RAFTELIS

OWASA
Strategic Plan Work Session 2 Summary

On December 16, 2021, members of the OWASA Board and Leadership Team met to review OWASA's existing vision, mission, and values, and to provide input on how those statements could be updated to capture what the organization should focus on for the next five years. Drawing on the previous discussion of the results of the environmental and operating scan conducted by OWASA staff, participants were asked a series of prompt questions around OWASA's aspirations, purpose, and values.

OWASA Attendees: Jody Eimers (Chair), John N. Morris (Secretary), Bruce Boehm, Raymond (Ray) DuBose, Kevin Leibel, Mary Darr, Vishnu Gangadharan, Stephanie Glasgow, Robin Jacobs, Andrea Orbich, Dan Przybyl, Todd Taylor, Mary Tiger, and Stephen Winters.

Aspirations/Vision

Participants were broken into three groups to discuss the following questions:

- What do you hope OWASA will be known for in the future?
- What would make you proud of the organization?

When the full group came back together, aspirations included:

- Reliable, high-quality product and services
- Community recognition and leadership
- Partner/Employer of Choice – a good place to work
- Innovative approaches to addressing challenges
- Water and service affordability
    - Innovative/alternate revenue sources

While the small groups moved on to the next exercise, facilitators drafted a vision statement to use as a starting place for future discussion:

To be recognized and appreciated by the community as an innovative leader in providing high-quality and affordable water services

Purpose/Mission

Participants were broken into three groups to discuss the key elements of a mission statement: who we are, what we do, and why we do it. After reflecting on the answers to these questions, each small group was asked to draft a mission statement for OWASA. The three mission statements were shared and discussed, with the following concepts resonating well for participants:

- "Water and wastewater service organization" (rather than "utility")
- "Providing for a secure water supply"
- "Community-owned"
- "Science-based stewardship"
- "Protection of public health and safety"
- Removing references to customers
- Incorporating references to the high-performing workforce

While the small groups moved on to the next exercise, facilitators drafted a mission statement to use as a starting place for future discussion:

We are a community-owned water resources organization with a dedicated and diverse team that protects public health and safety and serves as a steward of OWASA's natural resources and built infrastructure.

Values

The last break-out session related to values. Participants were asked to comment on the values that they saw being demonstrated when their colleagues were at their best, as well as the culture that they wished to inspire within the organization. The initial list of proposed values included:

- Doing the right thing
- Teamwork
- Empowerment
- Accountability
- Integrity
- Support for Employees
- Reliability/Dependability
- Innovation
- Adaptability/Flexibility

Facilitators considered the list and has proposed the following values/statements to use as a starting place for future discussion:

- **Integrity** – Doing the right thing
- **Reliability** – Consistently providing high-quality products and services
- **Teamwork** – Working together to achieve shared goals
- **Inclusion** – Ensuring diverse perspectives and experiences are valued
- **Innovation** – Taking a creative approach and adapting to changing circumstances

Next Steps

Members of the OWASA Board and Leadership Team will meet again to review this framework and develop strategic priorities on January 26th from 3:00-5:00 PM. Once the strategic priorities have been identified, OWASA staff will work to develop initiatives and measures associated with implementing each priority.