

RAB Retreat Meeting

March 10, 2014

Board Members

Wayne Wheeler, Barry Mundt, Bob Pierce, Jordan Veale, Mildred Nance-Carson, Todd Dunnuck, Hutch Kerns, Josh O'Connor

Council

Chris Pelly

Staff

Roderick Simmons, Director; Debbie Ivester, Assistant Director; Judith Scott, Administrative Assistant

Wayne Wheeler called the meeting to order by asking Debbie to overview the goals, followed by Barry to present his proposal on goal management and implementation.

Debbie presented the RAB goals as requested to develop based upon the RAB retreat on January 31, 2014, and invited board members to discuss. In the event RAB is satisfied with the goals, the board needs to formally adopt the goals at its next board meeting.

Focus Area: Communications

Goal 1: Develop relationships with City Council

What kind of relationship does RAB want with the City Council? Board has talked about wanting a more defined relationship with its City Council liaison so that the board has the engagement and presence with Council. Chris said it would help if the board spoke with one voice and to give him the message they want him to take back to council.

Should board members take the initiative to contact other council members or go through liaison? Liaison has an understanding of the board goals and department goals, and through the liaison the board members are speaking the same language. There are 30 different boards and committees appointed by Council and most communicate with email. Council members make themselves available when invited to meet with board members.

Goal 2: Represent RAB with stakeholders

Primary stakeholders include Cultural and Recreation Authority, Asheville Parks and Greenways Foundation (APGF) and the Friends of the Nature Center. At one time APGF required a RAB appointment. Mildred previously served as an APGF board member, and Josh is currently on the board but neither was appointed by RAB. It was reported that APGF changed its bylaws and no longer required a RAB appointment. APGF wishes to reestablish a RAB appointment to its board as an exofficio non-voting member.

Does RAB have an exofficio appointment to the Friends of the Nature Center? The Friends have not asked for a representative. Bob advised that the director of the Nature Center is an exofficio to the Friends board.

If RAB makes an appointment to APGF board, the RAB member serves in the role only as long as they are on RAB. Debbie will meet with Liz McLamb of APGF and will follow up on the RAB appointment.

Focus Area: Community Outreach and Public Engagement

Goal 1: Develop a process to engage with members of the public and community outreach

Chris reported that the dog park advocates would like to educate the board, but when they presented to RAB in February they came away frustrated. The City calls for a park in North Asheville in its master plan but the dog park advocates focus is only on the dog park. There is not land available in North Asheville for a large park. They are ready to raise money. How do citizens approach the board?

At the time the dog park group requested to present to RAB, the understanding was the group wanted to 1) encourage RAB to support a park in north Asheville that could include a dog park, and 2) convey their support for the city's existing dog parks. This message was not included in their presentation. Bob felt if they had come prepared with a written agenda or statement it would have gone better. Chris suggested providing a questionnaire with three questions and giving them a time limit at the board meeting. A 10-minute time limit already exists for presentations.

The purpose of the community outreach is to look for opportunities to get RAB members out there with the people. The community does not know who RAB is and why it exists. This goal identifies ways for RAB members to engage in the community such as attend official ceremonies and participate in the ceremony. We will develop a more formal process to keep RAB members aware of the calendar events.

Josh stated rather than partners make presentations at a board meeting, a more productive use of time might be a "meet and greet." Partners could have an exhibit showing who they are and what they do. There are 20-30 different partners to present to the board. He gave the recent expo event hosted by Asheville neighborhood associations at UNCA at which 30 neighborhoods were represented. 125 people attended and four council members. The Neighborhood Advisory Committee will host a breakfast in May to share what they are working on.

Focus Area: Partnerships

Goal 1: Enhance partnerships with Asheville Parks and Recreation Department

As a way to build relationships with department partners, RAB consider hosting a volunteer work day in a park or facility and invite a partner to join RAB members in the work day. An example is APGF will host its second volunteer workday in April at Carrier Park.

Roderick explained we are trying to get RAB to drive the initiatives. Right now its staff driven and the intent is for board members to take responsibility for its goals with assistance from staff to facilitate.

Focus Area: Finance and Budget

Goal 1: Participate in the Parks and Recreation Department capital improvement budget process

Roderick described capital improvement priorities and RAB's role in supporting the priorities and representing them with City Council so they know the value and priority for funding.

Debbie asked if there is consensus that RAB likes these goals and ready to consider them at the RAB meeting in April. Board members agreed.

Barry presented a work plan for RAB goal management. Template and instructions were handed out. It divides action steps into 10 or more projects, and assigns a RAB member to lead each project.

The lead person completes template, prepares project description and a work plan including identification of each step, start and completion dates, and participants. At each RAB meeting the lead person will report on the status of each project.

RAB members should be thinking about any goal they wish to lead and be prepared to discuss at the April meeting. Barry will send the goal management material to RAB members.

Bob asked if RAB members could have name badges that identify them as RAB they wear when doing business on behalf of the city. Debbie will make arrangements for name badges.

Meeting adjourned at 1:43 PM