

MNN Conference Session I –MNN Public Awareness Campaign on behalf of all nonprofits run by Carol Lavoie Schuster and Dan Turcotte, MNN Board of Directors

The MNN, as the statewide association of nonprofit organizations, as part of its goals is chopping to undertake a public awareness campaign on behalf of all nonprofits in Massachusetts. The research on public attitudes towards nonprofits shows a negative to neutral attitude. The MNN Board has had a subcommittee and private consultants working on a proposal.

The proposed message: Making Communities Stronger

Who should be the Messengers? We have been told that neutral third parties with good reputations make the best messengers as they have no “self Interest” in promoting the sector. Ideas: Jack Welch, Deval Patrick, Myra Kraft, Bob Kraft, Liz Walker.

Participants in the session wanted to learn more about the MNN and why it would be the advocate of the sector.

MNN Conference Session II --Should Massachusetts adopt Non Profit Standards? Facilitated by Bill Walczak, MN Board of Directors and Kristen McCormack

Pro:

- Sector has been headed this way for a number of years; it is best to develop your own standards rather than have them given to you.
- Is confidence builder with funders
- Would help boards understand requirements of nonprofits to be good nonprofits
- Smaller organizations could use standards to argue that they are up to snuff

Con:

- Could favor larger nonprofits over smaller, in that larger nonprofits would have more capacity to adopt/practice standards
- Standards could become accreditation requirement
- Could be conflict with standards that exist for many nonprofits already
- There are too many standards, we need unified standards

From this discussion, there was general agreement that:

- 1) We should create “standards” rather than “accreditation.”
- 2) MNN should ensure that there are sufficient training/education opportunities to go along with standards-focus on capacity building
- 3) A continuum should be created with differing standards based on the size of the organization
- 4) The standards in Maryland good; no need to re-create them
- 5) Creating standards should not imply that those organizations not participating are not good organizations

Everyone who spoke indicated that there are good reasons to favor Massachusetts creating standards, though we should be careful that they don't create harm to smaller nonprofits.

MNN Action Section III--*What issues should MNN take on?*

The participants were provided training from Dan Hunter on advocacy rules and encouraged to engage in advocacy and lobbying. In addition, Michael Weekes talked about MNN and asked what issues they feel are imperative for MNN to include on its agenda.

Due to the lack of time, there was no prioritization and this is a compilation of participant's responses to the question.

1. Standardize interactions between the state and the nonprofit sector
2. Pursue the charitable tax deduction
3. MNN to promote and market the government. (essentially we are pro government)
4. Create incentives for collaboration among nonprofits.
5. Increase funding for nonprofits' information technology expenses.
6. Expand the student loan forgiveness programs.
7. Look to GIC for health benefits.
8. Expand the Nonprofit Awareness Days.
9. Index contracts for inflation.
10. More money for nonprofit infrastructure costs.
11. Analyze how many government services are done by nonprofits.
12. All nonprofits should provide life/health and disability insurance.
13. Seek increasing volunteer mileage reimbursement rate
14. Request sufficient money for expenses from all funders.
15. Research the nonprofit's connection with the for profit sector
16. Establish tax deductions for volunteer work.
17. Seek greater oversight of the private foundation community.