

# OREGON STATE LANDSCAPE ARCHITECT BOARD (OSLAB)

## \*\*\*MEETING MINUTES\*\*\*

**BOARD SESSION on STRATEGIC PLANNING**  
**Thurs., April 3, 2014**  
**Channel Conf. Room, Port of Portland Headquarters**  
**@ Portland International Airport**

Board Members Attending

Steve Ray, RLA, Chair  
Mike O'Brien, RLA, Vice Chair  
Lauri L'Amoreaux, RLA  
Gregg Everhart, RLA  
Kathy Olsen  
Susan Smith  
Susan Wright

Others Attending

Christine Valentine, Board Administrator  
Mary Heffernan, Facilitator

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**Welcome and Overview:** Chair Ray welcomed all to the work session. He described the session as a special meeting to work with facilitator Mary Heffernan on goals and related implementation strategies for the Board. He noted that the Board would need to consider issues such as efficiency, focus, and authority. He suggested that the planning efforts would lay some good groundwork for the future.

Heffernan briefly spoke to the context for the session as well as the day's agenda and logistics. She then guided all through some ice breakers and discussion of hopes and cautions for the day. She stressed the importance of scaling ideas and results to the mission and abilities of the Board and estimated that the Board would identify many work possibilities and then need a systematic way to pick and choose where to place its energy.

**Overview of Strategic Plan and Filling in the Gaps:** Heffernan briefly reviewed with the Board key terminology for strategic planning. She asked the Board to spend some time first on review of its mission, values, and vision to provide a strong foundation for goals and strategies. The Board's mission as set by statute was reviewed. The Board discussed its role as a regulatory agency as compared to promotion of the landscape architecture profession. As part of regulation, the Board does promote quality work by practitioners and understanding of the knowledge, skills, and scope of practice for landscape architects based on education, examination, and experience requirements for registration. The Board members agreed to use a regulatory lens when evaluating possible goals and strategies that might go beyond the status quo work of the Board.

The Board reviewed its existing mission statement and determined it fit within statutory direction. However, Board members found it to be dry and uninspiring. The current statement is “to regulate (which is to govern or direct according to rule) the practice of landscape architecture in Oregon.” The Board reviewed the definition of regulate, which is to control so a system operates properly, to supervise by rules and regulations, or to set according to an external standard. The Board decided that it should work towards updating the mission statement.

Heffernan encouraged the Board to articulate a vision. She described a vision as a statement about what is different as a result of the Board’s work. She also recommended that the Board spend some time articulating its values, i.e. key things the Board believes in.

Everhart shared some values that she uses in practice and that originated from her past involvement with the American Society of Landscape Architects (ASLA). These were: (a) celebrate sense of place, (b) protect natural values, (c) enhance community culture, (d) create aesthetic value, and (e) promote social justice. Board members agreed these seemed like good values for the profession but not an exact fit for the Board as regulatory body. However, this discussion further kicked started discussion about the Board mission, vision, and values.

The Board drafted several possible statements that combined elements of a mission and vision. All focused on public service via regulation that helps protect health, safety and welfare. The Board will revisit these at future meetings. The Board next developed a list of possible value statements. The Board identified a variety of topics as important to the Board such as encouraging Registered Landscape Architects (RLAs) to work at the highest possible standards, providing qualified candidates with greater access to the profession, facilitating greater understanding of the profession and reasons for regulation, making sure quality services are available to public while addressing unlicensed practice, embracing evolution in the practice and regulatory processes, engaging registrants in regulation and mentoring of future RLAs, and promoting fairness through clear and consistent procedures and good customer service. Wright mentioned that the Board values focused around the action verbs Educate, Engage, Enforce, Enable, and Evolve. She suggested the Board might refine the value statements to stress these words.

L’Amoreaux and Valentine agreed to memorialize the Board’s draft work on mission/vision and values, with the Board to review at its May 8, 2014 meeting. Chair Ray and Wright offered to review their draft prior to the meeting. The Board briefly discussed sharing its work in this area in a future newsletter and welcoming comments from registrants and other interested parties.

Chair Ray called for a lunch break at 12:00 PM. He reconvened the Board at 12:30 PM

**Determine Board Priority Goal(s):** Heffernan suggested that Board members keep in mind the following parameters when developing and selecting for goals:

- What is the maximum impact considering available resources?
- Is the goal achievable given available resources?
- Is the goal important?
- Are there clear impacts or leverage points?
- Is the Board motivated to work on the goal?

- Is there external pressure or other urgency to work on the goal?
- What is the timeframe for achieving the goal?

Heffernan also offered some possible guidelines for the Board to consider with respect to achieving goals and strategies. These included evaluating performance at every meeting, expecting progress between meetings, and identifying Board member champions and assignments.

Heffernan broke the participants into two groups, each charged with developing one to two possible goals. She then brought all back together so the two groups could share results. The groups came up with similar ideas for possible goals as follows:

1. *Maintaining or increasing availability to consumers of highly qualified RLAs by evaluating and modernizing the path to licensure*
2. *Clearly identifying what is meant by Landscape Architecture practice to.... [Note: goal language to be completed by answering to "to what end".]*
3. *Enhance professional and public partnerships and communications, and RLA's linkage to, and relationships with, related professions.*
  - a. *Demonstrate the value of the profession, increase understanding and respect for it, assure needed technical expertise, and prevent market erosion.*
  - b. *This includes investigating practice overlap and outreach, including to allied professionals from the very beginning of implementing this goal.*
  - c. *This also includes (strategies and benefits): Articulate values, Increase visibility, Communications, Definition of roles*

Heffernan offered as description of the path from mission to goals, that the last two bullets could be summarized with the following statement: “In order to codify and protect high standards of the Landscape Architecture profession, OSLAB will clearly identify what is meant by landscape architecture practice, including identification of practice overlaps and their implications, and make linkages to and enhance professional and public partnerships and communications.” She also described bullet two as the “figure it out” goal and bullet three as the “talk it out” goal.

**Plan to Achieve Goal: Focus on Key Strategies:** Heffernan again broke the participants into two groups and asked them to brainstorm about possible strategies and implementation tasks, with each group assigned one of the possible goals. She encouraged all to keep in mind achievable scale of effort and benchmarks for measuring success. She then had the groups come back together to exchange outcomes and challenges with this exercise. Each group found that it had insufficient time to develop strategies and tasks but found the exercise useful in illustrating how this planning work could be approached by the Board. The members briefly compared notes on how they approached the assignment and challenges they saw in articulating clear and concise strategies.

**Proposed Plans & Expectations:** The Board briefly reviewed the day’s work outcomes. Heffernan then gave each member a matrix about possible time and areas of interest within the possible goals considered during the day. She asked Board members to review the time

commitments listed to verify accuracy and to also indicate primary areas of interest with respect to working on the goals. The matrix forms were then returned to Valentine for future reference. To summarize, the assignments aligned as follows:

- Path to Licensure: L'Amoreaux, O'Brien, Olsen, Ray, Smith
- Practice/Practice Overlap: Everhart, O'Brien, Wright

O'Brien anticipated work in both areas as linked back to administrative rules, given his role as Chair of the Administrative Rules Committee. Ray offered that he was open to working on any of the draft goals. Valentine anticipated staffing Board efforts as needed.

**Procedural/Structural/Role Adjustments:** The Board determined that it would maintain a strategic planning agenda item for each quarterly meeting as a way to help maintain and track progress. The Board planned to revise outcomes of the work session at its May 8, 2014 meeting and anticipated continued work throughout the summer on further development of strategies, tasks, champions, and assignments.

The Board discussed several possibilities for sharing information and gathering input from registrants and other interested parties. The summer newsletter could be used to share information with registrants. Surveys could be developed to gather input on specific topics, such as perceived or real barriers to licensure as experienced by those recently completing the LARE or working towards completion. In making assignments, the Board also will consider how to best build relationships with allied boards and professions.

The Board decided that before it formalized any mechanisms for working on goals (committees, etc.), that it would like Valentine and counsel to provide a primer on public meetings law. Not all board members were fully aware of the nuances of the law and all wanted to avoid potential issues.

The Board would like to continue work on streamlining quarterly meetings so there is more time to work on goals. One area to be further evaluated is how committee work and reports will be handled going forward. The Board also discussed building in an annual or biennial review of performance in achieving key goals.

**Conclusions, Closing Comments and Evaluation:** Heffernan confirmed that there was clarity on next steps for the planning work. She complimented the Board on its hard work. The Board in turn thanked Heffernan for her guidance with the planning process. The Board members agreed to spend some time at the May 8, 2014 meeting ensuring this work continues to move forward.

Chair Ray adjourned the work session at 4:00 PM.

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The minutes of the April 3, 2014 meeting were approved as presented at the May 8, 2014 Board meeting.

Respectfully submitted, Christine Valentine, Administrator