

Modernization & Revitalization Update Report

October 22, 2015

The primary purpose of this update is to give a recap summary of the NASW Board of Directors (Board) September 2015 decision, discuss forums and opportunities for continued chapter/national collaboration, provide an update on the work of the implementation teams, and to provide information regarding a petition received by the Board requesting a special meeting of the membership.

A. Review of the Board's September Decision

On September 25, the Board approved the continued development and implementation of the plan outlined in the *Modernization & Revitalization Implementation Plan General Design Document*. In its deliberations, the Board reviewed the 40-page General Design Document as well as the project plan presented in a 40-page Gantt chart (*these documents are posted on SharePoint*). The Board's approval of the plan mandates that work continue to operationalize and implement its June 2015 decision regarding the structure and future of the organization.

The planning process has been, and will continue to be, a collaboration between the chapter and national leadership. For instance, forty-one (41) chapter staff are members of the fifteen (15) implementation teams. Generally, the teams will meet on a weekly basis, focusing their work on operationalizing the changes approved by the Board. Importantly, much of the teams' initial work focuses on identifying critical issues that require decisions shortly.

The Board will review an update of the implementation plan at its January 2016 meeting. In the meantime, the Board Steering Committee will begin its oversight work, reviewing updates that summarize progress in the implementation process.

B. Chapter/National Collaboration

As the modernization and revitalization journey continues, we will look to enhance and expand opportunities to strengthen the collaborative partnership across the Association. As we position NASW for greater vitality, vibrancy and impact, it is critical that our collaborative partnership continues to grow. To that end, the following forums serve as vehicles for continuing the modernization & revitalization discussion.

- **COCE Steering Committee** – In person all day meetings with the members of the steering committee and key national staff are held semi-annually. The primary focus of the last two meetings has been on modernization. For instance, the September meeting provided an opportunity for COCE Steering Committee members to give input into the implementation plan that was submitted to the Board in September.

- **Implementation Functional Teams** – Chapter executive directors (chapter staff) play an important role on the teams. For most teams, executive directors serve as the team facilitator, partnering with the team lead to direct and guide their team’s implementation planning process and activities.
- **COCE Quarterly Call/Webinar** – On October 1, modernization was the focus of the call. The typical agenda was suspended to allow time for the CEO to join the meeting consisting of a 90 minute conversation with chapter executives regarding ways to maximize our efforts to operationalize the modernization & revitalization vision.
- **COCE Fall Meeting** – The agenda for this meeting provides another important opportunity to delve deeper into the details of the design and implementation. The COCE Chair and Steering Committee have invited chapter Presidents and Presidents-Elect to join the modernization discussion via Webinar on Monday, November 30 from 9:15 -11:00 am CST.
- **“Chats with Chapters”** – Conference calls with chapter Executive Directors and Presidents have been held over the last several weeks and will continue over the next several months. The calls are intended to allow for small group informal discussion, continued dialogue, and input. The small group allows for more didactic conversation, providing opportunities for clarification, questions and dialogue. Key highlights include:
 - *Chapters Participating, Thus Far* – the chapters that have been on the calls to date include: NJ, MS, LA, AR, FL, MI, VI, MA, NYC, KS, IN, DC, CA, IA, CT, ND, and WY. We are looking forward to having the opportunity to engage other chapter Executive Directors and Presidents in these informal discussions.
 - *Forums for More Conversations* – we will continue to look for more opportunities for chapter participation in the implementation process; in particular, we will create additional forums to engage chapter Presidents and Presidents-Elect in ongoing conversation; volunteer leadership input will include:
 - President input sessions
 - Participation in surveys
 - Input into and suggestions for team recommendations
 - CEO participation in COCP quarterly meetings
 - Other forums

C. Operationalization of the Vision

As we continue the modernization & revitalization implementation planning process, we are identifying specific details, addressing the unanswered questions, responding to frequently asked questions, providing clarification, and identifying opportunities and challenges. Throughout the planning process we will seek to provide details and specifics.

Overarching Implementation Governance & Coordination

- *Appointment of Board Steering Committee*: The eight (8) member Board Steering Committee is now seated, the membership includes 3 Board members, a COCP and COCE representative, and

three (3) volunteers. Melissa Feld and Doretta Richards will staff the committee. Committee members are:

- **Emily Donovan, IA, Board Member, Co-Chair**
 - **Wanda Ellingson, CO, Board Member, Co-Chair**
 - **Patrick Johnson, CT, Board Treasurer**
 - **Anthony Hill, DC Metro President, COCP Chair**
 - **Tamitha Overly, MO/AK Executive Director, COCE Chair**
 - **Mary McCarthy, NYS, Volunteer**
 - **Kathy Wehrmann, IL, Volunteer**
 - **Jeanette McQueen, CO, Volunteer**
- ***Implementation Coordinating Committee (ICC)***: The ICC will continue its project management role, providing guidance and direction to the functional teams, maintaining the project plan for the entire implementation, helping refine and define goals and objectives, and holding logistical responsibility for overseeing the successful development and implementation of the overall project plan.
 - ***Project Plan***: The functional teams' weekly update reports will provide the basis for adding to the plan, and adapting and revising the plan. The project plan serves to help the teams with identifying critical questions that require broader discussion, due diligence, deliberation and timely decisions.
 - ***Design Detail Document***: Along with the project plan, we will develop a Design Detail Document that will eventually serve as our implementation "playbook." This document will undergo multiple iterations as our planning cycle continues and we move toward implementation. The document will become increasingly more detailed over time.
 - ***Chapter Business Needs Committee***: This team will continue its work defining chapter business requirements across all functional areas, ensuring that the collective chapters' business requirements are considered, and met, in the areas within the scope of the project.

Operationalizing the plan requires that critical decisions are well-timed to allow sufficient time for implementation activities to be completed on schedule. In making these decisions, we will rely on team recommendations and input from broader discussions. As we operationalize the plan, we will strike a balance between getting extensive input and making timely decisions that keep us on track.

Designing the Operational Details

The implementation teams are intensely engaged in adding detail to the implementation plan. The implementation plan presented to the Board in September concentrated on the "what" needs to be done. Teams are now determining "exactly how" to operationalize the plan, looking at the different technologies and work processes that are needed to provide the capacity and functionality that matches business requirements for the Board-approved goals for modernizing and revitalizing the Association. Essentially their work involves drilling down into the layers of detail, logistics, and opportunities.

Through the various input channels discussed above, we are beginning to identify, and sort through, the next layers of detail. Discussed below are some of the themes and questions that are emerging from the teams and the ongoing series of discussions occurring across the Association.

- **Structure of National and Chapter Boards** - Delivery of high quality local programming through the chapters has long been a hallmark of NASW. Ensuring that our chapter structure is sustainable for the next thirty (30) years (and beyond) is an important priority. In addition to preserving our chapters, we seek to increase our local focus on enhancing member engagement, benefits, and services. Below are a few key highlights emerging from planning discussions:
 - Chapter Boards Remaining Boards of Directors – initial due diligence indicates the local boards can continue to be called Boards of Directors. The roles and responsibilities of the local boards likely will be defined in a “charter.”
 - Maximizing Local Board Authority – we all desire to assure, despite legal and fiduciary responsibility transitioning to the Board, that Chapter Boards have the authority needed to implement local programming. Providing a solid foundation for local boards in the charter is one way to assure that empowerment. Another example is to ensure that Chapter Boards have a substantive role in the hiring and evaluation of executive directors. Other important considerations include the chapter board’s input on the budget for local programs.

- **Nationalization of Chapter Staff** – Chapter staff become nationalized employees of the Association, with the chapter executive director reporting to the national office. Below are highlights of a few key issues being discussed:
 - HR Functional Team – Given the importance of the HR issues, this team has consistently been meeting on a weekly basis; and has met at least six (6) times to formulate their recommendations. We are hopeful that the team’s recommendations on several key issues will be made in time for inclusion in the COCE Fall Meeting.
 - Chapter ED Concerns – Contracts, salaries, benefits, and reporting relationship are being discussed. We are hopeful that the HR Team will have solid recommendations in this area in time for discussion at the Fall COCE meeting on November 30.
 - Executive Director Job Descriptions – Currently we have a standard job description for executive directors (Attachment A of current contracts). If revisions are needed to the current job description as part of implementation, it will be done so with input from chapter leadership.
 - HR Survey: The Chapter Business Needs Committee has distributed the HR Function Team’s two part survey – a combination of an employee census and chapter data collection.

- **Centralization of Administrative Services** – In order to maximize our operational resources and create a more sustainable organizational structure, administrative services, including finance, accounting, human resources and information technology, will be centralized at the National Office.
 - Administrative Fees: there is the need to assure that the assessing of the administrative fees are properly aligned and timed to be applied when responsibilities actually shift from the chapters to national office. The fees will be reflective of duties.
 - Additionally, it has been suggested there is a need for chapters to know the estimated amount of the administrative fee for this spring as they plan their FY2017 budgets; this is a reasonable request that national office will work to meet. We also know that the admin fee might cause “functional impacts” for certain chapters which will have to be taken into account when determining the fee for each chapter.
 - **Chapter Readiness Assessments**: We envision that many of the specifics for chapters will be sorted through as part of the readiness assessment process that will be completed prior to implementation. The readiness assessment will inform if/when certain aspects of the implementation require “ramp-up or ramp-down” processes.
 - **Data-Driven**: Since we seek to be data-driven, it was suggested that there might be other associations that assess an administrative fee to chapters that we can learn from. This idea will be shared with the implementation team.
 - Budgeting Overview – The Budget and Financial Reporting team is discussing how to operationalize the National Board’s budget oversight role with the chapter budgets.
 - Chapter Assets – The team envisions having an account that has chapter specific funds that will allow for chapter specific assets to be earmarked for each chapter, including any earnings associated with the assets. There is no desire on the part of national office to “seize” chapter assets. The intent is to implement a comprehensive investment strategy that preserves and grows our collective assets, knowing that our pooled assets will position the Association to reap greater gains on investments.
 - Chapter Development Fund (CDF) – Per the board’s June 2015 decision, the CDF fund will continue for the time being.
 - Information Technology: The goal here includes creating a single platform that integrates current, future and historical data.
 - **Learning Management System**: We will have a national platform for online continuing education programming, including online registrations.
 - **National Website with Dedicated Pages for Chapters**: The re-vamped national website will include microsites for each chapter.
- **Uniform Branding and Messaging** – The Association will establish and maintain consistent branding and messaging, and will develop collaborative marketing plans.

D. Request for Special Meeting of Members

The National Board of Directors has received a petition with 725 signatures requesting a special meeting of the members to change the modernization plan. The petition was filed by a coalition of 25 chapter presidents requesting an opportunity for NASW members to discuss the plan and consider alternatives for changing it.

A verification process is currently underway to ensure the petition meets the Bylaws requirement of having at least 500 signatures from current Association members, including 25 signatures from each of the 13 electoral regions. We will begin the process of preparing for the special membership meeting in accordance with NASW Bylaws and Robert's Rules of Order. We will keep you posted as the planning for the special membership meeting unfolds. There are a number of logistics that require sorting, including: notice to the membership; determining format/location, scheduling, agenda, procedures and conduct of the meeting; technology needs; and costs.

As we conclude all the celebrations for our 60th Anniversary, it is fitting that the Association's leadership is deeply engaged in a process to position NASW for continued impact over the next 60 years. NASW's commitment to promoting and protecting social workers, advancing the profession, and seeking social justice for our clients and communities rest on our shoulders— ¡viva la Asociación!

Take great care