

Board Retreat Minutes

Greenville Forward Office

December 12th, 2008

Present: *Jim Burns, Curtis Harkness, David Johnstone, Josh Lane, Mellone Long, Sally Sarratt, Liz Seman, Gene Smith, David Johnstone, Allen Hamada, Mark Cothran, Deb Richardson-Moore*

Absent: *Baxter Wynn, Michelle Shain, Chandra Dillard, Ben Haskew, Kent Satterfield, Cristina Schliefer*

Staff: *Russell Stall, Brock Koonce*

Present: *66% Attendance*

The Board of Directors met for a few hours to review the past year and to develop a strategy for the coming year(s). The first part of the day focused on a review of the past year. Some of the key successes in the opinion of the board from the last year include:

Successes from the Past Year

- Release of the Health Assessment Study
- A successful Tomorrow Night Event
- Presentation of the Heroes Next Door
- Development of the Project Report Card
- Release of the Community Engagement Study
- Release of the Race Relations Study
- Development of a process to develop the Environmental Report Card
- Development of the Status of Women Report
- Continued presentations to the community through Russell speeches and talks
- Continued connections and being asked to "be at the table"

Improvement Areas. Areas the board believes we should place some emphasis in the next year.

- Improve communication in a variety of ways.
 - Who are we currently reaching? Who do we need to reach? Is there a disconnect?
 - GF has been successful with civic groups and have talked with most of them. It may be time for a new rotation and revisitation. We have not spoken with some of the groups for three years.
 - Start approaching homeowners associations and neighborhood associations. Explore other groups we need to be connected to.
 - Continue monthly newsletter.
- Improve press relations.
 - Continue to be the "go to people" with the press. When something of significance related to the vision, the press calls us first.
 - Should have consistent presence in the press.
 - Revisit the Greenville Magazine Vision Voice.
 - Talk to G about consistent articles.
- Build web presence and usage.
 - Continue with the calendar.
 - Continue to constantly change it and make it fresh.
- Improve community engagement with the vision.

- Explore ways to inspire emerging talent.
- Be the clearinghouse for volunteers, but not a Hands on Greenville. We don't want to manage daily projects.
- Engage Youth, especially high schoolers.
- Reengage the creators of the vision including creating an Advisory Board.
- Focus on individual projects to drive the Vision.
 - Better engage in individual vision projects.
 - Work better with other non profits in product implementation.
 - Identify projects to accomplish, then develop a strategic plan around them.
 - Help HOG create a volunteer network, especially with graduating class of Leadership Greenville.
 - Review the relationship with the non-profit alliance at the Chamber. Possibly become more involved.
- Increase diversity initiatives
 - Coordinate with Diversity Leadership Institute. Continue to build that relationship.
 - Build on diversity of the board and participants.
 - DLI engagement
- Improve governance
 - Create a policies and procedures manual and become more formal.
 - Review policies and procedures with all new board members
 - Create a board attendance policy.
- Explore Board committees
 - Board committees are really not necessary.
 - However, it makes sense that board members have emphasis areas.
- Create a board calendar for the year
 - Liz has a good model and will send it to us.
 - Every board meeting will have a different emphasis (e.g., January governance, February fundraising, etc.).
 - Present a task force report at every board meeting, a task force "spotlight."
 - Take board meetings to 1½ hours instead of 1 if necessary.
- Explore fundraising options and strategies.
 - \$1.2 million committed so far in the \$2.2 million goal. Pretty good.
 - Improve marketing and communications.
 - Expand beyond traditional people.
 - Emphasize importance of research projects.
 - Look into program and study sponsorships.
 - Awareness leads to ability to raise money.
 - GF needs to define our value to groups. What is the return on investment?
 - Fundraising events are not our thing. Events are great as awareness builders, but not to raise money to support the organization.
- Create a membership organization?
 - Gene and Liz agreed to serve on an advisory committee to explore membership options.
 - Need to look at a membership model now rather than farther down the road.
 - What do you get by joining the organization? Do we need to offer anything?
 - Do some research of the impact of membership models with other organizations.
- Create a board attendance policy.
 - The non profits on the board will send us their policies.
- Be more engaged in the comprehensive plans.
 - Help the plans develop priority investment areas
- Create an advisory board of directors.
 - They should be in front of 1-2 things a year
 - Educate them on the status of the vision
 - Provide wisdom and connectedness

Projects Greenville Forward Should Focus Upon

- Better involvement in comprehensive plans
- Transportation
 - Be a facilitator for GTA
 - Convene broad transportation plan
 - Look at impact on poor
 - Explore GSP rates and low cost carriers
 - Build awareness of non transportation users
- Greenspace protection and land bank protection
- Housing
- Central City Park
- Walking/Biking/Greenways
- Young talent engagement and high school
 - Continue and encourage Leadership Greenville relationship
 - Continue Youth Leadership Greenville relationship
- Improve corporate presentations
 - Inspire a USC Upstate Nonprofit class
 - Conduct "Lunch and Learns" among Greenville corporations

Other Ideas:

- Honestly explore the membership model
- Have the board volunteer and do things together
 - Sponsor a festival of trees tree
 - Sponsor a canstruction
- Build PR/Awareness/Communication
- Create health alliance
- Broaden talks to other areas
 - Build grassroots awareness