

Report of the Administration and Finance Committee

January 2015

Committee Members

Chairman Greg Widin, KØGW; Directors Dennis Bodson, W4PWF; Tom Frenaye, K1KI; Bill Edgar, N3LLR; Jim Pace, K7CEX; Vice Director Mike Lee, AA6ML; Treasurer Rick Niswander, K7GM.

Committee Activities

The A&F Committee met on 15 November 2014 in Newington with all committee members and officers and staff present.

The committee considered first the IT Strategic Planning topic pursuant to the discussion of Minute 40 from the July 2014 Board meeting. This was discussed extensively by the committee, with the conclusion that IT strategic planning requires that there be a strategic plan for ARRL as a whole, and that IT planning needs to follow from the goals of the larger organization. The IT department has developed a project and resource planning approach that appears to be adequate once it can be based on ARRL's overall plan. The A&F Committee believes that this can be accomplished within the oversight responsibilities of A&F, and does not recommend the establishment of a separate committee for the purpose of IT strategic planning.

The committee also directed the chairs of the Executive Committee and the A&F Committee to propose a process by which an overall strategic plan may be created for the organization. A brief report of that proposal is appended to this report.

Director Mike Lisenco proposed the establishment of a "Legislative Issue Advocacy Fund". A&F believes that though such a fund has the potential to divide contributions into yet another, smaller piece, that the likelihood is that it will result in additional contributions overall because there are individuals who would contribute to this initiative. A&F voted to establish "a temporarily restricted fund titled the Legislative Issues Advocacy Fund, with the Terms of Reference to 'Educate and inform members of Congress of the importance of issues that impact the Amateur Radio Service.'"

During the Fall of 2014, there were two intrusion incidents with respect to the ARRL network and Logbook of the World. A&F has reviewed these situations and the responses that have been made to them. Though these particular issues appear to be well addressed at this time, A&F has request that there be an outside review of system vulnerability, and that expenditure for same be added to the 2015 plan.

A&F's recent activities have been dominated by consideration of the 2015-16 Plan. Chief among those considerations has been the question of a dues increase in 2015.

Two sub-committees were chartered at the April 2014 meeting of A&F to review dues and life membership.

The dues committee reviewed several alternatives and attempted to project their consequences. A&F concluded that the best decision for maintaining the organization's level of service is to increase dues by \$10/year. This follows almost 14 years during which the dues have remained steady at \$39. The version of the 2015-16 Plan distributed to the Board recently is based on this \$10/year increase, beginning in July 2015. There will be many details that staff needs to work out about the increase and publicizing it to the membership, but A&F unanimously supported the plan including this increase.

A&F also considered recommendations about Life Membership. Given Life Membership's definition at 25 times the annual membership fee, raising dues in 2015 will also raise the price of Life Membership. Many organizations similar to ARRL have discontinued offering the Life option to their members, but A&F has decided not to recommend this at this time. Further study is needed, and is also inextricably tied to our policies concerning access to ARRL's digital archives, principally of QST.

Several updates are in progress for ARRL financial systems, and expenses to do so were supported by A&F. This includes the ability to establish direct deposit options for expense reimbursement, and the ability to offer members the option for automatic renewal of their membership through a secure means using their credit cards. These updates will occur during 2015, and timing will depend on the timetable for supporting system upgrades.

As is customary, A&F will again meet in Newington on the Thursday before the annual Board meeting.

Appendix A

Report on Strategic Planning for IT
Kay Craigie, N3KN and Greg Widin, KØGW
December 2014

Consideration of IT Strategic Plan by A&F

At its July 2014 meeting, the ARRL Board of Directors adopted a motion by Director Rehman calling upon the A&F Committee to study the proposal to establish +an Information Technology Strategic Planning Committee,+and report back to the Board on this matter (see Appendix 1).

The A&F Committee met in Newington on 15 November 2014 and considered the motion. There was considerable discussion of various points concerning the motion, but eventually a consensus emerged that though there was already an adequate practice for determining specific projects and their priority for IT, there was insufficient direction in the form of an overall strategic plan for the League to enable a Strategic Plan to be created for IT. Discussion then centered on what should be done to create an overall strategic plan for the organization. Eventually consensus emerged around the following motion (from the A&F Minutes)-

Mr. Niswander moved, seconded by Mr. Edgar that:

- 1. The A&F Committee believes that IT oversight is properly the purview of the A&F Committee.**
- 2. The IT Strategic Plan is an integral part of the organizational strategic Plan and does not stand independent from the organizational plan.**
- 3. The A&F Committee recommends that the A&F Chair and the Executive Committee Chair develop a process by which the organization will create a strategic plan. The A&F and EC Chairs will present the proposed process to the Board at the January, 2015 meeting for their consideration.**

Developments in answer to the A&F motion.

President Kay Craigie, Chair of the EC, and Director Greg Widin, Chair of A&F, discussed the situation, and the charge given them by the A&F in point 3 above. The remainder of this report concerns that discussion and the resulting proposal to the Board to be considered at its January 2015 meeting.

Strategic Planning within ARRL enjoys a checkered history. Several attempts to create such a plan have been made in the last decade, and served only to demonstrate the difficulty of crafting a strategic plan. Following the A&F meeting, input has been provided by several board members to President Craigie and Chairman Widin concerning any process that might be proposed. Chief among these recommendations has been that any process involving the entire Board family is doomed to failure, and that the last two attempts amply demonstrate this result.

Several examples of other organizations, similar to ARRL in being membership organizations, not-for-profit corporations, and of about the same size, suggest that there may be a common approach that may be workable to create a strategic plan. All these groups created their plans with a small group, which kept a larger group informed during the process, while the small group incorporated good ideas from the input of the larger group. Each such plan delineated a handful of high level strategic goals, and then described relevant groups of activities, tying each type of activity back to those goals it served to further.

Ms. Craigie and Mr. Widin were impressed by the simple expression of these plans coupled with their clear relevance to achieving organizational goals. Therefore, in view of these examples and suggestions and their evident success, the following is proposed:

The A&F Committee recommends the Board form a Strategic Planning Working Group to create during 2015 a high-level strategic plan to be presented to the Board for approval at its meeting in January 2016. The membership of the Working Group should be:

- **The second VP of ARRL**
- **The CEO**
- **A senior staff member selected by the CEO**
- **Two members of the extended Board family to be appointed by the President**

The Working Group is chartered to define the process it will follow, and then proceed with the process, with the expectation that intermediate goals will be communicated as they are achieved, and that input from the entire Board family will be frequently solicited and considered in the development of the plan.

The first duty of this working group would be to sketch out a high-level process by which the plan would be created. It is expected that this would be an iterative process, and that input from the entire Board family would be solicited frequently during the process. Following establishment of a high-level process, the working group would proceed to elaborate the details within each part of the process.

Consideration of an IT Strategic Plan

Given the A&F motion and assignment to Ms. Craigie and Mr. Widin, it is plain that the current IT Prioritization Process will need to continue for at least the next year, pending an articulation of a Strategic Plan which IT can use to develop a list of tactical software priorities in support of the overall organization.

Appendix A1- **Rehman motion 40 from Minutes of 2014 Second Meeting**

ARRL Board of Directors, July 21-22, 2014

40. On motion of Mr. Rehman, seconded by Dr. Woolweaver, the following was ADOPTED:

The ARRL Board of Directors instructs the Administration and Finance Committee to study establishment of an Information Technology Strategic Planning Committee.

Such Information Technology Strategic Planning Committee should consist of three (3) members having a current background in Information Technology that are elected by the voting members of the ARRL Board of Directors. At least one member will be a Director and the remaining members will be Directors and Vice Directors.

Any committee vacancies will be filled at an election by the voting members of the ARRL Board within 30 days of the vacancy. If said election is not done at a board meeting, the Executive Committee shall authorize a special board election.

The committee shall select one of the Directors on the committee as chairman, shall begin its work as soon as practical, and report monthly to the ARRL Board. Committee deliberations and votes may occur independent of the times established for meetings of the Board of Directors or its standing committees. The committee shall conduct its work, to the greatest extent feasible using electronic means. In-person meetings are to be held only if the need for one overrides the cost consideration of the meeting. In-person meetings may be held in a manner that minimizes extra expense, such as in conjunction with meetings of the ARRL Board of Directors, or standing board committee meetings at which one or more members of the committee would otherwise attend.

DUTIES

The committee will examine the existing Information Technology operations. Using the information obtained, the committee will create a strategic plan that maximizes the IT services provided to League members and Headquarters staff, both currently and in the future. The committee, with the assistance of staff, will create a list of all outstanding IT projects, together with their current status and any related issues, and present the list to the Board with a suggested prioritization.

Findings of the committee, along with recommendations for changes will be presented to the Board and the CEO as they are determined.

The Administration and Finance Committee will report its recommendations to the Board in January 2015.

Appendix A2—Example strategic questions to be answered.

Here are some questions of strategic consequence to ARRL.

Because an explicit position on these issues has not been articulated, we remain inconsistent and achieve less than our full potential on each issue.

Who should ARRL serve?

Members only?

All U.S. amateurs, including lowest involvement licensees?

All amateurs worldwide?

Special emphasis on leading edge (in whatever facet of amateur radio)?

To what extent should ARRL lead the community?

Historical examples· advancement from Spark to CW, or from AM to SSB.

Should ARRL simply poll the membership and then follow that?

What percentage of its resources should ARRL devote to being a trailblazer?

In what areas?

What activities should ARRL support?

Technical; DXing; contesting; VHF/UHF; general operating; etc.?

Are there any that we leave to other organizations?

What level of resource should ARRL devote to International issues?

ITU and IARU?

How should ARRL resources be apportioned among projects with short-, medium-, and long-term benefits?

What is ARRL's outreach strategy?

What other organizations are synergistic with ARRL?

What is ARRL's strategic role in public policy?

How should the ARRL seek to acquire the resources needed to fulfill its mission?