



## Special Meeting Work Session June 3, 2021

**Call to Order:** The Board met remotely due to the COVID-19 pandemic. The meeting was called to order at 6:00 p.m. by Anita Gantner, Board Chairperson.

**Roll Call:** Cindy Lombardo, Maureen McGinty, Anita Gantner, Sandy Apidone, Jeff Deluca, and Art Gonzales, Mark Robeson

**Also in Attendance:** Park Director David Green, and approximately 8 attendees.

### Work Session

#### Strategic Planning Process:

Mr. Green introduced the Strategic Planning Process and that it should take between three to six months. The plan will be generated with the input of the stakeholders. It should be flexible and focus on the next three to five years. The plan defines the direction for RJRD and the process will include making decisions on allocating the needed resources to pursue the direction. He commented that the National Park Service's Rivers, Trails, Conservation Assistance Program (RTCA Program) can be used to enhance the Strategic Plan Process.

Mr. Green introduced Laurel Wirtanen-Siloy, a volunteer in the park. She is the Director of Philanthropy and Alumni Engagement at Kent State University and has been involved with several strategic plans. Ms. Wirtanen-Siloy spoke about the importance of strategic planning to develop a strong roadmap to make missions all that they can possibly be. She offered her assistance with the process.

Trustee discussion included: Producing something visual that is very easy for the public to understand can be helpful during the levy process; the strategic plans from other parks contained good information; the complexity of the RJRD organization and the need to identify all of the stakeholders for participation; stakeholders are residents, not necessarily partner groups; the need for as much input as possible to get buy in of the plan; and the need for someone outside the organization to guide the process. Trustees discussed pros and cons of hiring an outside consultant to facilitate the strategic plan.

Ms. Andrea Irland with the National Park Service RTCA Program spoke about engaging the community and her experiences with strategic planning. She spoke about the need to have a plan to guide fundraising. She suggested Business Volunteers Unlimited (BVU) as a good resource.

The ANCA report was addressed and Board members expressed that the report discussion was never finished.

Mr. Green spoke about the confusing contradictory messages he has received about plans for the property and buildings.

Trustees spoke about well-intended work being done in the park but that the work is not all following the same mission and vision. They discussed what direction the board wants to take towards preserving

or removing the buildings in RHP, the need to have a financially sustainable plan, and hiring an outside consultant.

Trustees and attendees spoke about the prior master planning process with EDG and the reasoning behind not having a final document written.

Trustees had a lengthy discussion on the topic of preserving versus demolishing buildings on the property as well as preserving them to this point so that decisions could be made in the future. Trustees also discussed the Clean Ohio Grant and what buildings may be required to be demolished.

Mr. Green opened discussion on putting together a steering committee and summarized its purpose. He said that the steering committee does not have authority over the board but its members help guide the planning process and ensure all stakeholders have a voice or opportunity to be involved. Trustees discussed who should be appointed to a steering committee and how many members it should have. Suggestions were members of partner groups and residents and comments on how to seek members.

Ms. Irland said that previous studies and reports could be looked at and the board may realize that accomplishments came out of those efforts. She encouraged focusing on accomplishments and areas of agreement.

Mr. Green said there seems to be board consensus to hire a consultant. He said he would contact park entities that have recently done a strategic plan for their input.

**Public Comment on Work Session:**

Comments included: making sure the hired consultant understands the deliverables the board is seeking at the end of the process, that the work session had been productive, ensuring the Board makes the decisions with the support of residents and outside groups, the importance of having respect for ideas that are shared and being transparent in making decisions. Additionally, a resident said that public comment at meetings is not always necessary.

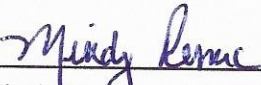
Mr. Green said that he will start researching consultants, contacting other park entities, and putting together a briefing memo for the Board. Ms. Gantner thanked everyone for their participation.

**Adjournment:**


**MOTION by:** Mr. Deluca and seconded by Mr. Gonzales to adjourn the meeting at 8:16 p.m.

**MOTION PASSED:** Vote taken by voice, which was unanimous

Submitted by:

  
Mindy Remec, Administrative  
Coordinator

Accepted by:

  
Anita Gantner, Acting Board  
Chairperson