

MACSAC board retreat 11/11/09

Warner Park Recreation Center | 1625 Northport Drive, Madison WI 53704

Attendees: Dela, Dave, Theresa, Chris, Erika, Amanda, Claire, Kiera, Amy, Gini, Kristen

I. Mission/Vision – Retreat Planning Committee, Amanda

Agenda item is a continuation from the “What is MACSAC saying” report from Amanda and Rachel, started last spring. The report showed inconsistency in MACSAC statements on website, brochure, other promotional materials etc. The purpose of today’s discussion is to get a sense of what’s really important to communicate, not to decide the mission statement.

The question “Who are our stakeholders?” arose from the Board Self Assessment completed by Board before today’s retreat. We decided that our stakeholders are: Farmers (broadly, not just CSA farmers) and Eaters. Questions remain about the need to define a geographic scope, is that important, is it limiting? southern Wisconsin?

Parts of current Mission Statement that we feel like support what we do:

- *Promote and support CSA*
- *Increases access to locally grown food*
- *Include an educational component about informing people about CSA*
- *7b – short, succinct.*
- *The word “Sustainable” – jargon*
- *Include organic (somewhere in mission or vision)*
- *Avoid programmatic references*
- *Shorter statement – more adaptable over the long term*
- *“sustainable, just local food system” – unclear.*
- *Word – “promotes” – sticking point for 501c3 status*

*Most promising statement = ****Connecting and supporting CSA farmers & eaters*****

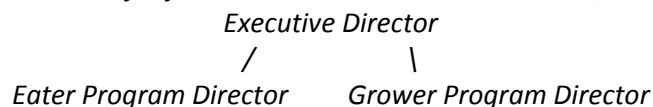
Ideas for Vision statement:

- *Total access to CSA, every household can be a part of a CSA*
- *CSA is the backbone of a local food system*
- *Our work with farms*
- *Removing barriers to CSA membership and CSA farmers*

Decisions & To do: *In agreement that we should have a vision statement. Amanda, new Board Chair, Kiera and Gini will work on mission and vision statement suggestions for the next meeting, Dec 8.*

II. Staff Structure – Personnel Committee

A suggested staff structure (created by Development Committee), with their suggested responsibilities was distributed for feedback and to start the discussion;



This staff structure is proposed to start in January 2010 with new budget, and transition over the next two years. The next decisions for staff structure will include title changes, salaries, responsibilities, new staff person, and where the funds will come from.

Past issues with ED: If we have an ED, we have to have something to direct, but now we have a proposed structure with two program directors, and clearly a need for more effort into building grower capacity (discussion below).

Decisions & To Do: *No objections to staff structure. Personnel committee will work with staff to create a plan for staff responsibilities, for the transition of responsibilities, salaries and title changes. Will bring proposal to Dec meeting.*

III. Grower Program Director Brainstorming - New Grower Committee

Chris provided breakdown of potential tasks/activities that GP Director would take on and the amount of time each might take. Recommends one person as CSA guru to handle tasks (could be up to full time or over), but would need to call on several farmers to help out and get several pairs of eyes on site visits, etc.

- *CSA staff person - doesn't necessarily have to be a farmer, but would be great if it could be. Also need good writing, communication, event coordination, and web resources skills.*
- *Is it realistic for CSA farmer to be able to come out to a farm for 3 hours in the middle of summer? What are limitations of staff person being a farmer?*
- *Don't think that this person would be on call for emergency situations like disease, etc. But more for CSA pick up, greenhouse suggestions, irrigation, crop rotation, etc.*
- *Some people already feel comfortable calling other farmers to ask questions, but maybe newer growers in the community may not be comfortable calling other growers. So newer growers may take more advantage of this service.*

- *Kiera - It seems that building the grower resources are most time consuming part of the work initially, then educational sessions, etc. Some of the responsibilities/tasks we are doing now, and some are new.*
- *Dave - Seems like top priority would be with one-on-one consulting because there would be the most immediate impact*
- *Idea to create a list/inventory of what our existing farmers are experts in, (potentially at Annual Mtg) and if they're willing to share that with the group*
- *Can also source expertise outside of existing farmers*

- *Questions and cost of advice; limit to number of calls staff person would provide.*
- *What is compelling \$rate for a half day? - \$200, maybe \$50/hr plus mileage reimbursement*
- *On and Off-season rate?*
- *Ask farmers at annual meeting what they would pay for service or would like to be paid for consulting? Would they use the service, how often would they use it? What is their expertise? Which of these services are most important to you in the GP Director position? Would you like to grow the number of shares you can provide?*

- *Consultant Prep time – Consultant would need to have a list of questions before hand from the client.*
- *Evaluation - Staff person will need to evaluate whether the consultant is worth the money.*

- *Suggested Name – Grow Squad*

- *Use grants to fund position – full time person to work on existing resources, growing mentorships, gatherings, field days, but also organize new one-on-one consulting service*
- *Primary responsibility – one-on-one consulting*
- *Secondary responsibility – grower mentorships – 5 or 6 folks talking about a specific topic*

- *Evaluation/Impact (for grant) ~500 new shares, 2 new farms*
- *More we can show that we're growing the amount of local food in Wisconsin the more favorably the State would see the application*
 - *Incorporating non MACSAC farms*
 - *Some MACSAC farms don't want to grow*
- *Dave proposes that the amount would be much more, ~15 new farms in the next two years, and maybe 50 shares per farm... So amount could be much more.*

Decisions & to do: *All in favor of going forward with Buy Local, Buy WI grant before Annual meeting, but information/survey from Annual Meeting will inform the position and what the priorities of the position will be. The New Grower Committee will help craft the position and grant.*

IV. Development Plan – Development Committee

Background/Introduction: Goal for 2010 is to reinvest in the organization to stabilize and expand our infrastructure.

Recommendations:

1. *501c3 status*
 - a. *Will help with receiving grants, but don't need this status for upcoming grant*
 - b. *Staff time to complete status change: once we have background info and necessary advice – will be a couple days of work*
 - c. *Reasons for applying right now – diversifying the funding stream*
 - d. **Decision:** *All agreed to go forward with changing to 501c3 status*
2. *New fundraising efforts of grower programs & staff*
 - a. *~\$50,000*
 - b. **Decision:** *Agreed to go forward with the listed grants for grower programs*
3. *Reinvesting 50% of MACSAC reserve money into organizational infrastructure*
 - a. *Conservative scenario – 50% over the course of three year, 25K in yr1, 15K in year 2, 10K in yr 3*
 - b. *Investment in staff, who then have a greater ability to diversify funding stream and bring in more fund; writing grants & having value-added products*
 - c. *Concern about if we invest some of the \$ into ongoing things or a one time thing, how we keep up with a \$20,000 investment each year. So if we increase staff funding by \$20,000, we have to keep providing those funds each year.*
 - d. *Goal is not to become a grant driven organization, but to diversify funding stream in a sustainable manner.*
 - e. **Decision:** *Approval to create a plan for next three years using this funding concept*
 - f. **To do:** *Development Committee will work on 2010 Budget, assess the gaps in funding, and finding sources for those gaps*

V. Board Self Assessment

1. *Board Self Assessment – Summary of Board comments*
 - a. *Bulk of work done this year was done by Dev. Committee*

- b. Have no Board members on the Finance Committee, we need expertise and participation on this Committee*
 - c. Time commitment – hope is that as staff structure changes, there will be a shift of time commitment from the Board; Some folks spending more time than intended to on MACSAC work*
 - d. Overall – high approval rating amongst Board members*
 - e. Good balance between stability and innovation; on the verge of real innovation*
 - f. New Potential Board Members – PS, finance, marketing, legal*
- 2. Co-chair position on Committees, held by a Board member*
 - a. Co-chair, serves as a liason, communication, and provides written summary or verbal report on what's happening on committee level to Board*
 - b. Serves more of an advisory role*
- 3. Board Chair*
 - a. Idea of having Chair be a rotating position on 2 yr. term*
 - b. Responsibilities – could be very small – coordinating/planning Board meetings, conversing with Director*
 - c. **Decision:** Agreed that Board Chair holds position for 2-yr term, does not have to take on hiring process or sit on Personnel committee*
 - d. Holding off to decide on new Chair for December meeting*
- 4. Date change – for Dec Board Meeting*
 - a. 8am-10am; Tuesday, Dec 8, MACSAC office, 303 S. Paterson St. Suite 1B*