



Advancement Committee Meeting Minutes
Thursday, February 13, 2025
9:30 – 11 AM
Via Zoom

Present: Kevin Berg; Marjie Blevins; Stacy Jacobson; Brian Mullen; Joel Rainville; Gabrielle Rohde; Kris Smyth

Staff: Matt Halley; Ralph Scorpio; Lacy Sietsema

Not Present: Stephanie Klenk; Maya Missaghi; Mark Richards; Fr. Larry Snyder

The meeting began on Thursday, February 13, 2025, at 9:33 a.m.

DEI Statement: Joel read the DEI Statement.

Prayer: Joel read the prayer.

Minutes: The January minutes were presented for approval. Hearing no changes or corrections, Kris moved to approve the minutes and Brian seconded. All present members voted to approve the minutes.

YTD Advancement Report

Ralph updated the Advancement & Marketing Committee on the YTD report. Donations are behind compared to last year. A mailing has gone out to donors who have yet to donate this fiscal year. Ralph has a list of upper-level donors and would like to share the list with the committee/Board to see if they know any of the names and can reach out. Ralph has been made aware of three estate gifts that will be received by Accola. Overall, Accola continues to hold steady.

Review & Discussion: Advancement Action Plan

The Advancement Action Plan was presented and reviewed. Potential partnerships are being identified and organized. Events (online auction and the Sarah's open house) are being organized and will take place in the next few months. Accola is organizing a month-long "31 Ways To Be Kind" in March. This will help bring awareness to Accola and its programs. Matt has organized a presentation and will meet with members of the Consociate Program on February 19.

It was reported that Matt, Ralph, and Joel have met and reviewed a communications plan. There was a discussion about how the programs are being impacted by the current social and political climate. Matt reported that the LIS's global luncheon was a wild success. It consisted of the LIS community, and there was a deep sense of community.

Ralph reported that fundraising information has been uploaded to the Board Portal. Kevin suggested that Joel could be given a few minutes during the February Board meeting to go over the fundraising items and ways the Board can help spread awareness of Accola, as well as mention the online auction and solicitation of gifts.

The committee reviewed and discussed current and ideal ten-year projections. There needs to be a strategic discussion about the eventual shift in resources. It's critical for Accola to be sustainable and grow, and this

will require a more balanced funding mix. The Sustainability Committee is looking at this topic as well. Currently, Accola is stable and there are some opportunities for growth. There needs to be a strategy around grants and event revenue.

There will be the eventual challenge of replacing the \$1 million gift from the Province. Matt explained how resources can be organized strategically. The committee provided some initial feedback on how funds can be rearranged. It was stated that now is the time to tell people that Accola is here to meet the needs of the time. The return on investment for telling this story could be significant now because people are anxious and want to support our vision/mission.

Review of Committee Work Plan

Joel reported that the committee work plan is on track.

Communications Plan Update

Joel reported that he, Matt, and Ralph will have a meeting with Dan Ryan, who has agreed to help create a strategic communications plan for Accola. Dan Ryan helped roll out the new Accola brand to the Board last fall. He would help put together a package and recommendation for the Advancement & Marketing Committee. Matt would then create a subcommittee to launch the recommendation. Matt asked committee members to let him know if they are interested in learning more about the subcommittee.

Board Engagement

Ralph introduced the committee to the Fundraising Page on the Board Portal. This page provides ways the Board can spread awareness of Accola on social media, as a sample invitation to a party. It also provides a sheet of Accola FAQs and an elevator speech. The Fundraising Page also provides a Board Commitment chart. Ralph would like to see all Board members commit to host something between now and June. Marjie recounted her party and her process for introducing Accola. Kevin suggested discussing this at the February Board meeting.

Update: Blake School Relationship

Gabi explained her connection to Blake School. She added that Blake School has long been invested in LIS and student involvement in the wider community. Gabi and Ralph met with the Blake School Outreach Coordinator, who responded positively to their ideas for creating program growth between Blake School and LIS. The committee discussed ways to deepen the partnership with Blake School. It was asked if there was a way to keep track of graduating students who volunteered at LIS. Ralph stated that an email list could be organized. It was suggested that a strategy could be developed, and this could serve as a model for future partnerships.

Committee Member Input – Additional Ideas

The committee was asked for further input on any of the topics discussed. Ralph would like the committee to think about a signature event and what this may look like. The committee was encouraged to think about everything discussed and provide feedback.

Upcoming Events/Announcements

It was reported that a letter of solicitation would be drafted for the Board with the idea that they could use it to reach out to their contacts. An event sheet is also being drafted about the Online Auction in April. It will provide the goal and how members can be involved beyond donating. This event will run from April 2-11, 2025. There was a discussion about sponsorships.

Adjournment: Meeting adjourned at 11:01 a.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Lacy Sietsema, Accola