



**American Brain Foundation
Strategic Planning Committee Meeting
April 11, 2016
Teleconference Call**

Call to order: April 11, 2016 at 8:46 a.m. (Central) by Dr. Shulman, Chair

In attendance: Jeffrey Rosenfeld, MD; Martin Shenkman; Lisa Shulman, MD, Chair; Ben Utecht

Staff: Tim Engel, CPA; John Hutchins, JD; Jane Ransom; Lauren Ross; Suzi Sherman; Marlys Weyandt

Guests: Bob Carter, Lela Diaz and Jim Starr, consultants at Carter; Gail Thomason and Kathleen Henrichs, consultants at Henrichs & Associates; Linda Hall, consultant at Coachange

Excused: Kevin Goodno, JD; A. Gordon Smith, MD

1. **Welcome and introduction of attendees:** Dr. Shulman welcomed everyone and discussed the agenda and objective for the meeting.
2. **Strategic planning progress report:** Ms. Ransom has started researching crowdfunding platforms and has spoken to the CEO of Kiva and CEO's at other crowdfunding/micro-lending organizations.

The main feedback is that marketing is key for these kinds of websites, so the ABF will need to focus heavily on marketing/communications. In terms of staffing, KIVA recommended for a project of our size to have 2 full-time IT staff and 1 full-time customer service representative.

KIVA recommends a "white label solution" for the ABF where we purchase a platform from someone and customize to our needs instead of building from scratch. Ms. Ransom will research the costs associated with these platforms after the Annual Meeting.

3. **Carter Co. philanthropic assessment report:** Bob Carter, CEO of Carter provided background about the methodology used (interview methodology) to conduct the philanthropic assessment and why/how the interviewees were identified. Interviewees were individuals/organizations that Carter felt were a good cross section of those who would impact good strategies and increase funding as the ABF goes forward.

Mr. Carter also discussed the importance of creating a culture of philanthropy.

This means developing, between the ABF and the AAN, a common outlook and values with respect to fundraising.

There are specific recommendations in the Carter report that the ABF can carry out to create a culture of philanthropy.

Jim Starr provided highlights of the 7 recommendations in the report.

1. Add additional staff:

- Hire a Chief External Affairs Officer who would be responsible for marketing and fundraising
- Hire a second Major Gifts Officer to secure large gifts
- Hire a Junior Fundraiser who would support the Major Gifts Officers, Chief External Affairs Officer, and Executive Director

2. Confirm a strong unique case for support: Continue to build out our case summary and make it adaptable so we can provide specific messaging for different donors/prospects.

Each adaptation should include the following information: summary of what the ABF's intended purpose is, what its proposed initiatives are, what its key focus areas are, and how we are measuring our impact.

3. Increase giving to the Annual Fund:

- **Direct mail efforts:** if we focus our messaging more, we could see a higher response rate and increase in average gift amount.
- **Build out a planned gift program:** Build relationships with estate planners and attorneys.

4. Identify national foundations with an interest in brain research and advocacy: Start to develop relationships and find out how they provide grants and what key areas they focus on.

5. Look to broaden and strengthen brand awareness of ABF: Start by building our awareness with our core group of supporters and their networks and go from there.

6. Create a collaborative culture of philanthropy in partnership with AAN

7. Develop public facing messaging and platforms to raise funds beyond AAN membership

4. AAN member survey on ABF priorities: Results of the survey indicate that there is a lot of potential for the ABF to grow its donor base from the AAN membership as 85% do not donate.

Henrich's & Associates shared that while conducting interviews with other foundations of associations, on average only 10% of the association's membership donate to their foundation.

The ABF staff was asked to provide figures on how many AAN members contribute to the ABF vs. BrainPAC, and what the average gift to each is. This will be provided at the next meeting.

ABF will research how many international members currently donate to the ABF, and determine our potential for growth within that membership segment.

5. Goals & Strategies for recommendation to the ABF Board: The committee discussed whether or not our mission statement as rewritten will appeal to the public – does it affect them emotionally and motivate them enough to get involved? Ms. Ransom said that we will be working with professional marketing people to develop the emotional messages. We don't need to rely on the mission statement to convey every message.

The committee approved the updated vision, mission, goals and strategies for review and action by the ABF Board of Directors on April 17, 2016.

Adjourned at 9:53 a.m. CST.

DRAFT