



WASHINGTON STATE
MAIN STREET
PROGRAM

Regional Retreats

*Strong boards build
strong Main Streets*





Day 2

- Shared understanding
- Culture & leadership
- Navigating responsibilities



Main Street leadership

- Lead people
- Manage resources
- Execute plans





- **Bring people together and build sense of ownership**
- **Stay true what we do, who we are**
- **Foresight - potential, valuable assets, etc.**





- Maximize time
- Develop an environment where people can succeed
- Finances & assets



- Forge action-driven programming and impact
- Working shoulder-to-shoulder





Boards show commitment

- By driving the strategy and vision
- By defining clear direction and priorities
- When they lead by example

Leadership pipelines

- Welcoming
- Recruiting
- Orienting
- Elevating





Welcoming

How are future leaders introduced to your organization?

Recruiting

- **Seek out those who value your mission and share a commitment to the vision**
- **Understand and reflect demographics**



Onboarding

Special meeting for new board members

Orientation packet (see Board Leadership Guide)

**Personal phone call with board president
and/or executive director**

**Assignment of a "board buddy," matching an
experienced board member with a new board member**

**Follow up personal contact after first
three months of board service**

Elevating

- **Succession is success!**
- **Great leaders proactively seek ways to mentor and elevate newer board members**



The Main Street Structure





Board & ED Partnership

- Understanding the executive director's role in relation to the board's
- Coaching & supporting the executive director

The Executive Director's Role

- **Leadership:**
Strategist, advocate
- **Management:** Day-to-day administration
- **Execution:** Alongside volunteers





The ED is *not*..

- The sole fundraiser
- The board nor committee chair
- The bookkeeper
- The sole program implementer

Joys

- ▲ Making a positive difference
- ▲ Building relationships
- ▲ Creativity and problem solving
- ▲ Tangible improvements downtown
- ▲ Saving historic buildings
- ▲ Celebrating success
- ▲ Being at the table of major decisions
- ▲ Getting to be a visionary
- ▲ Meaningful/fulfilling work
- ▲ Interesting and diverse
- ▲ Rich community life
- ▲ Flexibility in schedule
- ▲ Working with volunteers
- ▲ Networking with Main Street peers
- ▲ Being a community leader

Pains

- ▼ Boundaries (lack thereof)
- ▼ Constantly accessible, always "on"
- ▼ Unrealistic expectations
- ▼ Dealing with roadblocks/politics
- ▼ Unresponsiveness from volunteers
- ▼ Lack of resources (funding, staffing)
- ▼ Endless work, always "what's next?"
- ▼ Inadequate pay and benefits
- ▼ Being pulled in multiple directions
- ▼ Difficult to unplug, take time away
- ▼ Progress not being acknowledged
- ▼ Misperceptions
- ▼ Cheerleading fatigue
- ▼ Constantly "putting out fires"

Coaching & Accountability

- Center work on the mission
- Serve as a sounding board
- Clearly state desired end results, giving flexibility to means



Mind Your Meetings

- Share agenda & materials in advance
- Build in social time (outside the agenda)
- Time keep & facilitate
- Active asks, not just updates





Walla Walla

Planning Practices

- Set aside time for strategy each year
- Strategy drives work plans
- The many benefits of work plans!

Financials & Fundraising

- Developing an annual budget
- Monitoring the finances
- Raising sufficient funds





**Now
what?**

