

**Participants:**

*Board Members:* Roger Millar, President; Kristin Smith, Vice President; Anne Cossitt, Secretary; Janet Cornish, Treasurer (meeting facilitator); Jeff Bollman; Andrew Finch; Lanette Windemaker; David Greer; Warran Vaughn; Chris Saunders; Steve Hess  
*Members:* Candi Beaudry; Bob Horne

**Results**

(Recorded by Janet)

**1. Mission Statement Discussion:**

Our current “purpose statement” is found in our By-Laws in Article II, as follows:

*ARTICLE II. STATEMENT OF PURPOSE*

*The purpose of the Corporation is to promote the health, safety and welfare of the general public through the encouragement of comprehensive planning, community and economic development activities, and human resource planning. The Corporation believes that well planned communities provide for the public’s health, safety, and welfare while minimizing public costs.*

This does not really suffice as a mission statement and is more in keeping with statutory language associated with planning. Therefore, in addition to this purpose, it was decided that we needed a mission statement that more accurately reflected what we do as an organization. Our discussion addressed the following points:

- Our mission should reflect two overall values:
  - Membership Services
  - Public Engagement – Demonstrating and promoting the benefits of collaborative, community based planning
- ‘Public health, safety and welfare’ should remain as our “purpose” because the language is within our charter with the State of Montana and it reinforces our role as a professional planning organization, operating within the statutory framework of planning and community development.
- We are stewards and advocates for community based planning because it improves the quality of our lives.

- Our definition of professional planners includes both practicing professional planners in the public and private sectors as well as citizen planners who serve on planning boards and local governing bodies (elected officials).
- Our resources – financial and human limit the extent of our activities.
- We need to evaluate how we serve our members vs. our communities – do we have adequate resources to serve both?
- Our members can provide our resources.
- What are our current activities and are they reflected in our mission statement?
  - Planning 101
  - Annual Conference
  - Grants to Communities
  - Our website
  - Lobbying Services
  - Peer Review
  - Annual Awards
- We are advocates for excellence in community planning.
- It is important to empower a strong and diverse membership.
- Internally we provide education and professional development for our membership, while externally we are advocates for planning through public education and public presence.

The following mission statement was put forth by the group:

*The mission of the Montana Association of Planners is to advocate excellence in planning that creates and sustains diverse, active and engaged communities, economies and landscapes. We strive to achieve this by:*

- *Empowering a diverse membership,*
- *Providing professional development opportunities, and*
- *Putting planning knowledge into the hands of citizens and elected officials.*

## **2. Issues, Challenges and Opportunities Facing the Montana Association of Planners:**

### Legislative and Public Policy Issues

- We need to evaluate our legislative involvement – how effective have we been and how can we be more effective in the future?
- Is the amount of money we currently allocate for lobbying too much?
- The biennial legislative agenda is unwieldy, unclear and ineffective.
- We lack a long-term strategy in addressing legislative issues.

## Public Education and Outreach

- Our education of the public has been inadequate.
- We don't do a good job of promoting the value of planning to our elected officials.
- We don't engage in relationship building/networking with other organizations such as:
  - The Sonoran Institute
  - Smart Growth Coalition
  - Montana Association of Realtors
  - Surveyors/Builders
  - Montana Association of Geographic Information Professionals
  - MACo
  - Montana League of Cities and Towns
- We don't engage in relationship building/networking with:
  - State Elected Officials
  - Planning Boards
- There is no point of contact/reference point for our organization. (This is also a membership involvement issue.)
- We don't do a good job of disseminating information about who we are.
- There is a dearth of planners or champions of planning in positions of leadership or on professional boards.
- We need to educate, involve and empower the public as consumers of our services.

## Global Issues Facing Planning in the State:

- Montana has a conservative, anti-government attitude, reflected in our out-of-date legislation.
- We need to "spread the word" that planning is not contrary to private property rights.
- We need to address the fact that people don't want government "telling us what to do."
- There is an "east-west" split regarding attitudes about planning (this also might be characterized as an urban-rural split).
- It is difficult to keep up with court cases and legal opinions – both a challenge and an opportunity.
- Growth Policies do not always meet statutory requirements and therefore we need models and prototypes.
- Planners are not always addressing overall community needs as they affect the elderly and housing (among others).

### Membership Involvement/Membership Benefits

- There is apathy and lack of interest among our members.
- There is no point of contact/reference point for our organization. (This is also a public education and outreach issue.)
- We don't show our membership that our dues "pays dividends", which in turn leads to membership apathy.
- We face the challenge to expand and diversify our membership.
- We don't know what our members can do – what resources they can provide to the organization.

### Overall Organizational Issues

- We don't use the Internet as effectively as we could.
- We need paid staff to assist in the implementation of our programs and activities.
- We lack clarity in our priorities.
- There is a lack of understanding by our members and the public about the relationship of the various professional planning organizations including MAP, Western Planning Resources Inc., West Central Chapter of APA, etc.
- We are "awash in cash", which presents the opportunity for our organization.
- The committees established in our by-laws are non-functioning.
- Even though we have funds, we will have to expand our revenues to address our issues more fully.

### Professional Development

- The state university system lacks a Masters of Planning Degree.
- It is important to promote a healthy private sector planning profession in Montana.
- We would benefit from greater university access for professional development.
- We need more diverse and comprehensive conference content.
  - We need more information from our members on conference content on an ongoing basis
  - We need to "shake" our conference up – make it more exciting and informative
- We need more students involved in our organization and advocate planning as a career among students at Montana universities.
- Professional standards for planners are not consistent.

### 3. Priorities for the Organization

- Enhance our website/web presence.
- Conform with our by-laws with respect to our committees:

- Membership
- Public Education
- Professional Development
- Western Planner
- Legislative
- Election
- Consider hiring paid staff, including an executive director to implement our programs as needed.
- Involve our membership in decision making/strategic planning through:
  - Soliciting member participation in committees
  - Seeking member input in setting priorities for legislative initiatives
  - Soliciting member input in identifying conference and continuing education content
  - Identifying member needs and wants

#### **4. Implementation Strategies**

##### Overall Organizational Strategies

- Activate our committees with ACTIVE board involvement.
  - Each committee should have at least two board members
  - Each committee should produce a work plan and budget for the year, beginning in 2010.
- Enhance our website/web presence
  - Provide a clearing house for planning documents, such as growth policies, housing plans, capital improvement plans, urban renewal plans, etc., using both links and expanded capacity to host documents.
  - Create a “members only” section of the website.
  - Post links to articles of interests.
  - Encourage/provide for more on-line communication through list serves, blogs, and/or social networks.
- Establish a single point of contact for the organization.
- Identify new marketing (imaging/branding) strategies for membership recruitment and public outreach.
- Prepare standard operating procedures (SOPs) for the Board
- Identify resources to implement our programs.
- Continue holding MAP Board and Membership retreats/strategic planning sessions.
- Create a manageable repository of organizational documents.

- Hire services as needed to facilitate implementation of identified strategies including web enhancement, document storage, conference calling and marketing.

### Professional Development

- Energize our Professional Development Committee through the use of webinars and by providing greater access to universities for continuing education.
- “Shake up” our conferences by including:
  - Panels on big issues
  - Create as you go formats
  - Comprehensive content
  - A MAP Past President Forum
- Prepare standard operating procedures (SOPs) for conferences.
- Learn more about how our members currently access information.
- Continue our peer review program
- Continue our planning awards program.
- Present spring regional meetings/mini conferences focusing on planning board members and elected officials and shared issues

### Public Education and Outreach

- Get involved with companion organizations to promote the value of planning.
- Develop an “on call” professionals’ speakers bureau, e.g. Planning 101, with compensation for our speakers.

### Membership

- Publish a monthly newsletter (either electronically or in hard copy format).
- Provide free memberships to planning board members and elected officials.
- Improve member services.
- Provide more opportunities for member interaction.
- Consider a name change for MAP.
- Reach out to tribal planners.

### Legislative Activities

- Develop an overall strategy for lobbying.
- Engage in a long term approach to improving Montana’s planning statutes.

## **5. Committee Assignments and Tasks (recorded by Lanette)**

### Membership Committee

Andrew Finch, Chair

Kristen Smith

Anne Cossitt

#### Tasks:

- Prepare Long range goal
- Develop 1-year work plan
- Develop Budget
- Formulate newsletter administration
- Assist Planning Director Peer Review program
- Expand memberships Affiliates – Planning Board members, elected officials
- Identify benefits of membership
- Revise membership application
- Develop electronic communication
- Establish SOPs / Board member
- Initiate member communication and feedback
- Archive MAP Documents

### Legislation Committee

Roger Millar, Chair

David Greer

Andrew Finch

Chris Saunders

Candi Beaudry (member)

#### Tasks:

- Prepare Long range goal
- Develop 1-year work plan
- Develop Budget
- Prepare Lobbyist recommendation / budget
- Provide Legislative agenda to board
- Identify Legislation position / priorities
- Clarify Process for establishing legislative positions
- Engage in long range legislation planning

### **Public Education Committee**

Candy Beaudry, Chair (member)

Roger Millar

Janet Cornish

Steve Hess

Warren Vaughan

Tasks:

- Prepare Long range goal
- Develop 1-year work plan
- Develop Budget
- Work on branding / image
- Reach out to other organizations
- Explore/Establish Speakers' bureau
- Continue Awards committee (member)
- Make use of web component in outreach activities.

**Professional Development Committee**

Janet Cornish, Chair

Lanette Windemaker

Warren Vaughan

Anne Cossitt

David Greer

Bob Horne (member)

Tasks:

- Prepare Long range goal
- Develop 1-year work plan
- Develop Budget
- Jazz up conference
- Hold regional (within MT) conferences
- Develop Webinar database
- Work with Membership Committee on Newsletter / Web article efforts
- Advocate for University Masters Program
- Continue presenting Planning 101 and explore the addition of Planning 201 and 301
- Provide for AICP certification of conference presentations
- Confirm Realty certification of 101 presenters

**Western Planning Resources, Inc. Committee**

Jeff Bollman, Chair

Tammy McGill

Allyson Bristor (member)

Tasks:

- Prepare Long range goal
- Develop 1-year work plan

- Develop Budget
- Clarify MAP relationship to APA, WCC, WP (family tree) in 1<sup>st</sup> newsletter article
- Prepare/solicit monthly article to WCC / WP
- Facilitate MAP sponsored event at WP conference
- Facilitate MAP appointments to WP board
- Submit Montana projects for awards at National and WP conferences

### **Ad Hoc Website Committee**

Kristen Smith, Chair

Jeff Bollman

Chris Saunders

Warren Vaughan

Steve Hess

#### **Tasks:**

- Prepare work plan
- Develop budget
- Upgrade content
- Post or link to Planning Documents
- Post MAP By-Laws
- Post articles of interest
- Create a Members-only link