

Strategic Planning Committee
Community Relations Working Group

August 18, 2014 Meeting Minutes
Hammond 314 @ 10:30am

Committee Attendees: Jessica Augat, Nicholas Capasso Robert Carr, Christopher Hendry (Acting Chair), Jannette McMenamy, Renée Scapparone, Joshua Spero. Absentees: Elizabeth Walsh (Chair), Daniel LaFond, Karen Leary, Megan Pierce

Guests: Jay Bry, Jane Fiske, Lisa Moison, Anthony Wilcox

Meeting called to order at 10:31am

Minutes of the July 21st meeting were reviewed; motion to accept by Jessica Augat and seconded by Joshua Spero; unanimously approved.

Discussions:

- Christopher Hendry (Acting Chair) distributed attendance sheets for the August 18th meeting to be signed by all committee members in attendance for the meeting.
- The majority of the meeting discussions evolved around the final preparation of the committee's list of top objectives to be presented to the SPC on Thursday, August 21st:
 - Christopher Hendry (Acting Chair) distributed a copies of the committee members [personal] list of possible objectives along with the fall calendar. Also distributed were copies of 'How to Set SMART Goals'.
 - Noted was the need to consider the financial aspect as objectives are being developed since the strategic plan will be closely tied to the fiscal budget. Jay Bry also stated that as the committee looks at all objectives, need to consider the costs associated and the feasibility to implement and that over the next 10 years these objectives should not add to the budget and need to realize that the possibility that other [budget] line items could be offset (or removed).
 - The suggestion was made that as the committee develops their top objectives that the language crafted is broad enough without being too specific.
 - Discussions began around the general consensus of the committee's first objective pertaining to a campus-wide coordinated internship program. General discussion around the need and possible conflict of having a program coordinator, most were in agreement that there was need for infrastructure and a strategy to be developed. There was concern that departments still needed to be in control of their [established] internship program and that the university should become familiar with what is being done well within these departments and what might need to be improved.

Suggestion was made that the internship programs at organizations need to be year round, including summer.

The question was raised as to how organizations in need will be identified and that the scope should initially be narrow before expanding throughout the city and surrounding areas.

- Discussion evolved pertaining to the committee's second (agreed upon) objective addressing community engagement. Previous concerns raised by Marc Dohan (Executive Director of the Twin Cities CDC) that we should not limit ourselves to one neighborhood but look at the larger community.

Josh Spero reviewed the efforts of REDI and that data is currently being collected and analyzed as to the local impact their efforts have had as well as the shift to include a downtown focus (in addition to their regional focus).

Comments were made by Nick Capasso, Director of the Fitchburg Art Museum, that if the community doesn't thrive neither will the organization; the redevelopment and rebranding efforts of the museum include partnerships with other downtown organizations, local schools, and the City of Fitchburg as well as with FSU. Capasso believes that these help (perhaps, in a small way) with the various economic development issues and that the museum is the only viable attraction to bring people to Fitchburg. He also stated that by building better program offerings, the museum has increased attendance by more than 25% by attracting people from outside the area (mostly from Boston and Metro West) – which also brings the potential increase to other businesses such as the hotel and local restaurants.

Recommendations were made to have the Crocker Center develop more activities that invite the community and the university to collaborate. Also suggested was to use the model that the museum has implemented.

- The discussions then shifted to the committee's third (and final) objective relating to economic development and entrepreneurial opportunities.

The recommendation was made to conduct a feasibility study to identify the entrepreneurship needs.

Discussions continued around the Clark model and possibilities for FSU to follow this model. If so, there needs be a long-term commitment from FSU and a need to identify what the community wants that tie into the vision and goals of FSU.

- General discussions included having a clearer definition of community, identifying community engagement and relationship development and perception of FSU by the community.

Also discussed, if a long range goal is established there must be intermediary (shorter term) goals. Keeping in mind setting SMART goals.

Suggestions to expand and open the University Project to others, also a means to measure outcomes.

The question was raised as to how the external stakeholders are involved with the overall FSU strategic planning efforts, in response: all subcommittees are open to the public. However, people (external) are not aware of this and that there should be more publicity of these meetings encouraging the external stakeholders to participate.

ACTION ITEMS:

No action items were noted.

Next Meeting: Friday, **September 5**, 2014 @ 3:30pm in Hammond 314

Meeting adjournment at 11:28am

Respectfully submitted by,
Renée Scapparone