

Natick 360
Honoring Our Past. Planning Our Future.



Strategic Planning Oversight Committee
Minutes * April 18, 2007

Present

Rosemary Driscoll, designated by School Committee
Terri Evans, at-large member
John Heerwagen, at-large member
Bill Mayhew, at-large alternate member
David Parish Co-Chair, designated by the Board of Selectmen
Craig Ross, Co-Chair, designated by the Finance Committee
Andres Rochwerger, at-large member
Harlee Strauss, at-large member

Absent

Matthew Gardner, designated by the Conservation Commission
George Richards, designated by the Planning Board

Consultants Present

Phillip Blackerby, Blackerby Associates (by telephone)

The meeting was called to order at 6:35 p.m. EST by the Co-Chair, Mr. Ross, in the Ed Dlott Meeting Room, 2nd Floor, Town Hall, Natick, MA 01760. A quorum was present.

Item 1. Minutes

The Committee did not consider minutes.

Item 2. Invoices

The Committee considered two invoices from Blackerby Associates: no. 07-010 for \$8,550.00, the regular monthly amount for consulting services, and no. 07-001 for \$352.72 for other direct expenses related to the April joint board and committee meetings. Ms. Strauss moved to approve both invoices 07-010 and 07-011, Ms. Driscoll seconded the motion, and the Committee voted 7-0-0 to approve both invoices.

Item 3. Project Updated Revenues and Expenses

Mr. Witte provided an update of the Committee's financial position. The Committee has raised \$25,700, plus \$5,000 in hand from Boston Scientific, which is expected to be accepted by the Board of Selectmen next Monday. Those revenues generate a balance of approximately \$27,750. The budget for the June Strategic Options Weekend is \$2,500, leaving a balance of about \$25,250 available for the survey.

The Committee has two grant applications pending, including: (a) Deval Patrick Inaugural Committee; distribution of these funds will not be known until June; and (b) a local telecommunications company for \$5,000; the Committee expects to know on Friday about the disposition of this grant.

Item 4. Draft Strategic Options Report

Mr. Parish described a revised outline for the draft strategic options report. Part 1 describes the financial condition of the Town. Part 2 describes the six focus areas, and consolidates action items into a single list rather than separating policies, programs and projects. Part 3 addresses financing strategies to deal with short-term and long-term financial issues. Committee agreed in principle to the revised outline.

The Committee suggested an introductory section to give context and motivation: addressing outcomes, with instructions how to use the document to prioritize goals. This document is about the aspirations of the Town. We will be in a situation of insufficient resources for a long time. We need to strike a balance between aspirations and the realities of our financial situation. Look at financial actions in Part 3, as well.

Introduce what the process for the June workshops will be. It is advisory, and not binding. The five sponsoring boards are seeking public input, so they can craft a strategic plan considering the public input. Here's your job.

The Committee discussed how to address non-financial impacts of the options. Options included: discuss in narrative associated with the goals; discuss in few words in the tables.

The Committee considered the use of icons: *e.g.*, cars, trees, hearts..., to denote categories and to highlight that the focus areas are interconnected. The Committee decided to try to add icons to the second version, with the costs.

The Committee agreed to change the focus area name to include environment, safety and health, and to add the fire protection items under this focus area. The Committee decided not to add a new train station to the list of actions.

The Committee generally agreed with the instructions drafted to accompany the strategic options, with some minor edits.

Item 5. Draft RFP for Community Survey

The Town's procurement officer suggests specifying a firm dollar amount, while also indicating that additional funds may be available, subject to fundraising. If the proposal is under \$25,000, a formal bid process is not required, using list of vendors known to be of high quality. The procurement officer also suggests including high qualifying requirements, and then accepting the low-bid from a qualified provider, avoiding the proposal analysis and bidder interview process.

The Committee agreed that the request be priced at \$24,500, and avoid the formal bid process. If possible, the Committee also agreed to allow for additional proposals to increase the scope of work, subject to funding availability.

The Committee agreed to change the evaluation criteria and related weights:

- Create a new criterion related to responsiveness to the RFP and quality of work. HA: Process and solution are described clearly and fully explained and fully address the project’s objectives; the methodology provides a high sample-to-cost ratio. A: Process and solution are described adequately, and address most of the project objectives; methodology provides an adequate sample-to-cost ratio. DA: non-responsive. Assign a 30% weighting to this criterion.
- Quality of project experience. Change the weighting to 25%
- Combine and re-title “scope of project experience :” relevance: survey size, Massachusetts, methodology; quality of previous reports: read clearly; - user-friendly; easily understood by members of the general public. Excellent or exceeds requirements, adequate, non-responsive. 20%
- Combine Principal Investigator and Project Manager into one criterion related to personnel, with a 20% weighting.
- Preserve the 5% weighting for schedule.

The Committee agreed to some editorial changes: on page 15. update the focus areas; delete appendix on p. 16, and let the proposers say how large their sample sizes will be; on page 4 delete “citizens,” and refer to “adults residing...”

Item 6. Strategic Choices Weekend June 8-10

A request to hang a banner across Main St. was submitted; it is not available first week of June, but have applied for the previous week.

Try to get Governor to come for keynote, but learned that it is unlikely the Governor will attend a weekend event; nevertheless, a request letter will be hand-delivered to the Governor’s scheduler. Lt. Gov. is already coming to Natick May 15-16 and is unlikely to return so soon. Mr. Mayhew volunteered to develop a Plan B strategy for a keynote speaker strategy.

Mr. Rochwerger offered to help with the publicity program. Ms. Evans will update the planning document on the Yahoo! Natick360SPOC web site, showing who will volunteer to take responsibility for key elements. Committee members are encouraged to tell her what they will volunteer to do.

Item 7. Business Focus Group Update

The Business Focus Group process went well; Ms. Driscoll facilitated. The Committee agreed to send the participants the list of strategic options.

Item 10. Other Business

A church has requested someone brief them on the Natick 360 process on Mothers’ Day, May 13, at 11:00 a.m. to 12:00 noon. Mr. Ross will be available.

Mr. Heerwagen moved to adjourn, Ms. Driscoll seconded the motion, and the Committee voted 7-0-0 to adjourn. The Committee adjourned at 9:25 p.m.