

## CLEVELAND GROUP, LLC

Board of Governors and Staff Retreat  
Airlie House Retreat Center  
January 6-7, 2012  
Prepared for Leila Gordon, Executive Director,  
Reston Community Center  
Summary Report (additional meetings notes available)

February 9, 2012

### Attending

#### Board of Governors

Beverly Cosham - Chair  
Carol Ann Bradley  
Bill Bouie  
Bill Keefe  
John Gasson  
Cathy Vivona  
Vichy Wingert  
Bill Penniman (Saturday only)

#### Not in Attendance

Roger Lowen

#### Staff

Leila Gordon - Executive Director  
Tom Ward - Deputy Director  
BeBe Nguyen, Media Director  
Pam Leary, Customer Service Manager  
Kristin Terrill, Public Information Officer

#### Saturday only:

Eileen Boone, Leisure and Learning Director  
Brian Gannon, Facilities Manger  
Linda Ifert, Acting Arts and Events Director  
Joe Leary, Aquatics Director  
Harun Rashid, Information Technology  
Renata Wojcicki, Finance Director

Karen Cleveland, Facilitator

### Retreat Objective

To evaluate options and adopt decision making criteria for near term and long term facility growth and enhancement using the strategic vision of building community and the objectives set forth in the strategic plan. Additionally, vet with staff, the merits and methods for implementing online registration in a holistic manner and integrate it into the planning for a new RCC website.

### Friday, January 6, 2012

Chair, Beverly Cosham welcomed everyone to the 2012 Board of Governors and Staff Retreat and thanked them for committing their time and expertise to this important initiative. Executive Director, Leila Gordon, reviewed the objective for the retreat and turned it over to facilitator, Karen Cleveland.

#### **Online Registration:**

Tom Ward and Pam Leary reviewed data regarding patron trends in types of registrations, timing of registrations, and method of payments. They then

explained the current policy of only allowing patrons to use online registration after the priority period has ended. This process is labor intensive and coupled with the current, complex lottery system, creates stress and surge for patrons and staff alike, and additional costs. The current process is labor intensive because customer service reps must enter all registrations and execute a complex randomizing system. Tom outlined new procedures to coincide with the rollout of the new, improved website. All registrations would now be on a first come first serve basis, with the exception of aquatics.

### **Registration Data**

Tom reviewed data on classes that close during priority registration. Data shows that demand is high for only about 16 percent of classes that get sold out during priority registration period. Those patrons who don't get in one season typically can get in the next. First come first serve, with the appropriate controls, will give all patrons fair access and more self-directed control than the current lottery system.

### **Aquatics Considerations**

Leila and Pam explained that for Aquatics there are other considerations and the registration is not as straightforward as it is for other classes and activities. Skill level is a factor (patrons registering for classes in which they do not meet the requirements) as well as the need for the patron to pass one class in order to register for another and; a status they don't know by the time they have to register. Given the time lapse between registration for one class and completion of the previous class, this process would create additional re-work by staff of those registrations.

Board discussion of the aspects of online registration supported the approach with a view toward achieving registration processes that are the same for all program areas, including Aquatics being an optimum eventual outcome.

### **Website Discussion**

The board and staff reviewed the current RCC website and several other arts organizations' websites evaluating the features and benefits. They then made recommendations for considerations for the development of the new RCC site. Consensus pointed to a clean design, easily navigable drop-down menus with appealing graphic/video elements.

Saturday January 7, 2012

**Review of new RCC vision, mission and values:**

**Vision:** The Reston Community Center enriches lives and builds community for all of Reston.

**Mission:** To create positive leisure, cultural and educational experiences which enhance the quality of life for all people living and working in Reston by:

- Providing a broad range of programs in arts, aquatics, recreation, enrichment and life-long learning
- Creating and sustaining community traditions through special events, outreach activities, and facility rentals.
- Building community through collaboration and celebration.

**Values:** In accomplishing our Vision, RCC will be:

- A welcoming community resource committed to improving citizens' quality of life,
- A builder of sense of place and community traditions
- Celebratory of peoples' traditions, cultural and recreational aspirations,
- An active partner with other Reston Organizations,
- A barrier-free organization - physical, financial, cultural
- An accepting and open organization,
- A responsible and accountable steward of community resources,
- A respectful organization that supports and nurtures its staff, board, volunteers, constituents and patrons.

**Creating a Decision Making Map**

Board and staff engaged in a Mind Mapping activity to sort through the challenge of creating a decision making tree for future investments and strategic initiatives.

## **Discussion item #1**

Turf Field for South Lakes High School community field proposal and discussion.

Leila reviewed the concept presentation from the December board meeting proposing RCC's financial support for a community turf field in partnership with South Lakes High School, the Fairfax County Park Authority and several Reston organizations.

This project aligns with the RCC facility goal from the strategic plan stating: RCC facilities address our mission, expand our capacities, respond to community needs and are aligned with community opportunities and resources.

The project will fund two synthetic turf fields. The first would be in the stadium at South Lakes High School and the second between the High School and Langston Hughes Intermediate Schools. Discussion about the value and return to the community was positively endorsed and Leila noted that RCC had already endorsed the concept but wanted to bring forward the funding proposal of the community field. She explained that turf fields with lighting offer 62 percent more availability during a normal season and also add a useful winter season.

The planning group is seeking collaborative funding from various organizations. The Board inquired about the return to RCC and how it would have access to fields if they were to make a financial contribution, ensure it is easy and aligns with county procedures to make a one-time financial contribution, ensure RCC would not have to vet and monitor process and would just be a financial contributor, and consider how RCC would propose to use and program fields if RCC had access.

Leila reported that she has been meeting with the project team about and has assurances that they will adhere to a policy that allocates time and priority commensurate to the amount of funding. Additionally, she reported that she vetted this with the county and has assurances that the funding mechanism is within the purview of the RCC and all liability issues have been satisfied.

Maps and policy documents show the configuration of Reston fields and existing policies for field use allocation. Budget was discussed and Leila assured the board that money for this project could come out of the existing budget for either FY12 or FY13 or evenly between both fiscal years.

Following discussion, the board felt the project aligned with the strategic objectives as outlined in the strategic plan and instructed Leila to place this item on the next board agenda for consideration and a vote.

## **Discussion Item #2 Reston Master Plan Task Force Progress**

Bill Keefe and Bill Penniman gave an update on the Reston Master Plan Task Force progress. They reported that support is strong for increased density around the Metro stations with the Whiele station being predominantly residential with some commercial and retail right around the station. The Reston Town Center station area is expected to be approximately half commercial and half residential. The task force is expecting a traffic analysis report and recommendations for recreation needs, in March. There has been much discussion about creating additional pedestrian access, encouraging biking and the development of a circulator bus system.

Discussion followed about how the RCC can meet the needs of the influx of residents and employees. Consensus was that Reston has a need to enhance its recreational infrastructure in order to keep Reston an appealing place and that RCC should do its part. Leila explained that additional revenues will be received by RCC (tax base) but finding space to add facilities close to the people will be challenging. Land values/prices will increase as metro arrives.

Concern was expressed about the arrival of Metro creating an even bigger divide between North Reston and the rest of Reston and the board committed to continuing to look for opportunities to reach out north Reston.

Leila reported there will be a staff analysis from the Fairfax County Park Authority, Reston Association, and RCC as part of the County's obligation to provide the Task Force with staff reports to inform the Reston master plan study outcomes and they will define priority outcomes with respect to recreation, open space and cultural amenities. She stressed the importance of this work being done in collaboration with all three organizations. Each organization will be vetting the draft report prior to its delivery to the Reston Master Plan Special Study Task Force.

Discussion followed about the future of the village centers and whether there was opportunity for the RCC to have a presence at all village centers.

## **Discussion Item #3 Future RCC facilities**

In the recently adopted strategic plan, the RCC identified the following two priorities from a facility standpoint: Aquatics and Performing Arts Venue.

### **A. Aquatics Facility**

The board discussed the needs and desires of Small District 5 as relate to pools, the existing facilities in Reston and possibilities for the future. Expressed needs/desires include a 50 m indoor cold water pool; a warm water therapeutic pool; a competition pool; family pools. Leila gave a thorough report on existing and near term facilities including the Lifetime Fitness plan for an indoor and outdoor pool. Discussion ensued around possible sites to build an aquatics

facility and the cost/value relationship between a stand-alone facility and one in combination with an existing facility. Bill Keefe then outlined the possibilities and challenges surrounding an expansion at Hunters Woods. Following discussion, the board asked Leila, along with Bill Keefe, to continue to explore the possibilities of expansion and report back to the board. The board also discussed the merits of building single use facilities and/or multiple use facilities, partnering with other organizations and/or engaging in a public private partnership arrangement. The board then ranked their preferences for further exploration considering opportunities aligned with the expense of resources. They ranked: Baron Cameron (Park Authority partnering) the most preferred, then Reston Town Center North if viable, followed by Hunters Woods. Next they instructed staff to look at other developers who are making plans as a result of the up-zoning coinciding with the adaptation of the new Reston Master Plan to see if there is potential for the development of desired Aquatics facilities.

#### B. Performing Arts Venue

C. Leila reviewed possibilities for realizing a performing arts facility. She stated that discussions have taken place with the developers of both Reston Metro Stations regarding proffering space for a performing arts venue. Following her report, the board felt the Town Center location seemed to be the best fit but it is too early to know for certain as Phase II of the Metro is currently in limbo. She talked about potential size, specific location and uses.

#### **Costs and Priorities**

Discussion followed regarding cost, financing options for either or both of the discussed facilities and how the decisions will be made. The board asked questions about the RCC's ability to issue bonds through the county, the need for a referendum and explored the feasibility of other options. They also discussed potential partners in either or both of these projects. Consensus was that there is a strong desire to keep pace with the needs of the community, ensure that people and groups can continue to swim and perform in Reston and that the RCC do its part to maintain the high standards of Reston.

Due to the anticipated high cost of these projects, the board discussed the need to prioritize outcomes or bring other partners to the table. They discussed ranking the two capital priorities but felt that they needed more data before deciding which way to go. They also discussed the need to keep the community engaged in the discussion so that whatever decisions are made, the community is in support. Progress reports will be made through the long range planning committee.

#### **Decision Making Framework**

Following much discussion and consideration, the board agreed the following criteria should be used to make decisions on major facility expansion and capital expenditures.

Ensure alignment with strategic plan goals and objectives

- Evaluate against RCC core competencies
- Evaluate demand, practical timeline and prioritize accordingly
- Explore all potential partners before going it alone
- Solicit community input throughout
- Conduct thorough cost benefit analysis
- Complete feasibility study or studies
- Develop business plans

**Next Steps**

The Board directed staff to assure to the degree possible that community partners remain deeply engaged in the pursuit of strategic planning goals. The annual cycle of February and March committee meetings to encourage engagement and obtain staff research reporting will be the next opportunity to explore the facility, program, and related goals and objectives of the current Strategic Plan in concert with the community.