

March 20, 2015

To Our Strategic Planning Committee Members,

*First of all, thank you again for volunteering* – we really appreciate your help in this important initiative. You are the first members of a new NARFE standing committee. We're hoping for a busy and productive 2015, and your term will run until the Convention in 2016. If you're interested in serving another term after that, please let me know sometime along the way.

We're still fine-tuning on just how this will all work – it's a process of evolution, not revolution. Though not always visible to the membership, we've been working to make the FON report the focus of our planning. We know that change is happening around us, and we're moving now to ensure our organization is ready for the future.

But we know these things already:

- We will be honest, open and transparent with all stakeholders throughout the process.
- We will listen to everyone, and think carefully about what changes can and should be made.
- We want to include and represent both the active and vocal groups *and* the silent majority – the 85% of our members that don't attend meetings – as well as new members – even those without a computer or email address.

It's a tall order, but we have a talented and diverse group on the Committee.

On the NARFE website under **HQ Happenings** is a blue banner labeled **Strategic Planning**. Here you'll find links to these documents:

1. A short article on the topic that appears in the *Insider* for April 2015
2. The *Strategic Plan Fact Sheet – Team and Committee Assignments*
3. The *Strategic Plan Diagram* (timeline, process, participating groups, communication tools)
4. A special FON edition of the *Insider*

Please review these materials carefully before our first meeting (see below), and please bring along copies of items 3 and 4 with you (we'll mail you these before the first meeting).

We've started by prioritizing the thirty-five FON recommendations and putting them into an initial timeframe. Some of the recommendations have already been accomplished. After much discussion, the NEB grouped the recommendations into two timeline categories – **Now** and **Later**.

The **Now** items are ones the Committee should work on for this initial planning stage. The **Later** items will be addressed by Strategic Planning Committees down the road, based in part on what we decide initially and on available funding.

Attached you'll find a spreadsheet with the actions in two tabs – **Now** and **Later**. As mentioned, the **Now** items are those for consideration during your initial tenure on the Committee. We want you to carefully address these – some are challenging concepts. They'll challenge our creativity and even our courage. The **Later** items are those either already accomplished or those deferred to the next Committee for its consideration.

But right now, *time* is our biggest constraint. We need to act clearly and decisively.

We have twelve items – 8 from the FON report – to look at. After the Committee makes recommendations, they will be put into a Strategic Plan, vetted through the NEB, and then specific actions to support the Plan will be presented to the Convention or handled by referendum.

Everything is open to discussion. Some things that sound appealing (e.g.: election of Congressional District Leaders) may be too expensive, time consuming, or simply impractical.

Our previous Strategic Plan email is generating responses that I will present in a spreadsheet we can discuss after which I can also forward the email received to one or all of the Members.

I've also asked the President to create a one-page fact sheet with information about NARFE, and we can talk about how this can best be used. Our marketing research is starting and we'll be presenting some preliminary observations before long.

We'd like to bring you to our DC headquarters for a two-day initial meeting with the Facilitator. You will also have an opportunity to meet with the Team and the NARFE Staff. With that in mind, I'd appreciate it if you could let me know about your availability between **March 23 and April 10** as soon as possible so we can pick the best dates.

More information to come shortly about the meeting, but in the meantime, you may reach me at [jdowe@narfe.org](mailto:jdowe@narfe.org), or 571-483-1281 (my direct dial at the NARFE HQ).

Thanks.

Jon Dowie