

**Planning for the Future of PVS**  
**Prepared for April 17, 2015 Board Meeting**  
**Updated for January 25, 2016 Board Webinar**

For the past five years the PVS Board has been making steady progress in exercising our responsibility for directing the future of PVS.

The process began with our October 2010 Board Retreat facilitated by Louise Tritton to look at the strategic needs of the organization. As a result, we initiated four task groups:

- 1) To increase visits and facilities visited, and establish recruiting priorities
- 2) Assess and improve quality and impact of visits
- 3) Increase recognition of our program through media outreach; and
- 4) Board and staff development.

Task Force 1, Recruitment, was led by Dan Doyle (USP Lewisburg, PA visitor) to include Rachel Osborn, Lena Prewitt, and Denise Carpenter.

Task Force 2, Visitor/Visitation, was led by Elaine Silverstrim (PVS Board member) (initially by Jim Matsen).

Task Force 3, Communications (Media), was led by Murray Hiebert (PVS Board) to include John Vanyur and David Poundstone.

Task Force 4, Human Resources (Board and staff development), was led by Joe Davies (PVS Board) to include Phyllis Taylor and Rick Boardman.

The task forces set to work and began reporting back to the Board starting with our November 2011 Board meeting.

How well did we do?

As the Board has heard and seen at our meetings and elsewhere, we have made significant strides in the first three task force areas. We have addressed portions of the fourth – focusing on staff and fund development – but made no significant progress on areas relating to Board development (Board nominations, committees and the like).

In 2012 the Board determined to hold a second Board retreat. Some of the topics we identified for discussion for that retreat were:

1. Who is our customer? Prisoners? Visitors? Bureau of Prisons and Dept. of Defense?
2. Where do we envision the organization to be in 2017? In 2022?
3. How shall we prepare for leadership succession?
4. How shall we achieve our vision?

This Board retreat was held in November 2012, also facilitated by Louise Tritton. At the retreat, we made a commitment to grow the organization and begin work on restructuring for the future.

That initiative continued with the staff skills assessment [tasks and competencies review] conducted by John Vanyur in late 2012 and early 2013, which underscored our need for enhanced fundraising and development outcomes. Furthering that initiative, in April 2014 we retained a development consultant, the Philadelphia-based firm of Schultz & Williams, to help us develop a strategic development plan to achieve our vision. The consultant's comprehensive report with recommendations was completed October 9, 2014 and presented to the PVS Board in preparation for our November 2014 Board meeting. This was a milestone in the PVS planning process. At our November 2014 Board meeting we formally adopted the Schultz & Williams report and recommendations as our development action plan.

Following that adoption, the Board asked John Vanyur to develop individual action (work) plans with staff to help make the development plan concrete. John Vanyur and staff developed the staff performance work plan documents in December 2014 and these were approved by the Board at our April 2015 meeting. A bi-annual staff performance review schedule was set.

Throughout and prior to this time, the Board has also discussed the need to revise the PVS Bylaws, including at our November 14, 2014 Board meeting at which the Board discussed and agreed on a number of changes to our bylaws as they relate to sponsors, national visitors and Board membership. With the requisite advance notice given, the revised bylaws were approved and adopted April 17, 2015.

At the November 2014 Board meeting, following the recommendations of the development action plan, we continued to discuss leadership succession planning. During the first quarter of 2015, this conversation continued at the Executive Committee level and at Executive Committee and Board meetings throughout 2015.

Now, respecting our unique vision and mission of service to prisoners, and our long history and traditions, a thoughtful and pragmatic discussion regarding the future of PVS is in order. To that end, we need to focus on our effectiveness in the present as well as preparing for the immediate future through planned transitions in volunteer and staff leadership.

We need to reconfirm our commitment as Board members to work together as the governing body to insure the present and to plan for the future of PVS. Our responsibility is to the continued viability of the organization and maintaining and expanding the unique service we provide to prisoners.