. In addition, the effectiveness of a nonprofit largely depends on employing an appropriate number of staff who are talented, adequately trained, and properly supported and compensated.

5. *Ability to Mobilize Others* - The ability to mobilize and engage volunteers, other nonprofits, businesses, and government agencies is an essential skill for nonprofits seeking to address the root causes of problems and bring about long-term change. Building awareness and support among key audiences and bringing more people and resources to the table are essential to change.