September 16, 2020

Lucy and via you to the Board,

This follows up on my August 21 email on the subject of “For the Board’s Consideration” about IBHA’s planning approach which received several positive responses and no negative responses. I interpreted that outcome as encouragement, or at least no objection, to me thinking further about its content.

Experiences as board chair of a recovering 35-year old global association, board chair for a national association on its fiftieth anniversary, membership on a variety of other boards, and CEO at four major nature and science museum have guided me that an organization’s “strategy” is best viewed as the culmination of a multistep process using time-limited, result-specific task forces rather than standing committees, especially if the available team is relatively small but aspires to greater impacts.

Lucy has asked me to chair IBHA’s planning effort as a task force. I am pleased to do so and suggest these sequential, but also iterative, four steps to span the next year or so:

1. Core values are enduring attitudinal traits, typically 5-7, that define the organization’s culture and should not be violated in any transaction or decision.
2. Mission is a pithy distinctive statement of the organization’s purpose, its raison d’être and visualized as its beating heart, that is best stated in impact terms.
3. Vision is an uplifting pithy statement that imagines a more advanced stage of organizational success with greater achievements (? in 2030).
4. Strategy is a high-level, annually updated, roadmap of the organization’s intentions expressed as goals as a guide to how value-conforming efforts will best advance the mission in the direction of the vision.

In this scenario, the IBHA History task force would get underway and finish as soon as practicable, the 1-4 sequence would be followed by By-Laws and Website task force updates\*, and then these would be followed by new Board Recruitment and Membership Recruitment standing committees\* (\*both need the total 1-4 result as their guiding input). Along the way, other needs, such as a board conduct and ethics task force, could be complementary task force efforts.

I look forward the Board’s comments and responding to any questions about this planning agenda item at the October 4 board meeting.

Respectfully, Emlyn