



2012-14 Strategic Priorities

Approved by the Board of Directors: June 30, 2012

Updated by Joan McBride: September 5, 2012

INTRODUCTION

Over the weekend of February 18-19, 2012, Little People of America's Board of Directors met to create a spirit of teamwork, be informed of major topics facing the organization, and brainstorm a strategic direction for the organization's next three years. Each member of the Executive Committee, the district directors (or their designated proxies), the parliamentarian and executive director were in attendance at the meeting, which was facilitated by consultants Joan McBride and Carole Zavala.

Over the two days, the following topics were covered:

- 1) A variety of leadership and team-building exercises
- 2) Presentations on BioMarin, www.growingstronger.org and governance
- 3) A report on the organization's progress toward its 2008-11 strategic plan
- 4) A report on current facts, figures and accomplishments
- 5) Results of the planning surveys conducted by phone (to the board of directors) and chapter presidents/committee chairs (via www.surveymonkey.com), in the form of a SWOT (strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats) analysis
- 6) Breakout sessions defining a) strategic priorities for the next three years and b) tactics for pursuing these strategies

The two-day session concluded with a traditional board meeting.

The purpose of this particular document is to outline the strategic priorities defined during the retreat, specific tactics for accomplishing each priority, and recommendations for implementation and reporting. A separate report summarizing the entire weekend is also available.

STRATEGIC PRIORITY 1: Medical Advocacy. Continue to educate our community about medical options available to little people.

Tactic	Timeframe	Person(s) Responsible	Possible Obstacles/ Resources Req'd	Consultants' Comments	Status
A. Provide accurate, timely information related to medical options or treatments (such as BioMarin) designed to enhance quality of life to members and their families, with a goal of educating and informing families so that they can make choices that best meet their needs. Information can be made available through district directors, lpaonline.org, <i>LPA Today</i> , Facebook, e-newsletters, conferences and meetings, etc.	As soon as possible	Leah Smith, Ericka Okenfuss, Dr. McKenzie	Time and effort	Information about BioMarin should be distributed as soon as possible.	Article included in Winter/Spring 2012 <i>LPA Today</i>
B. Create a "tool kit" to support the efforts noted in A, including an FAQ document and PowerPoint presentation which can be used by all levels of the organization.	March, 2012	Leah Smith, Ericka Okenfuss	Time and effort		
C. Utilize the MAB in facilitating and communicating medical information as appropriate. Information presented will primarily be fact and evidence based, although we recognize that emotions are powerful and varied on this topic throughout the membership.	As soon as possible	VP Programs	Time and effort		
D. Consider cross-representation from the LPA and MAB boards to foster communication*	See Strat Priority 5	Governance Cte	Time and effort		In progress

*Potential medical partnerships (such as Growing Stronger) should then be referred to these two representatives or a representative from their own district (such representatives need to be identified) for coaching and next steps. Each process also needs to be documented. An LPA policy regarding these types of inquiries/relationships does exist; it needs to be revisited and revised if necessary.

STRATEGIC PRIORITY 2: Community Awareness/Advocacy. Continue to educate the general public about dwarfism and advocate for the community as appropriate.

Tactic	Timeframe	Person(s) Responsible	Possible Obstacles/ Resources Req'd	Consultants' Comments	Status
A. Revisit and enhance LPA's community awareness/advocacy tool kit	By December, 2012	Advocacy Cte	Time and effort	Topic mentioned frequently in pre-meeting surveys	
B. Continue to pursue community awareness efforts, including but not limited to National Dwarfism Awareness Month.	Ongoing	Advocacy Cte	Time and effort; some expense may be involved in future.	See above	Times Square PSA initiated
C. Develop policy agenda that identifies state and federal legislation that LPA supports or opposes.	Ongoing	Advocacy Cte	Time and effort		

STRATEGIC PRIORITY 3: Membership and Volunteerism. Develop and implement a plan designed to enhance the recruitment, retention and volunteer involvement of LPA's membership.

Tactic	Timeframe	Person(s) Responsible	Possible Obstacles/ Resources Req'd	Consultants' Comments	Status
A. Research 1) possibility of providing dues-free memberships (with no benefits) and paid memberships (perhaps at different levels) which provide specific membership benefits (another option is a \$10 annual membership with no benefits); 2) why lapsed members have let their memberships expire (i.e. through a Survey Monkey survey)	2012	E. Crough/ Membership Cte	Time and effort	This needs to be evaluated very carefully. Concern re: chapter/ district budgets in particular.	
B. Brainstorm/research (by examining benefits offered by similar organizations) additional benefits (beyond conference discounts, voting privileges and <i>LPA Today</i> subscription) in an effort to enhance the value of membership. Value of LPA membership (fact sheet outlining value and accomplishments; pie chart illustrating use of dues) should also be communicated through Web site, <i>LPA Today</i> , etc.	2012	E. Crough/ Membership Cte	Time and effort; additional benefits may require a financial investment		
C. Once A and B are completed, develop a specific membership plan* which outlines all strategies, as well as cash flow projections/ financial ramifications. Volunteer strategies should also be included in this plan.	January through June, 2013	E. Crough/ Membership Cte	Time and effort; cost of information packets TBD		
D. Present plan to board for review/approval.	July, 2013 BOD mtg	Ethan Crough	Time and effort		
E. Implement plan upon approval.	August, 2013—on	E. Crough/ Membership Cte	Time and effort		
F. Evaluate plan and make adjustments as appropriate.	Annually beginning in 2014	E. Crough/ Membership Cte	Time and effort		

*Possible tactics identified at the 2012 Mid-Year meeting include 1) identifying strategies for reaching out to lapsed members, 2) outreach through each district to new parents through local hospitals and clinics (i.e. information packets for social workers), 3) document procedures for recruitment and retention, 4) form a membership committee to implement plan (i.e. Mike, Joe, Shannon and Ethan), 5) use of raffles (i.e. 3 year members included in a raffle for a lifetime membership), 6) more events for young adults, 7) welcome calls/emails to new members from chapter president, district director and VP of membership, 8) follow-up calls to lapsed members from chapter presidents/district directors

STRATEGIC PRIORITY 4: Fundraising and Finance. Implement a financial system that maximizes fundraising opportunities while ensuring financial accountability and transparency at all levels of the organization.

Tactic	Timeframe	Person(s) Responsible	Possible Obstacles/ Resources Req'd	Consultants' Comments	Status
A. Maximize fundraising opportunities by expanding upon LPA's current fundraising activities*.	Ongoing	Jason Rasa/ Joanna Campbell	Additional staffing/ consulting (cost TBD); time and effort	Holiday card solicitation recommended at Mid-Year; concern that this could conflict with \$50 for 50 Campaign. A holiday msg could be incl. in a \$50 for 50 eblast.	Fund dev plan updated in August, 2012 (see below)
B. Revise LPA's fund development plan with the tactics identified above and implement accordingly.	Revise plan by June, 2012	Joanna Campbell/ Joan McBride	Time and effort	Board members should receive education about fundraising success stories from similar orgs	Completed: 8/12
C. Revisit and revise LPA's case for support document	Revise case by June, 2012	Joanna Campbell/ Joan McBride	Time and effort		Completed in 8/12; Joanna finalizing
D. Staff the fundraising effort as needed (see Strategic Priority 6 for additional information)	Discuss at July, 2012 BOD meeting	Jason Rasa/ Joanna Campbell	See Strategic Priority 6		To be discussed after board restructure
E. Create specific finance recommendations** and present to board for approval	Develop in spring 2012; present @ Jul 2012 BOD mtng	Jason Rasa	Time and effort		
F. Implement financial reporting plan	July to Dec. 2012	Jason Rasa	Time and effort		

* Recommended strategies: \$50 for 50 More Campaign (including board giving), reactivation of fundraising committee to recruit donors from beyond existing membership, expansion of conference sponsorships (particularly timely due to CMC's role in future conferences), grants and planned giving education. District directors should also be involved in identifying potential donors from within their districts; also consider targeted solicitations for life members.

**May include the following tactics: 1) eliminating chapter treasurers and moving responsibility for finances to district treasurer/director, 2) streamline reporting process, 3) follow-through with by-law changes as necessary (see Strategic Priority 5), 4) maintain separate accounts for chapters, 5) on-line viewing access for each chapter account. Local chapters will still need access to funds, but there needs to be a method for national to account for chapter and district funds.

STRATEGIC PRIORITY 5: Governance. Design and implement a governance structure that enhances LPA’s mission and utilizes best practices for a nonprofit organization.

Tactic	Timeframe	Person(s) Responsible	Possible Obstacles/ Resources Required	Consultants’ Comments	Status
A. Complete trademark and Web domain protection	By June 30, 2012	Andrew Gray	Minimal (i.e. \$500)	Also provide board member education re: governance/role of the board	In progress
B. Develop a formal plan for recommended board restructure; restructure should aim for increased efficiency while assuring representation of membership	By May 31, 2012	Gov Cte	Time and effort		Plan completed
C. Communicate proposed structure to membership through district and national conferences, e-newsletters, Web site, <i>LPA Today</i> , etc.	June through October, 2012	Gov Cte	Possible resistance to change by membership; time and effort		
D. Amend by-laws and articles of incorporation to reflect new structure	Nov to Dec, 2012	Andrew Gray	See above		
E. Pursue organizational approval of new by-laws/articles as outlined in current by-laws.	Jan to July 2013; final vote at national conf. in 2013	Andrew Gray, Jon North, Joanna Campbell	See above		

*Ideas discussed at Mid-Year Meeting include adding an at-large appointed position (research if this is possible since remainder of board is elected—this may also be the MAB representative mentioned under Strategic Priority 1), VP of Medical & Research and VP of District Operations to existing board; all other executive committee positions would also remain. Under the new structure, it is proposed that District Directors no longer serve on the board (VP of District Operations would be primary voice for membership.) Another potential structure was also presented prior to the Mid-Year which would feature regional representatives on the board. Governance Committee needs to convene to examine possible structures/make a specific recommendation as soon as possible; new structure must also follow applicable nonprofit laws and regulations. If District Directors no longer serve on the board, their roles would transition to more fiscal responsibility/ability to serve their chapters in a more hands-on manner.

Note: The district directors and proxies in attendance at the mid-year meeting were generally in favor of district directors no longer serving on the board. There was concern, however, that the membership still be represented in some manner and that a system of “checks and balances” be preserved.

STRATEGIC PRIORITY 6: Staffing. Determine a staffing configuration which best meets the needs of the organization.

Tactic	Timeframe	Person(s) Responsible	Possible Obstacles/ Resources Required	Consultants' Comments	Status
A. Conduct a staffing survey every year which will 1) confirm that staffing is adequate based upon conference needs and day-to-day operations, 2) incorporate input from executive director and 3) determine possible raises/bonuses.	Annually before July board meeting	Gary Arnold	Time and effort		
B. Between staffing surveys, stay in close contact with Executive Director to make sure staffing needs are being met.	Ongoing	Gary Arnold	Time and effort		
C. Consider adding a professional fundraiser to the staff	Discuss at July, 2014 board meeting	Board of Directors	Salary for full time fundraiser would be at least \$60K plus benefits; part time or consultant would be less; time and effort	At the mid-year meeting, hiring a grantwriter was suggested. It is probably more prudent to hire/retain a fundraising generalist who can manage a variety of fundraising programs.	
D. Make <i>LPA Today</i> a better product by enhancing the quality of the magazine; a "test run" will take place with a paid consultant for the winter/spring, 2012 issue.	March, 2012	Gary Arnold, Leah Smith, Joanna Campbell	Transition from current system; consultant fees estimated at \$1,000 per issue		Joan McBride retained; currently working on 3 rd issue under new system

IMPLEMENTATION AND REPORTING

It is recommended that LPA's Board of Directors review and approve this document at its next regularly scheduled board meeting. Once approved, the strategic priorities should also be shared with the membership via the Web site, e-newsletters, and *LPA Today*.

It is recommended that Gary Arnold, President of Little People of America, take responsibility for the plan's implementation. The document should also be updated periodically (particularly the "Status" column). Updates should be presented to the board at least twice each year, including one update at the National Conference board meeting.