

FM Board Retreat Minutes – 1/23/21

Attendance

Jason Bruns, Sr. Marilyn Trowbridge, Michael Barnett, Sr June Casterton, Sharon Cooke, Don Evers, Waleed Fadayeel, Brian Forschner, John Payton, Don Rohling, David Roth, Basette Smith, Guillermo Villa, Elaine Ward, Renee Sales, Craig Kowalski (consultant)

Introduction - Jason

Jason talked about the goals of the retreat. It is not a new strategic plan or to come away with a major change. Instead our goal is to “level set” as we face new realities brought by the pandemic and give clear direction to the staff.

Guillermo asked about what success would look like.

We want to all be on the same page, have clarity about our direction rather than all different ideas about what we should be doing. Need to be clear and give clear direction to the staff.

Near Term Issues- Michael

Reviewed short term needs/issues from agenda and materials. Michael discussed current needs presented by Tamar’s need for secure space, Tau House-loss of revenue and stability of lease, and Barn with loss of revenue, new unproven director, and more of a for profit than a not-for-profit. There was discussion of the following:

- Retiring ED- who we need to replace and take into consideration future needs in order to hire and match skill set. But ED job is not the sole focus
- Finance area- we have a volunteer CFO, though have built bench strength in accounting in and bookkeeping. We can’t afford this now, and we are small, but a long term dream
- Reorganization – it is a good timing to consider if there is a better way to structure ourselves. though COVID has skewed perspective, but it is an opportunity
- The Peddler- important to keep in mind but more of a long term consideration
- Talent- Finance, Barn, Operations, Development, are all about the FM talent needs
- Multi-generational Organization Chart – this might shoe needs now, needs in 3 years and in 5 years
- ED needs to be out of the day-to-day. Elaine has to wear too many hats.

Poll of top three short term issues

1. **Addressing needs of Tamar’s (100%)**
2. **Staffing for Development (79%)**
3. **Growing some ministries while decreasing others (36%)**
4. Maintaining current ministries (29%)
5. Reducing current ministries (21%)

Breakout groups report on most important challenges in the near-term

Group 1 - Michael, Sharon, Don R, Basette, Elaine

- Talent- defining needs so can hire ED and communicate priorities to new person, need to find talent who are flexible in role due to small size of organization, possible operations director
- Organizational structure- need to establish a vision and portray to candidate
- Tamar's- maybe we can stay there, but need something stable
- Development Director, after ED is the second most critical role right now, hard to fill role, need to build donor-relationships and work on grants

Group 2 – Jason, Waleed, Brian, David, Sr. Marilyn

- Hiring prospects for ED may not be good - not very appealing, Tau, Tamar's and Barn are all precarious, no development director. Who will want to sign up for this?
- Mission focus – are we able to see the forest for trees?
- Support- are we maximizing the support of the Sisters?
- Summary – focus on mission, organize to support this and achieve goals

Group 3 – Don E, Sr. June, John, Guillermo

- Tamar's is of top concern
- Talent/Staffing
- Ministry Structure – outsource (??)
- Financial solvency
- Safety – COVID not going away soon

Long Term Issues- Jason

- Congregation presence changing in US, will evolve over next several years, the Sisters are in US for future but leadership may come from other countries
- We will continue to be a sponsored ministry Sisters are there to support us and this will continue at least for 8 -10 years.
- We do not need to become self-sufficient.
- Sisters' funding carries other ministries too

Discussion

- How do we have most impact?
- Would be nice to be able to be more independent.
- Nurturing partnerships makes sense to impact more people
- There is a tension between securing independence and our mission--when our mission is to meet unmet needs, they are often unmet because they are not funded

Polling of top three longer term issues facing FM

- 1. Reorganizing staff roles and responsibilities -60%**
- 2. Increasing partnerships with other non-profits – 53%**
- 3. Outsourcing Barn Management - 47%**
4. Eliminating or modifying operation of one or more ministries – 33%
5. Increasing Board role and responsibilities- 33%

Group 1

- Board members each adopt a program- help look for grants and be a listener
- Partnering with others—what is the goal? Long term partnership builds synergy
- Sustainability is a long, long, term issue, perhaps could be sure we are making best use of Sister's support
- Outsource the barn (should do cost benefit analysis of this option) Freedom Center (outsourced event area to Sydexo)

Group 2

- Should be focused on most mission impact, do the most mission critical work, maybe sooner before ED departs
- Tamar's is most important in this regard
- Possibly divest other ministries – MMH take Haircuts? Barn outsource.

Group 3 – general comment “We are really four ministries and the Barn”

- Increase volunteer base
- Talent acquisition and development
- Partnerships with other non-profits
- Identity and brand
- Eliminating or changing ministry operations
- Service and quality
- Exploring new needs

Discussion

- On talent development we should summarize current talent and opportunities – Myers Briggs
- Vision is important for new ED

What to do now? – concrete actions

- Explore outsourcing/leasing Barn. It could be win-win, reduce stress and increase income. We do benefit when Barn is operating and want that revenue to continue
- Is Tau House an unmet need?
- Converse with MMH re: Haircuts.
- Not ready to let Haircuts go! it fits our mission and is oldest program
- Barn is really a for-profit and is outside our core competency

- If Barn were outsourced, we would have four ministries and then it would seem we would be “right sized”.
- Development director is a need
- Need to define what are roles of ED – not everything, could handle development different ways, either off load operations to someone else and ED handle development, us outsource some
- The action needs to be the overall organizational structure not just a question of the development director
- Should be structured to support being able to meet unmet needs.
- It is essential to give ED and other the capacity to really work in to the mission
- Tamar’s needs added focus
- There are timing issues, figure out sequence before ED retires