



Public Pension Financial Forum  
c/o Ohio Public Employees Retirement System  
277 E. Town Street  
Columbus, OH 43215  
614-222-5601

P2F2 Board Strategic Planning Meeting  
**March 9-10, 2015 Minutes**

*Directors present:* Beulah Auten, Michelle Camuglia, Karen Carraher, Rhonda Covarrubias, Dave DeJonge, Rob Dolphin, Darla Iverson, Michele Nix

*Directors unable to attend:* Karl Greve

*Guests:* Scott Caine, GroundWork group

**Strengths of P2F2** – P2F2 was formed with the intent of having a group of public pension system experts for networking, advocacy, educational, policy input and ownership of public pension system needs. Some of the strengths of P2F2 include the dedication and longevity of its Board; the Board’s ability to adapt to pension system standard and reporting changes (ex. recent GASB changes); the quality and content of the annual conferences (the cost/CPE and the large number of CPE hours offered, educational focus, caliber of speakers) that are put together by volunteers; the number and strength of the active membership, which has grown in numbers since P2F2’s inception and includes pension experts with a high level of knowledge and with whom networking can occur: through attendance at the annual conference, email questions to the membership and the monthly information sharing GASB phone calls (for which the number of participants has increased greatly); and the recognition that P2F2 is becoming known as the experts in the field of public pension systems and are being invited to the table as a voice for public pension systems.

**Weaknesses of P2F2** – P2F2 has a few areas that could be improved upon. One is to develop a more efficient method of pushing out questions to the membership group, so that all members can see the answers, not just the member who asked the questions. One option to improve this process may be to purchase a product to use for this purpose. The website, which could be a tremendous source of information, is not used often. P2F2 members are very busy with their full-time jobs, and use volunteers for everything. The Board will look at the possibility of using retirees or hiring a support staff to perform some tasks and serve on committees. At this time, payments for membership and registration fees are not able to be made via credit card.

**Five-year Goals -**

- **Membership size** – If we want to increase membership, how big do we want to become? If we get too big, there could be a loss of familiarity between members. What size limits us for the conferences? Membership numbers have increased 24% since 2010. If there are 300-350 conference attendees in 2016, that will be too large for many hotels and their meeting room limitations. P2F2 may have to consider two hotels for conferences if numbers continue to grow at this rate. Is the growth rate because of GASB changes or just a natural progression? Will membership drop off after coming to the annual conference a few times? Are members retaining their membership? We need to annually review the membership and conference attendee numbers to see the trends. One goal is to have membership representation from each state. Concentrate marketing to new members to those states for which we don’t have representation. Determine how to manage and plan the growth.

- **Membership data** – Review the registration data to determine how long members have been members and how many conferences they have attended. What is the average number of years members have belonged to P2F2? Nancy will look at the statistics.
- **Communication** - Do a better job of keeping in touch with the membership throughout the year.
- **Peer questions and answers** - Need a better way of systematically sending out questions and answers to the membership, so all members have access. A couple of examples that work well are the CEM Benchmarking Peer Network system and the GFOA of Texas system.
- **Administrative tasks** - Rely less on Nancy Mikola for administrative tasks by transitioning these responsibilities to members who have retired, or possibly, to a company that handles these tasks for organizations.
- **Utilize retirees and their skills** – Carraher emailed a pool of former members who have retired. She had a conference call with two of them, to discuss having them volunteer to help with administrative tasks, such as records, bill paying, conference support, conference location, coordination of the roll call of the states, coordination of mailings, and website interface. What kind of compensation could be considered for their assistance?
- **Advocacy** - P2F2 has a respected connection to GASB and GFOA. Would like to work together as partners on pension issues.
- **Newsletter expansion** – Keep more frequent contact with membership through a newsletter. Expand the number of members on the Newsletter Committee.
- **Website** – Link other websites (such as pension systems, actuary firms, professional organizations and our sponsors) to our own. Link items such as RFPs, GASB reports and CAFRs via a searchable database restricted to members. Include a Board-only page. Casey will continue to update changes to the website.
- **Sponsorship** – Keep the sponsorship count at 20. Each year, address the number needed when finances are discussed.
- **Social media** – Expand and utilize P2F2’s social media usage (Facebook page, twitter, texts, blog).

#### Ten year Goals -

- **Board succession planning** – Determine how succession of Board members will be handled.
- **Expand conference and educational offerings** – Include additional topics at the annual conferences (ex. actuarial). Explore using other avenues of education, such as webinars.
- **Offer a pension-focused certification** - Offer a Certified Pension Finance Professional (CPFP) or a Certified Finance Pension Professional (CFP2) certification. What does it take to attain a certification? This could be a way to draw in new members.

#### IT Needs –

- A more efficient method of pushing out questions to the membership, so that all members can see the answers, not just the member who asked the questions. Consider purchasing a product to improve this process.
- An electronic way to process membership registrations, conference registrations and fee receipts.
- When members sign up for the conference, have the ability for them to sign up for specific sessions online and send back to the members the schedule, classrooms, etc. Have an app for conference attendees.
- A searchable database capability, which can include member demographics, an RFP repository, and other member information. Include the ability to track members by system and state. Need to have a plan for updating the information in the database, making sure that the fields are consistent. Make available for pensions systems to update their own information when things change. Have this database accessible to members only.
- A volunteer database, to help make better use of volunteers.
- A job posting page.

- An electronic CPE tracking process.
- A link to the conference sponsors.
- Links to other organizations: NCPERS, NASRA, etc.
- A secure Board area.
- Toolkits for membership use.
- The ability to mail/merge letters for mass communications with sponsors, retirees and/or members.
- An electronic process to sign-up for the monthly GASB phone calls.

**Roll Call of the Systems** – Instead of having a Roll Call session at the annual conference, use the information usually collected for that in a searchable member database. (See IT Needs). Use the Roll Call time slot to break into committees to discuss their purpose and goals, or a meet the Board session.

**Sharing of Services** – Consider sharing resources with PRISM.

**Finances** – The balance as of December 31, 2014 was \$198,789. The balance as of February 28, 2015 was \$214,418. The 2014 conference balance was (17,408) as of 12/31/14.

**Administrative Tasks** – Volunteers handle the administrative tasks. Administrative workloads are highest at conference time, with tasks such as maintaining membership lists, paying bills, emailing members, etc. Consider utilizing a company that does administrative tasks for organizations.

**GroundWork Group (GWg)** – Scott Cain, the CEO of the organization, made an informal presentation to the Board. GWg is a non-profit organization that started ten years ago, to provide administrative services to non-profits using technology. Types of services include providing member portals, building websites, social media assistance, facilitating databases and assisting in managing data, payment processing and fundraising. Many of P2F2's IT needs listed above could be achieved by contracting with GWg. Some of the needs discussed with Scott included: access to all members to the questions and answers, membership registration, conference registration and payments, a searchable membership database, RFP repository, links to sponsors and other organizations, social media, a conference app, job postings, toolkits, electronic CPE crediting, mail merging, and member monthly phone call sign-ups. Pricing structure would include a fee to create the organized core system, development of the site and a monthly hosting administrative fee. GWg will get back to P2F2 with their recommendation and price estimate.

**Strategic Plan** – There are a number of things listed on the current strategic plan. Review the strategic plan and decide what the top 10 tasks are and the right coordinators for those tasks.

**Annual Conference** – Continue to offer the maximum number of CPE credits during the conference. End at noon on Wednesdays. Keep the tax session as the last session on Wednesday. Evaluate ordering boxed lunches versus a buffet for lunches on Wednesday. Ideas for pre-conference topics include GASB 72, results of employer audits and asset types. Discussed recording sessions to put on the website after the conference is over.

**Member networking** – With the discontinuation of the Roll Call session, discussed ways to get members to meet each other. Have breakout sessions with attendees where members of the same size of plan type are grouped together? Provide pictures of the membership, so members can put a face to the name? Have conversation starters at the tables at the reception? Have a meet the Board session?

**Newsletters** – Goal is to have four per year. Have a section in the newsletter where some of the questions asked by members are included with answers from others.

### **2015 Conference Budget –**

- Reviewed a draft conference budget. Historically, there are more attendees at California conferences. In the past, the registration fee would cover the meal costs. The largest expenditure for the conference is hotel related. Budget assumes not serving breakfast or food at breaks, except for the ice cream social. Plated lunches have been used in the budget, as they are cheaper than buffet lunches. Need to verify tax exemption status in California. The San Diego team is looking at having the welcome reception, at Marina Village, which is off-site of the hotel. There will be more snacks provided in the goody bag for the 2015 conference than had been in the past. While the Board met, Nancy revised the 2015 budget. Auten will update the budget with a higher number of attendees.
- The results of the survey sent to members regarding breakfast at the conference were that 80% would like to have breakfast included. However, when they were told how much breakfast costs, 50% said they would like to have breakfast included. 20% said a continental breakfast would be fine and 20% wanted a hot breakfast. The goal of the Board is to have the agenda out in May or June so attendees can get approval to attend and sign-up earlier, to help in attendee counts. The decision was made to not provide breakfast. Attendees will be on their own for breakfast at this conference.
- P2F2 has committed to 325 rooms. We must use 80% of the rooms that we commit to.
- Discussed having a volunteer thank-you event or a meet-the-Board event for new members.
- Determine if there should be limits as to the number of sponsors and attendees and what that limit would be.

### **New Conference Rate Structure effective for the 2015 conference–**

- Early-bird member registrants - \$325
- Early-bird non-members registrants - \$475, which will include an annual membership
- Regular member registrants - \$425
- Regular non-member registrants - \$575, which will include an annual membership
- Non-Eligible (those who are not employed by a pension system) attendees - \$3,000

**2016 Conference –** Meeting Site Resources (MSR) recommended a few sites for the 2016 conference, which will be held on October 23-26, 2016. The options were Atlanta, Savannah, Indianapolis and Asheville, NC. We have put a hold on two hotels in Charleston, SC and one in Richmond, VA. DeJonge will reach out to Darden to do a site visit.

**2017 Conference –** DeJonge and Carraher will explore options for the 2017 Conference location. Options were narrowed down to: Albuquerque, NM; Salt Lake City, UT; Las Vegas, NV; Coeur d'Alene, ID; San Francisco, CA; Denver, CO; Austin, TX; Santa Fe, NM and Seattle, WA.

**2015 Budget –** Camuglia is working on the full year budget. The conference expenses are the largest for the annual budget. The Board discussed the possible need for a part-time staff person to provide administrative support. Estimate the time needed to be 8 hours a week, paying bills and reconciling the checkbook. Administrative needs increase during conference and conference planning time. What dollar amount would P2F2 be comfortable spending? Leigh Snell recommends getting someone in Washington to help with the legislative bills. The other six groups in the GASB Communication Research Group have someone in Washington, who helps testify in Connecticut.

**Financial Goals –** As of the end of February 2015, there is a balance of \$214,000. The Board feels comfortable keeping a base of \$180,000 in our account, which makes approximately \$25,000-\$34,000 available for additional expenditures (website, administrative, lobbyist/advocacy, one projector). The overall goal is to add \$10,000 to the balance each year. There is a total of three CD's, two of which mature at the same time. When the CD's mature, reinvest each CD with a different maturity date

### **Follow-ups –**

- Nix to convene Web Committee and proceed with research and recommendation on IT solution.
- Carraher to update the Strategic Plan.
- Nix to post the mission/vision statements on the website.
- Carraher will share the post-its from the meeting.
- Nix will work with Charlene to get the sponsor letter out.
- DeJonge will contact MSR regarding the 2016 conference hotel.
- DeJonge will contact Darden Green to do a site visit for the 2016 conference hotel.
- Carraher – Convene Speakers Committee- goal to get brochure out by May 31.
- Carraher – Send videos to Board and Nix for posting
- Auten – 2015 Conference rates finalized; follow-up on breakfast with Charlene.
- Nix – Add links to the website for sponsors/ NCTR, etc.
- Camuglia – Work on non-conference budget.
- Iverson – Strategic Planning minutes.
- Dolphin – Research accreditation certificates.
- Carraher/Camuglia – Nominating Committee – need the most help with advocacy; look at leadership on committees – limit to one year on each committee.
- DeJonge – Contact Greve to let him know Patti Brammer is on the Newsletter Committee.
- Camuglia – Clean up the draft searchable database.
- Camuglia – Convene the Membership Committee – Dave Andrews, Robin Madsen, Patti Brammer, Michelle Camuglia.
- Camuglia – Look at timing of cash flows.
- DeJonge – Will update the 2015 P2F2 Committees (non-conference).
- Auten/Iverson – California Outreach
- Covarrubias – Electronic CPE

### **Newsletter Topics – due to Patti Brammer ([pbrammer@opers.org](mailto:pbrammer@opers.org)) by April 15.**

- DeJonge – Strategic Planning Meeting Update
- Covarrubias – Summary of the results of the conference survey.
- Carraher/Nix – How to be a Board member
- Dolphin/Nix/Camuglia – Mission/vision update
- Auten – 2015 Conference
- DeJonge – Toolkit
- DeJonge/Carraher – 2016 Conference
- Carraher – Nominating Committee
- Nix – Web exploration
- Iverson – Conference Rates change
- Carraher – Speakers Committee
- Camuglia/Greve – GASB 72
- Brammer – Videos
- Camuglia – Roll Call/Searchable Database
- Carraher – Retiree Committee
- Nix – Roll Call of the States
- Carraher/DeJonge – Meet the Board
- DeJonge/Greve – AICPA response
- DeJonge/Greve – Tech agenda
- DeJonge/Greve – Update on GASB.com
- Greve – Excel tips
- Brammer – Member Surveys

- Nix – How to access secure site
- Brammer – Call for volunteers