

## **2020 Western Meeting:**

5-12-10

### **Those in Attendance:**

Betsy Thammert, Mike MacDonald, Brant Henshaw, Tom Neilson, Kim Summer, Dani Shaw, Tim Hutchen, Jarad Knight, Ginger Pauley, Sari, Danielle Pinney, Karla, Michelle Branconier

1. What does your section need to make this a productive meeting?

Clarity, goals, progress, momentum, understanding of national expectations, and considering alternative options

Concrete next steps, things we can take back to build momentum, how we can all work better to streamline things

See roadmap for how we are moving forward, what has happened since LS, eager anticipation about starting change

More action steps versus visioning. Want to move.

Listen and hear and continue local momentum

Direction and benchmarks of progress

2. Since the Leadership Summit what has our section put into action, is excited about, or have done differently?

More comfort, buy in, but move forward – well maybe not everyone

Excitement about professional development

Changed by laws to bring in community members

Created new initiatives that are in line with growth strategies – leadership academy- environmental collaboration, state and local public policy efforts

Excitement around an educational event

What is national board holding itself accountable to – duty of care, duty of loyalty, and duty of obedience

How that looks in both places/national and section

(Pull my vision statement from my blog)

What motivates you? Fear? Possibilities? How does one balance the two?

**Threats:**

1. Reduce number of 990's
2. Noncompliance with accounting and reporting standards
3. Noncompliance with labor codes
4. Uncontrolled internal competition for resources
5. Noncompliance with program delivery standards

**Testing Assumptions with two primary models:**

1. Independents – New York
2. Roll ups- Southeast

Art asked, "How does the model work here? " What does that suggest? A third model?

Many questions: what is the difference between separately incorporated with IRS determination and those that share ACA's determination. What does that mean in terms of taxes? Independence?

**Tensions:**

Definition of camp

Centralized versus decentralized versus networked and distributed leadership

**What did we hear Peg say?**

There are people who know who we are

Build on what we hear from others – relevancy, looking outside, marketing strengths

Opportunities exceed resources

Alignment in a lot of different areas – key phrases and concepts

Didn't hear how we take those messages back to the membership

Acknowledge resources but seek out the resources of others to leverage impact – shared mission

**Reports out on Strengths:**

Strengths:

Evergreen and Oregon

1. Passionate members
2. Culture of cooperation
3. Good communication with members

#### SoCal

1. Staff support
2. Education calendar
3. Other training organizations
4. Boost, parks and rec
5. Nimble
6. Responsive to new needs
7. Ability to be mobile

#### Rocky Mountain

1. Friendly open and engaging
2. Good track record
3. Sharing
4. Good state and local relationships

Who is coming: 80% members, 20% others, front line staff, specialty staff,

#### NoCal

1. Strong capacity and desire not to be trapped by definition of camp
2. Collaboration and reaching out very strong
3. Generative board and commitment to growth strategies
4. Financial stewardship

#### Southwest

1. Very mobile
2. Focus on membership state to state
3. Strong, loyal board pretty open minded

#### Texoma

1. Utilize social media methods to use multiple methods
2. Interactive communication
3. Very intentional about communication methods

Day Two:

**I feel better:**

Better about the vision

Better about firmness of the board in their direction

Better about the illumination of the path

Better about more concrete info

Better about light at end of tunnel

Better about reportable outcomes of meeting

Rick wants to know what it looks like – he needs a visual

What is next for this group?

Wonder what my local board will do and how that affects me?

**Reports out on gap analysis/weaknesses:**

Need more diverse revenue stream

Engagement of who we want versus of who we already have

Summer vacuum is a weakness

Competition from others who do what we do

Opportunity to make competition a partner

Diversity = growths

The word membership is a threat-feels exclusive other ways to be involved

Lack of understanding of the message that trickles down in a consistent language

We still aren't nimble enough – not action oriented

Common language and consensus would help this – contextual framework is not trickling down

Process to reach consensus is onerous

Find a camp is an opportunity to prospect

Resources we can share if we did a better job

Collaborate with other organizations – AEE etc.

Expand offerings, share speakers, e-institute is affordable and attracts new audiences

Mine alumnae with camps for government relations opportunities

Volunteer network to deliver services

Need momentum/pick the low hanging fruit/close the deal/move quickly

Collaborations local and national working together

Geographic size versus number of members – disparate and difficult

Staff and time and staff time

Membership and marketing materials are all the same without opportunity to customize

Need materials that are not always about STANDARDS

Cost of membership is a barrier

Prospecting poor

Services to low density areas are difficult and can you justify

Lack of a model for membership development – zero track record of ACA doing this

Over process over process

National is too academic versus practical

Unclear who we serve public or members-we are schizoid about who we serve

What we are doing is unsustainable

2020 fatigue has turned into sense of defeat

Lack of depth in section leadership

Trying to do too much with too little

### **Art did board overview**

Broadly speaking – more on the southeast spectrum – Brant

Rick – concern about day to day operational aspects/ what and where are the additional supports

Dani – staff functions in decentralized arena focused on local delivery with opportunity/responsibility to add value to national

Nathan – keep horizontal relationships in areas such as public policy, public relations, education

Vertical piece is related to mitigating threat (art)

## Art just set goal to roll in more than one Section by October

Word or phrase that best describes where you are right now

1. Encouraged
2. Hopeful
3. Connecting
4. Appreciative
5. Excited
6. Intrigued but processing
7. At ease
8. Relieved
9. Clarity
10. Less confused
11. More comfortable
12. Good
13. Pensive

### **What have we heard from Art and Peg per a desired future?**

Contextual framework or guiding principles

If there is an annual gathering of like minded passionate people desiring to engage and participate in a form of leadership it will allow flexibility and dynamism (sp) of the organization. Long live Woodstock.

Annual gathering allows leadership connections that complement turnover realities of our community.

Reports Outs:

Alignment under 3 guiding growth strategies

Local community leaders and staff support that will be adjusted over time by the Ceo to meet local needs

When issues arise staff and leaders will be deployed to meet the need

Initially to members everything will look the same – no depletion in program and services and they have someone who will address and meet their needs

Goal is to be nimble and flexible – break down sense organized around geography but needs and identified outcomes

Document needs – identify benchmarks and/or standard operating procedures, how to instill accountability, how to realign when necessary, what is the process to work out problems when not working, what happens when there is a difference in priorities per local and national priorities – how resolved and how resources allocated, no mention of archiving historical information of section documents – stay in local area but not in someone’s basement, prior tax returns add prior audits and reviews, document would include assistance in understanding and gathering required information

Contextual framework document and Art’s slides will be useful when communicating at home. People need to see the tangible evidence.

Part-time staff currently assumption is they will stay part-time initially

Question around finances and reserves – local use? How and who would decide the use of those reserves?

Challenge moving forward as we want organic groups to form and geography not the decision factor how will that information be shared? (PDC?)

Will need to remember to be very intentional not to revert to old structures.

Speculation about local leadership might be – the board as they exist now might disappear but the committees will remain as they add value to the work of the local delivery system. The executive committee may be the board/council

Observation that this document (conversation starter) speaks to national needs but not the section needs – need to add that information IMPORTANT

How soon can we get these notes?

#### KEY MESSAGES BY FRIDAY AND SLIDES

Local leadership could really begin to tease out the program services ‘checklist’.

Local board question will be how will we hit the ground running by the fall when camp is over.

### Update conversation starter and flesh out program and legal by the end of the month.

#### What are thoughts about what you heard about diversity and what is your work?

1. **This is critical work.** We must reflect the communities in which we live. If we want to grow and expand we must be inclusive.

2. Work is essential, we have made strides but in our community there is push back. There is a perception that camp is only for people of a certain economic strata. We are wrestling with the issue of diversity – more ethnically diverse in our boards but to what end. The elephant in the room is traditionally we have not been diverse as an industry or association.
3. If parents went to camp – kid goes to camp but many do not have DNA and that has caused a diminishing market.
4. Excites me to hear this discussion about diversity as it is broadening around our definitions of such in order to include and impact those organizations and programs who are already serving a diverse population. It is about listening and finding those relationships
5. I worry when we discuss this topic – definition of insanity. Just repeat same mistakes. Impact of economy and the massive shift in the elimination of the middle class and the fact that camp is discretionary are the real challenges facing us not just diversity of any nature. We are up against that in a big way. (another response – that is why we need to reposition ourselves around youth development to expand value) I agree that is why we need to focus the discussion around youth development not diversity.
6. Embrace the non traditional in order to tap into the diversity and where we can add value in terms of best practices and learning. ACA must expand definition of who we can serve and what value we have to offer then we open up more opportunities including diversity.
7. Many do not see themselves in thought or voice and as a result we are not a very welcoming organization. We need to be prepared for those who may not think like we think – prepared for difficult moments and conversations in order to grow. Change is not always comfortable.

**Where are the networks of folks who can add value to our efforts? But unless we are welcoming them in language, behaviors, and attitudes we will not be successful. You can't make it to the 2020 vision without this conversation is the real definition of insanity.**

**Report out on Diversity:**

1. How do we bring in fresh eyes to evaluate our own tribal practices that exclude people?
2. It does feel redundant and schizo but the fact is it is still real. But we don't have the answer.
3. We are not the only ones who struggle with this issue so we are not in it alone. Who can help us with this mutual struggle?
4. I have seen progress on my board. The next generation (Millenials, Y's, X'ers) has a completely different take on this issue. We need to involve the youth to a greater degree – value their opinions.
5. If nothing else the conversation is more rich because more people are talking about it.
6. Hispanics and native Americans perspectives are very different – introduce more family events, consider terminology ie exclusion etc. suggests an opposite. Good bad versus a new norm
7. When not so much 'joining' versus participation it may make a real difference.

**Report outs on additional diversity discussion:**

1. Elements of definition – openness, universal appeal, mutual benefit.
2. People won't tell us what makes them feel unwelcome
3. Understanding boundaries – limit white supremacist camps
4. Must take the long view, won't happen overnight, must be honest about our desire to make this happen, must answer the question what is in it for us/them, common values and outcomes, must be willing to adjust our norms
5. Seriously consider the willingness to say yes
6. To feel a part of the group they must feel represented in ideal, norms, values
7. Must be seen at board, staff, and participant levels
8. Definition broadened as relationship driven and not so much about verbiage of diversity and inclusion.
9. Healthy to document progress so not discouraged and give up
10. Effort is endless and should be a way of life.

If we are going to put together a 'structure' do we understand to what end? As such, we must talk about this subject. It is fundamental/integral to the vision.

#### **Report outs:**

##### Association Wide Relationship:

1. Implications – new communication challenges as one association. Maintain appearance of local staff
2. National needs to lay out an operation plan to indicate how issues are handled including accountability – bidirectional standard operating procedures
3. Local training plans for leaders
4. Regular updates on progress of roll ups including lessons learned
5. Develop SOP's quickly to help get framework in place

##### External Relationships:

1. Essential to develop and prioritize focus on low hanging fruit
2. Nationally focused relationships and where can they be leveraged locally
3. Being aware of vision and manpower disconnects – unfunded mandates
4. Intersectional relationships – sharing resources etc
5. Relationships are foundational between and among are critical
6. Give local field staff names of staff who are leading national relationships so they can build intersections between local and national
7. Cause marketing principles guide relationships in order to help with focus – stage so we can manage our capacity

##### Communication:

1. Increase the detail (diminish fluffy)

2. Two way communication/interactive
3. Clear and concise using as many modalities as possible
4. Some things just are best discussed face to face
5. Diversity – ask different audiences for their opinions
6. Eliminate code words
7. Do away with reply to all
8. Give opportunity for comment and feedback – allow an open format
9. There are challenges dealing with different audiences across the country when communicating
10. Look into Talkbox (conference with up to 20 people and see them)

#### Inventory of Shared Resources:

##### Education:

1. So Cal – camp staff training day impacting a child’s life, 40 to 50 break outs, talk to mentors and keynoters.
2. So. Cal spring leadership program – can we take it on the road? It was successful? Yes. Participants and exhibitors were happy. Opportunity to ramp it up to make it fiscally sound model.
3. Dani – education success helps sharing ideas for sessions, sharing of resources that are staff intensive like registration, sharing of speakers to expand opportunities, sharing ways to replicate volunteer management structures, sharing site locations to expand audience and ease of access.
4. Consider market concentrations to drive locations for training (Brant)
5. Dani – the other shared resource might be delivery systems such as alternative means – technology etc.
6. Danielle – excited about new models of delivery and the expanded capacity is tremendous. Shared resources over blurred lines
7. Dani – need a global focus. We don’t have technology in place to be interactive.
8. Rick- we need to come together two or three times a year to discuss issues, trends, programming, etc. face to face
9. Kim – don’t want to become little pockets need a balance
10. Rick – geographic areas should have regular generative meetings to discuss current market and future market
11. Brant – open calendar/ open participation
12. Rick – must be facilitated to manage the financial piece
13. Art- must be clear understood anticipated outcome – that drives participation
14. Rick – organized around topic areas instead of geography? Topics may rotate around the country
15. Dani- geography, issue, and interest will drive participation
16. Art- observation on geography – west larger areas in the NE are smaller areas
17. Dani- geography issues cut across all strata regardless

18. Danielle- NoCal, brings herself as a resource with her accounting background. It is an administrative strength
19. Dani- michelle brings a huge fund raising strength where my section is phelfff
20. Michelle – LA times opportunity working with national to try to preserve the camperships program. So Cal has commitment to fund raising.
21. Rick- we are drawn to what we are comfortable with instead of considering the new efforts around fund raising, camperships, and public community (awareness)support, etc. New work is hard and we are drawn easily back to comfort areas.
22. Michelle – traditionally fund raising has not been an association priority. We suffer stewardship that is necessary to have a viable fund raising effort
23. Rick – capacity is tough when one person is trying to do everything. We need staff capacity to get these jobs done.
24. Michelle- takes us back to priorities and not biting off more than we can chew
25. Danielle-it means we have to let go of some things we no longer need
26. Rick- iam giving you permission not to do everything you have done in the past – his CEO is downsizing his school
27. Michelle- what are the ramifications of letting legacy programs/services go
28. Danille – maybe it is not letting it go but shifting responsibilities across staff. Lupine and I trying to unify California – maybe it doesn't make sense we both are doing the same thing
29. Kim-conversations will begin to happen at a new level in the future. Allocation of time and effort may look different in the future. Influence of the national form for staffing will really drive how we shape these relationships. Without a staffing structure I am still doing it all with a parttime person. I need to be able to talk to national to consider how this new form and shape takes place. Do we decide if we do Camp West or does national step up and develop the design.
30. Art-what brought this group together was our hope this would happen based on need not a mandate. Staffing will be an interesting piece – you ask us to tell you what we want but when we do you say that's not what we want. We need to be able to talk this through.
31. Kim- collapse staff just in the west and there are 6 full time staff. Each could be assigned an area/function of focus. Each would be a field person with a speciality.
32. Dani has 3 full time staff.
33. Art- we all have a piece of the puzzle. We need to get together and figure this out.
34. Kim- we want education and need the capacity to do so
35. Dani-help me manage expectations with my board. Can you accept all people coming in at once.
36. Art- tension points are a part of the negotiations
37. Julienne – check list is part of the process
38. Dani-the check list is not the complex part
39. Art-things we need to have to go forward – trust is important. I have to trust you will come into this open and flexible and I will do the same. Trust we will find synergy.
40. Julienne – art who is the I. Art- those assign to work on the roll up
41. Mike-could each section consider the roll up individually and if so whenever we are all in place then how do we blend and share staff resources.
42. Kim-everybody rolls up at same time?

43. Mike- no but every section must determine individual readiness. Can we accept we each may roll up at our own pace within a defined period of time
44. Dani-complexity of staff roll up at different levels seems very complex. Competing skill sets could result.
45. Rick- need a staff study to determine needs and assignments
46. Art- design and then build or design as you build. Roll up leave as is and when rolled up then consider assignments
47. Mike- community building is done in phases and evolves in competencies as we grow
48. Danielle- we are not the association. We are parts to the whole. So who knows are we pigeon holing ourselves into something that may not be the case in the future.
49. Sari- caution on GSUSA – we spent months before we merged making organizational charts – that eventually got thrown out the window once we merged. Need to trust the process and not get too involved in the details right now
50. Danielle-roll up process is unique to each section/local considerations
51. Rick – it is hard to register an opinion not knowing what the strengths of others when thinking of moving forward

### **Julienne – straw poll of continuum**

Oregon- we are ready because we have nothing to lose

So Cal: we are excited, ready to go, encouraged that a decision has been made about how this is going to happen, what will concern our board is while we are pursuing the new the current services are maintained. Michelle will now have to do more in the interim. Worried about accountability and sense that people are going to follow through and do what they say they are going to do. What will it look like? What is the process to figure our best division of resources? Division of responsibilities? And recommend that we can't do this on the cheap- we need more face to face meetings. Our history is start great guns and then resources are not available and things peter out. Important work and can't be done by email and conference calls. DO NOT WORK. Our board is a governing board and how will their influence fit in the future. This is a challenge for us and what will that look like? How do we manage that because they are not going to want to do operational work.

Evergreen: board meeting next Tuesday and anticipate excitement and readiness. I am encouraged by the faint glimmers of form that are starting to emerge from the fog. I am worried about how I start taking on Tuesday about officers and future leadership and ability to describe new roles for leaders. Door is open and got to stay ahead of the herd. I think the pieces received in folder were good starting points and slides were all useful. And might be enough tangible for them to manage a bit more ambiguity. As fast as we can get this pulled out the better.

No. Cal: will have another board meeting as a result of this meeting. Will present all the information and they will be excited. I'd be surprised if they are not ready for a roll up. We are encouraged by the information and that is really very helpful. We have answers. I am more worried and a bit cautious that

we honor the process but not jump ahead of the process. Clarity was provided and tools to answer questions provided. I need to go back and talk to our board.

Southwest: all to gain but nothing to lose. We are ready and our board will be ready. Don't want to lose the collaboration in the west. Still want to have discussions with presidents in the west including Texoma in order to stay unified as an area (region). Our culture and challenges are unique as an area.

Rocky mountain: we are excited and anxious. Details very important. Most encouraged by dissolving of lines is encouraging and moving away from building a new western bureaucracy. I still question some of the small scale roll up details. Slides etc. will be helpful. Encouraged by the individual section basis and the southeast pilot. Recommend maintain the personal connections and time to spend together.

Texoma: we are having our board meeting next week. We have the mindset that we roll up or die so why fight it. We are encouraged by the forward progress and it is less cloudy. We have something we can take back to the board. We are worried about the transition of our board elections and what that will look like in the short term. We don't want the current level of services to drop in the section during the transition.

Oregon trail: we are ready and encouraged about opportunities. Want to collaborate with others. Worried about the financial matters because we have worked hard. Board will want to know structure and really want to work with other sections i.e. Evergreen. Worried about the board leadership piece and how it evolves to committees. Don't want to do another 990. We need more time face to face to build relationships in order to have the difficult conversations.

**Art:**

By Friday:

Key messages

Slides

Board conversations:

Key messages

Slides

Conversation starter

Board readiness assessed

Readiness will be assessed at both the national and section level in terms of staging roll ups.

Leadership: each section should continue to pursue leadership process to maintain local leadership to facilitate change.

After local board meetings we will have a better sense of who and how we can move forward.

Currently, we are only working with NY, NJ, USNY, SE, and the West.

Transition Committee: (President will need to approve)

Invited Carol Johnson and Dani Shaw have agreed to serve on the committee.

Role of transition committee is to make recommendations to the board and help manage the transition.

## **Key Messages: Meeting with Western Sections and Texoma**

1. Six sections (Evergreen, Oregon Trail, Northern California, Southern California, Rocky Mountain, Southwest, and Texoma) met in Portland, Oregon, May 11<sup>th</sup> and 12<sup>th</sup> with Art Wannlund, Peg Smith, and Julienne C. Johnson.
2. There were several anticipated outcomes identified for this meeting.
  - Update all leaders on 2020 vision activities since the Leadership Summit
  - Understand the directions for growth and unification as identified by ACA's national board
  - Discuss the implications, opportunities, needs, and desired next steps of the sections
  - Engage in generative thinking around a unified Association
  - Recommend norms for future working relationships
  - Identify desired (concrete) next steps
3. Threats were reviewed: reduce number of 990's, noncompliance with accounting and reporting standards, noncompliance with labor codes, uncontrolled internal competition for resources, and noncompliance with program delivery standards.
4. Opportunities were reviewed: Professional Development Center, Membership and Customer Marketing and Promotion, and Government Relations.
5. Input was given to the development of guiding principles in support of the national board's priority of diversity and inclusion as well as communication, Association-wide, and external relationships.
6. The national board has identified two primary models for unification to reduce identified risks and maximize identified growth strategies.
  - a. Independents: sections that are separately incorporated with their own IRS determination, with at least a million dollars in assets
  - b. Nationally merged: based on evaluation of readiness and staging process to roll centralized functions into the national office and decentralize and network program delivery systems designed to meet and exceed local needs
7. National has been testing these models by working with New York as an independent and Southeast as nationally merged.
8. An interim alternative to accommodate issues of readiness and staging will be extending charters for one year where appropriate.
9. A Conversation Starter (checklist of critical areas for consideration) has been developed to facilitate the process. As conversations continue, the checklist continues to evolve and improve.
  - a. A seamless process from the perspective of the member is paramount
  - b. Frequent communication using multiple means will be paramount
  - c. Standard Operating Procedures will be developed to frame our collective work

10. The document, Contextual Framework, clearly outlines focus, opportunity, and direction.
11. Sections participating will be sharing key messages, the slide presentation, the Contextual Framework, and the Conversation Starter with their boards.
12. Further conversation and readiness inventories are only initiated after section board approval to do so is secured.
13. A Transition Team has been commissioned by the National Board of Directors. Members include: Tisha Bolger, Anthony DeGuzman, Ellen Gannett, Rich Garbinsky, Carol Johnson, Dani Shaw, Peg Smith, Chris Strevel, and Art Wannlund.
14. Sections also discussed opportunities to share information about each other's resources, needs, and opportunities for collaboration across the west and throughout the Association.