

**Fort Hays State University**

**Strategic Planning Report  
for the  
Greater Salina Community Foundation**

**September 29, 2001  
Brookville, KS**

## **Background**

The Greater Salina Community Foundation (GSCF) was established in 1999 to create connections between donors and worthwhile causes, creating a positive interdependence among the people, the organizations, and the financial resources of Salina and the greater community. In two years time, the foundation has grown to a very successful community organization with an administrative endowment of \$2 million, a donors' endowment of \$8 million, and the involvement of 42 separate non-profit organizations. Its growth and success is a model of community activism matched by few other community foundations.

In August 2001, GSCF contacted Fort Hays State University's Docking Institute of Public Affairs to conduct a strategic planning session with their board of directors. A conference call with board members yielded a tentative agenda and session goals. In preparation for the planning meeting, Board Members were asked to develop an advance list of the organization's strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, threats, and major issues for the coming 2-3 years. These were received and summarized by the Institute. Sixteen board members plus the Executive Director (see Attachment A) met on Saturday, September 29th, from 8am-12noon at the CK Ranch in Brookville. FHSU Docking staff members facilitating the session were Cathy Drabkin, Michael Walker and Joseph Aistrup, PhD. This document represents both a summary of the planning session, and the beginning of a strategic planning document for GSCF.

## **Mission**

The mission of the Greater Salina Community Foundation is to enhance the quality of life both today and in the future, by:

- enabling donors to fulfill their charitable desires,
- building a permanent endowment,
- facilitating prudent management and care of funds,
- meeting needs through grants, awards, and scholarships.

## **Foundation Services and Relationships**

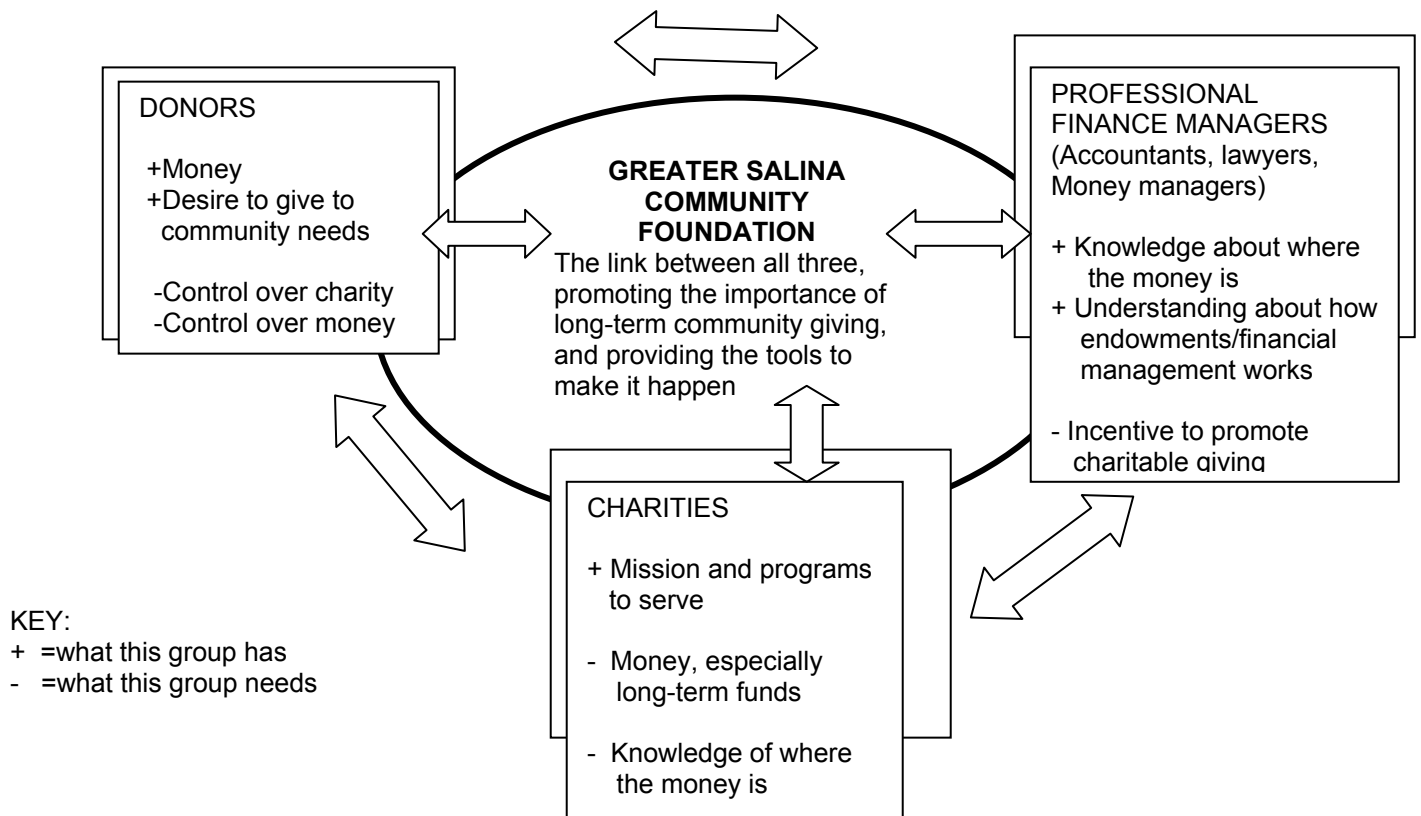
The Foundation's specific activities include:

- helping individual donors to set up endowments through designated, donor-advised, scholarship, and fields of interest funds
- helping local non-profit organizations and area communities set up endowments through organizational funds and affiliates

- directly meeting immediate and future community needs through dispersal of its unrestricted “Fund for Greater Salina,”
- and managing endowment funds for the best, reliable yield.

The Foundation also allows professional financial managers to maintain control of individual donor funds that have been given to GSCF. In essence, GSCF serves as a conduit for linking three major components in community long-term giving: donors, charities, and financial managers.

The model below\* describes what each component has, what each one needs, and how the Foundation provides the links between the three.



\*Model provided by GSCF Board Chairman Pete Peterson.

This model raises some important issues for GSCF to consider, both in terms of its relationships with these independent entities and the nature of its approach to delivering its services.

In its role of building endowments, GSCF walks a fine line between supporting local charities by helping them set up long-term giving endowments, and competing with them, either by reducing the available pool of annual donor dollars, or by redirecting donors’

funds from an individual charity's cause to GSCF's unrestricted fund. GSCF's choice of the former role (connecting donors to charities), means that the Foundation's main focus will be educational—guiding donors, educating non-profits, and encouraging professional finance managers to arrange long-term giving opportunities.

In the above model, GSCF's relationship is supportive, helping each entity secure what they lack to make a successful connection: control over the charity and money for donors; financial management tools and access to donors for charities; and incentives to encourage giving for professional finance managers. GSCF's approach to delivering these support services will be to facilitate giving, but not directly solicit funds. Providing these support services to each entity should be a major focus of growth for GSCF in the next 2-3 years.

And yet, the core of GSCF's mission—to enhance the quality of life in the Greater Salina area—and the fact that it does accept and disperse unrestricted funds, implies the organization's vision of community need is larger than that of the combined visions of the charities involved in its organization. Even if all charitable organizations within the greater Salina area were involved in GSCF, there is the possibility that some community needs would be unmet. This is an opportunity for GSCF to step up to the plate with the distribution of its unrestricted funds.

This role, as a direct provider of community needs with donors' unrestricted funds, has the potential to be seen as competitive by local non-profits. But most non-profits' mission-specific programs and limited funds are not flexible enough to meet unexpected or rapidly changing community needs. GSCF's unrestricted fund can help meet unexpected or unmet community needs, while providing donors an option of investing in the overall health long-term of the community. It is a valid function for a community foundation.

Much of how local non-profits perceive GSCF's dual role (of connecting donors and charities and of directly funding community needs), will be determined by how GSCF approaches its acquisition of endowment funds. Aggressive fund raising for unrestricted or restricted funds will surely aggravate local non-profits. But this is not to say that GSCF should be passive in its approach to building its endowments. By maintaining and augmenting its educator-facilitator role, by focusing on its long-term giving perspective, by regularly promoting the non-profit endowments currently under its umbrella, by actively communicating with local non-profits, and by consistently promoting its purpose of community enhancement (vs. "empire building"), the Foundation can expect to build community-wide trust of its intentions.

GSCF will need to constantly monitor its relationship with donors, non-profits, and financial managers, to keep its finger on the pulse of community perception and to maintain positive cooperation between all four partners in long-term community giving.

## **Organizational Growth**

As with all rapidly growing organizations, GSCF has found its policies and internal structure strained by the tremendous growth experienced during its first two years. While the Foundation currently relies on an active board of directors and a paid executive director, its growth to \$10 million in assets and 42 separate non-profit endowments strains the current accounting system, hampers the ability of the group to continue its “donor-friendly” approach, and prevents broadening its educational activities. GSCF has strong marketing and educational skills on staff currently, and uses its volunteers extensively in providing Foundation services. The addition of a part-time paid staff person is not unreasonable for an organization of its size.

GSCF’s growth has also led to changes or exceptions to policies for accepting donor gifts, charging maintenance fees for handling funds, and dispersing funds. Its larger size will require the Foundation to re-think their policies affecting donors and funds, to ensure uniform treatment and to maintain the community trust they have built. In instances where policy changes will impact previous commitments to donors, the Foundation should consider grand-fathering in changes.

## **Priority Issues**

During the GSCF planning session, Board Members identified the following issues of concern for the Foundation in the next 2-3 years:

- How can we educate board, professionals, donors and charities about the accessibility of the foundation and charitable giving opportunities? (Internal education and external education).
- How should we develop paid staff and volunteers with the skills necessary to perform the operations of the foundation?
- How do we continue prudent financial management in an uncertain economic and policy environment?
- How do we balance the need to be donor friendly with the need to control and facilitate the assets and management of the foundation? How do we set boundaries and exceptions?
- How should we extend the foundation beyond Greater Salina? Should we continue to build affiliates? Should we charge fees for administration of accounts that don’t benefit Salina?
- How do we maintain board diversity?
- How should we encourage organizations to apply for grants and publicize the grants given? What should be our focus for unrestricted money and how can we

best choose grant recipients?

Working groups of the board chose the first two issues to address as a starting point for strategic planning. These issues and the Board's proposed strategies are as follows:

**Issue #1a: Internal Education/Communication**

**How can we best educate our board members, existing donors and currently affiliated non-profits about GSCF, the accessibility of the foundation and charitable giving opportunities?**

Free flowing communication is essential to an organization's success, especially one experiencing rapid growth. GSCF's Board, while primarily made up of founding members, has brought in new members, and will continue to do so as a part of its natural growth. Educating and orienting board members, existing donors, and currently affiliated non-profits to GSCF's mission and procedures will be important to maintain the group's progress. The more communication that flows within an organization and its separate parts, the greater understanding there will be of issues and of how decisions are made.

**Strategies:**

To address this issue, GSCF will:

- 1) Develop a standard procedure for orienting new board members that educates them on GSCF history, mission, operations, and general procedures. This procedure could include a "Board Orientation Packet," meetings with the Executive Director or other board members, or other training opportunities.
- 2) Continue educating current board members. Consider developing an annual board education meeting or retreat, in addition to the current information meetings at quarterly board meetings.
- 3) Include detailed minutes of committee meetings in board meeting packets.
- 4) Consider using the Internet (e-mail or web site) to disseminate committee meeting minutes and other important information to all board members.
- 5) Develop a periodic newsletter to communicate with regular donors.
- 6) Develop a speakers bureau to go out to charities to educate/update them about GSCF services, and to train them on processes for long-term giving.
- 7) Convert the original campaign development committee's function to one of sustaining current donor and charity relationships through education and communication.

## **Issue #1b: External Education/Communication**

**How can we educate financial management professionals, potential donors and potential charities about the accessibility of the foundation and charitable giving opportunities?**

External education will be important to continue the Foundation's progress, and to promote GSCF's supportive role. GSCF will target small audiences (versus the general public) as a more efficient use of resources. To avoid "active solicitation," external education efforts will focus on working *through* current charities and professional finance managers, encouraging them to strengthen the link between donors and charities (as presented in model above).

### **Strategies:**

To address this issue, GSCF will:

- 1) Develop and conduct a seminar for the current 42 GSCF charities which teaches them how to use the foundation's endowment to their advantage by converting annual donors into endowing donors and legacy bequests.
- 2) Use personal contacts to educate community finance professionals on the need and incentives for promoting community giving among their clients.

## **Issue #2: Staffing GSCF**

**How should we develop paid staff and volunteers with the skills necessary to perform the operations of the foundation?**

GSCF's staffing plan is built around three strategic points. First, it should take advantage of current staff's strengths, maximizing the Executive Director's marketing and outreach skills. Second, it should fill the missing accounting/bookkeeping skills not currently on staff. And third, because of their tedious but critical nature, these accounting/bookkeeping skills should be carried out by paid staff (instead of volunteer staff) to insure accountability. Volunteer skills should continue to be focused on education and outreach efforts.

### **Strategies:**

To address this issue, GSCF will:

- 1) Hire an additional 15-hour/week staff person with accounting /bookkeeping background and computing skills. Aim for paying this individual \$20 per hour, with an annual salary cost of \$15,600. Budget this position at \$20,000 the first year to factor in additional equipment and training.
- 2) Fund this position by borrowing against the administrative fund, to be paid back in better years.
- 3) Form a new volunteer committee for education and publicity to assist staff in those efforts.

## Additional Recommendations

There were many issues and ideas brought up during the planning session with GSCF that could not be addressed due to time constraints. The Docking Institute views the initial planning session and this report as a good start towards mapping the Greater Salina Community Foundation's future direction. In addition to the above strategies developed by working groups, we recommend the following:

- 1) Continue addressing the issues identified by Board Members during the retreat, assigning working committees to explore various options as necessary.
- 2) Consider adding to GSCF's Mission Statement, wording that makes its linking function between donors and charities, and its supporting role for community non-profit organizations, clearer. This may help alleviate confusion within and outside of the organization regarding GSCF's education vs. solicitation focus.
- 3) Address the "donor-friendly" and organizational integrity issues sooner than later. Confusion about and/or changes in monetary policies and procedures can lead to very divisive situations. GSCF needs to be clear about its policies, even laying out guidelines for when exceptions to policies can be allowed, to avoid potential charges of deception, favoritism, or incompetence.
- 4) Develop guidelines or a philosophy for what kind of community needs will be met with unrestricted funds, ensuring that there is no overlap with existing charities' services, and establishing an evaluation method to measure effectiveness. Currently, it is unclear how GSCF determines what community needs should be met beyond reacting to requests for grants, etc. Furthermore, there is no indication that a system of evaluation is in place for determining whether community needs are solved by GSCF's fund dispersals. Questions to consider: Do GSCF unrestricted fund gifts focus on long-term community needs? Short-term needs? A mix? Would GSCF consider community needs beyond those served by local non-profits—eg. Community parks, revitalization efforts, and other public efforts.
- 5) Consider including additional representatives of local non-profits in certain levels of Foundation decision-making (e.g.—assisting with identifying unmet community needs for GSCF's unrestricted funds), as a way of building trust.
- 6) Develop a "low-key" marketing strategy, which promotes the foundation's linking and supporting functions to the larger community. GSCF provides a very valuable community service and should keep in the public's eye, even if only peripherally.
- 7) Investigate ways of bringing additional charities under the Foundation's umbrella.



## PLANNING PROCESS AND MEETING NOTES

### **Mission Statement:**

Following introductions, Board members were invited to comment on GSCF's mission statement, whether they felt it still represented the organization's work and goals, whether it needed additional definitions, the relative importance of the stated purposes, etc. Discussion of the mission encompassed the following topics.

### **Regarding the stated purposes:**

The bulleted purposes listed in the mission are not in order of importance, but rather general order of sequence. None is more important than the other (they are of equal importance), and they encompass the general work of the organization.

The question was posed: Is the mission statement for the community or for us? The short-version of the mission typically used in public presentations is that GSCF's purpose is to "link donors to charities." Should this be succinctly put in the mission statement somewhere? Some felt that the mission should emphasize this linkage or conduit more clearly.

### **Regarding "enhancing quality of life":**

Donors make the judgment about what is "enhancing quality of life." However, discretionary funds give GSCF an opportunity to think about what the board feels are important community needs. Some of what we do is done on faith. When you give a student a scholarship, how do you measure the enhancement of the quality of life? GSCF also "enhances the quality of life" through the 42 community groups that have an endowment accounts-- these groups work through their specific missions to increase the quality of life. The Foundation is providing the support structure.

### **Regarding GSCF's approach:**

Salina has strong community organizations, so the foundation is there to support these other community groups. We are here to sustain, much less about creating something new. The Foundation enables donors to achieve their long-term charitable desires, which will give community groups a solid foundation for the future. "Today and in the future" is appropriate because the foundation helps those with immediate needs and provides the financial mechanism for generating resources in the future.

One board member noted that the organization should be a passive organization that is not beating the bushes chasing donor dollars and competing with other community organization. There was a call for the board to ratify the passive nature of the foundation. Should we remain "facilitators" versus active fundraisers? While many said they wanted to remain passive, the question of "how passive is passive" was raised. For example, should the foundation bold its name in the phone book? Or, should it sponsor an educational workshop? The general

consensus was that “passive” refers to direct fund raising, but “active” refers to Donor education and enabling. Enabling and educating are action words. We still need to be active in terms of enabling, of helping donors make the link with charities. But we need to be educating versus selling the foundation. It was also felt important to distinguish between the long-term and short-term nature of GSCF’s fund raising.

**Regarding GSCF limitations:**

We need to make sure that people understand that while the foundation is a conduit for those with charitable gifts, there are rules that keep the foundation from following certain types of desires for donors. There are legal mandates which prohibit distribution of foundation funds to individuals or organizations which are not clearly charitable organizations (501(c)3 designation or other indication).

We have both restricted and unrestricted funds and with unrestricted funds, the board has more discretion to spend the money. A few of the board members don’t think that the mission statement adequately reflects what the board should be doing with unrestricted funds. Conversely, one board member noted that a flexible mission statement gives the board the ability to adapt to new donors with different goals.

**Internal and External Environment Assessment**

In preparation for the planning meeting, Board Members were asked to develop an advance list of the organization’s strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, threats, and major issues for the coming 2-3 years. These were received and summarized by the Institute.

**GSCF Strengths:**

Docking Institute staff summarized the list of GSCF strengths composed in advance by Board Members’ as follows: (see Attachment C for complete list)

- Strength, dedication, excellence and leadership of board, executive director, committees and volunteers.
- Diversity and community representation within the board
- Financial strength of organization
- Administrative endowment
- Unrestricted fund
- Community awareness of GSCF
- Relationship with other non-profits/institutions
- Enthusiastic donor response
- Wide community involvement
- Good reputation within community
- Operating as holding/support organization
- Board understands community’s needs
- No personal agendas

- Worthiness of cause
- Donor-friendly policies
- Low cost services
- Early grants very positive
- Solid foundation
- Well thought out organization
- Quick growth of foundation

### **GSCF Weaknesses:**

Docking Institute staff summarized the list of GSCF weaknesses composed in advance by Board Members' as follows: (see Attachment D for complete list)

- Lack of support staff (clerical)
- Lack of understanding/experience among some board members
- Some volunteers disenchanted
- Community's awareness of GSCF, it's goals and purposes
- Uncertainty of what GSCF should be
- Trying to be all things to all people
- Foundation accepts Trojan Horses (?)
- Unaware of opportunities for community enrichment
- Learning curve
- Too much too soon (fast growth)
- Young group finding its way

### **GSCF Opportunities:**

Docking Institute staff summarized the list of GSCF opportunities composed in advance by Board Members' as follows: (see Attachment E for complete list)

- To become a regional leader in community giving/planning
- Increase charitable giving to community through unrestricted funds
- Increase giving within community
- Fill more community needs through grants, scholarships and loans
- Develop financial base to cover future activities
- Tap into greater Salina community
- Increase public awareness of GSCF's purpose/goals and value to the community
- Support unique opportunities as they arise in community
- Assist other communities in developing their own foundations
- Add Affiliates
- Plan GSCF's future—identifying, prioritizing and acting on opportunities
- To develop an organization of excellence

### **GSCF Threats:**

Docking Institute staff summarized the list of GSCF threats composed in advance by Board Members' as follows: (see Attachment F for complete list)

- Economic change/recession and volatile stock market's effect on endowment.
- Reduction in charitable giving due to economic downturn.
- Default on pledge payments due to economy.
- Reduced tax incentives for giving
- Perception by other organizations as a competitor/empire builders
- Losing donors' support by not fulfilling their wishes.
- Loss of reputation due to poor fund management or unwise distributions, especially in financially challenging times.
- Setting rules too tight—it's not "our" money
- Wavering from policies, rules, procedures
- Failure to perform
- Overconfidence
- Missing timelines for grants to be requested/awarded
- No plan for continuing leadership
- FIMS

## **Discussion of Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities, and Threats (SWOTs):**

After presenting summarized SWOTs on flipcharts, Docking Staff led a discussion on the various SWOTs, asking which is the most important for GSCF's future success, what patterns were noticeable among the SWOTs, what were the implications for strategic issues, etc. Discussion of SWOTs encompassed the following topics:

### **Regarding people:**

GSCF has a good board and good relations with other community organizations—this is a strength to be capitalized on. We sold ourselves as a service to other nonprofits. Board members are active in other community groups. The community groups trust us.

There is the sense that before any new initiatives can be taken on, GSCF needs more support staff (clerical?). In addition, new board members have not been socialized into the organization. New board members don't have all the group's history and standard procedures internalized as original members do.

### **Regarding policies/services:**

Is "donor-friendly" a strength or a weakness? It's listed as both. We are amenable to the desires of donors in terms of handling funds and distributing them. But, too small and frequent distributions can cost too much administrative overhead. We were donor friendly when we allowed community groups to withdraw their 5%—even though their account did not earn 5% and even though this would mean that some of the accounts would drop below the \$10K threshold. Some members of the board felt this should not have happened. Do clearer guidelines/policies need to be set?

### **Regarding Community Awareness/Education:**

Community awareness of GSCF is listed both as a strength and weakness—why? There has been lots of initial support (founding donors, etc), but 90% of the general public doesn't know about the foundation. Maybe this isn't a weakness, just a matter of time. Sandra McMullen says it takes 10 years for people to know what you are about.

We need to have people find out about us, so that everyone who wants to use the foundation has the opportunity. We want to give a vehicle to those with even limited funds. So, we need to get our name out there. Should there be a publicity committee?

We need to explain what a foundation is to the general public. There are a lot of people with much money. How do we build a sense of trust for rich and modest donors (when trust is built over time)? There's an opportunity here we need to take advantage of: educate people on the "philanthropic mind set", among individuals, younger population, and associated non-profits. There is much wealth that has been developed and it needs to be directed partially toward the foundation. We need to raise the *overall* community awareness. We need to educate baby boomers as to the opportunity to have directed donating ability, which fits the desires of the baby boomers.

One other opportunity discussed was whether GSCF should try to get more affiliates. We have added Ellsworth and Russell affiliates. But does this fit the mission statement and does it fit the "Greater Salina" geographic boundary?

### **Model for Linking Donors, Charities, and Financial Managers:**

Pete Peterson presented a model (see page 3) of how GSCF links donors, charities, and financial managers, according to what each entity has, and what each entity needs. GSCF can provide the linkage among the three. There's an opportunity here to teach the Professionals, Donors and charities about what GSCF does. Professionals, so that they know they can continue to manage funds endowed to GSCF. Donors, so that they will consider giving to GSCF. Charities, so that they will start educating their donors to give to their component endowment fund.

## **Priority Issues**

After reviewing GSCF's strengths, weaknesses, opportunity and threats, board members were invited to write down their top 3 issues for GSCF to address in the next 2-3 years. These were reported as follows:

- How can we educate board, professionals, donors and charities about the accessibility of the foundation and charitable giving opportunities?

- How should we develop paid staff and volunteers with the skills necessary to perform the operations of the foundation?
- How do we continue prudent financial management in an uncertain economic and policy environment?
- How do we balance the need to be donor friendly with the need to control and facilitate the assets and management of the foundation? How do we set boundaries and exceptions?
- How should we extend the foundation beyond Greater Salina? Should we continue to build affiliates? Should we charge fees for administration of accounts that don't benefit Salina?
- How do we maintain board diversity?
- How should we encourage organizations to apply for grants and publicize the grants given? What should be our focus for unrestricted money and how can we best choose grant recipients?

In addition, Docking Institute staff presented a list of summarized priority issues identified in advance by GSCF Board Members: (See Attachment G for complete list)

- What should the focus of foundation growth be? (education vs. solicitation)
- How can we best prepare for National economic instability?
- What investment options should we pursue to yield best return??
- What should be our focus for unrestricted money?
- How can we best choose grant recipients?
- How can we better educate the community/increase awareness of GSCF among stakeholders?
- How do we maintain momentum, keeping PR efforts at high level?
- How do we continue to meet the demands of donors, investment advisors, and charities while continuing to operate within 501( c )3?
- What should we do to make sure all organizational promises are fulfilled?
- How do we meet management needs (staff, computing) of our rapidly growing group?

Board Members were then asked to vote on their top issues to be addressed in working groups. Board members voted to address the two main issues below in working groups for the remainder of the session's time.

- 1) How should we develop paid staff and volunteers with the skills be able perform the operations of the foundation? (7 votes)
- 2) How can we educate board, professionals, donors and charities about the accessibility of the foundation and charitable giving opportunities? (8 votes)

The second issue was split into two components (internal education and external education). The Board then broke into three working groups to develop broad strategies and ideas to address these issues. Working groups reported back the to board as follows.

## **Reports of Working Groups**

### **Issue 1: Staffing GSCF**

**How should we develop paid staff and volunteers with the skills necessary to perform the operations of the foundation?**

Several factors influenced the working group's thinking on this issue.

First, Betsy Wearing (Executive Director) indicated that there isn't a need for more clerical staffing (as presumed by board members) but for more accounting skills on staff. In other words, the solutions to the staffing issue need to address available skills as well as the number of hours.

Second, it was clear to board members that their executive director is a major strength of the organization, and that her marketing and outreach skills are particularly valuable. It was felt that solutions to the staffing issue should take advantage of Betsy's strengths (and interest).

Third, the working group felt that accounting functions of the organization, because of their tedious but critical nature, should be carried out by paid staff (instead of volunteer staff) to insure accountability. It was felt that volunteer skills should be focused on education and outreach efforts.

To address the need for more accounting skills on staff, to capitalize on Betsy's marketing skills, and to use volunteer time most efficiently, the work group recommended GSCF should:

- 1) Hire additional staff with accounting skills to take on those type duties, thereby freeing more of the Executive Director's time for educational and outreach activities. The group proposed that such a staff person be part-time, 15 hours per week, with accounting/bookkeeping background and computing skills. They estimated that such a person could be hired for \$20 per hour. The annual cost for the position would be \$15,600. With additional equipment and training for this staff position factored in, the expected annual cost for initiating this position was \$20,000. The working group recommended against soliciting new funds for the administrative endowment to fund this additional staff. They suggested borrowing against the administrative fund to be paid back in better years.
- 2) Form a new committee for education and publicity to assist staff in those efforts.

A straw-poll of board members indicated that there was a general consensus to support the increase of GSCF staffing in the manner recommended.

### **Issue #2: Internal Education/Communication**

**How can we best educate our board members, existing donors and currently affiliated non-profits about GSCF, the accessibility of the foundation and charitable giving opportunities?**

Several factors influenced the group's thinking on this issue:

First, it was recognized that while the board of directors has many founding members in its ranks, there are newer members who don't have the advantage of the group's history. As one group member put it: Those of us who have been around can see where the furrows are, but that may not be the case if you're dropped in the middle of the field.

Second, the more communication that flows within an organization and its separate parts, the greater understanding there will be of issues and of how decisions are made. The importance of "recycling" of issues from the committee level to the larger group was stressed.

To address this issue, group members recommended the following:

- 1) Develop a standard procedure for orienting new board members that educates them on GSCF history, mission, operations, and general procedures. This procedure could include a "Board Orientation Packet," meetings with the Executive Director or other board members, or other training opportunities.
- 2) Continue educating current board members. Consider developing an annual board education meeting, in addition to the current information meetings at quarterly board meetings.
- 3) Include detailed minutes of committee meetings in board meeting packets.
- 4) Consider using the Internet (e-mail or web site) to disseminate committee meeting minutes and other important information to all board members.
- 4) Develop a periodic newsletter to communicate with regular donors.
- 5) Develop a speaker bureau to go out to charities to educate/update them about GSCF services, and to train them on processes for long-term giving.
- 6) Convert the original campaign development committee's function to one of sustaining current donor and charity relationships through education and communication.

### **Issue #3: External Education/Communication**



## **How can we educate financial management professionals, potential donors and potential charities about the accessibility of the foundation and charitable giving opportunities?**

Several factors influenced the group's thinking on this issue:

First, the group recognized the fine line between GSCF's need to educate donors, professionals, and charities about the opportunity for long-term endowed giving, and the appearance of GSCF directly soliciting funds or competing with local charities.

Second, it was felt that the "greater Salina community" was too large a public to try and educate effectively. The group felt that targeting smaller audiences would be a more efficient use of resources.

Third, it was felt that to avoid "active solicitation," external education efforts should focus on working *through* current charities and professional finance managers, encouraging them to strengthen the link between donors and charities (as presented in model presented above).

The working group recommended the following:

- 1) Develop and conduct a seminar for the current 42 GSCF charities which teaches them how to use the foundation's endowment to their advantage by converting annual donors into endowing donors and legacy bequests.
- 2) Using personal contacts, educate community finance professionals on the need and incentives for promoting community giving among their clients.

## **ATTACHMENT A**

Attendance at GSCF Board Retreat  
September 29, 2001  
CK Ranch  
Brookville, KS

Jane Alsop

John Chalmers

John Divine, Vice Chairman

Linda Ellison

Roberto Garcia

Randy Graham

Amanda Gutierrez

Dave Jacobs, Sr.

Barbara Knight

Margaret Logan

Mark L. Miller

Pete Peterson, Chairman

Ramon Schmidt, MD

Don Schroeder

Shelli Swanson

Donna Vanier

Betsy Wearing, President/Executive Director & Secretary

## ATTACHMENT B



### Greater Salina Community Foundation Strategic Planning Agenda September 29, 2001

**8:00-8:15am Gathering/coffee**

**8:15-8:30am Introductions**

**8:30am Review and Clarify Mission of GSCF**

A mission clarifies an organization's *purpose*, *what* it wants to do and *why* it should be doing what it does.

**9:00-9:40am Review of SWOTs identified by GSCF board**

**9:40-10:20am Issue identification, discussion, and prioritizing**

**10:20-10:30 BREAK**

**10:30-11:30am Issue Statement and Strategy Brainstorming**

**11:30am Report Back to Group**

**11:50am Wrap-up and Next Steps**

#### **Stated Goals of 9/29/01 Planning Session:**

- 1) Clarify/confirm GSCF mission
- 2) Assess internal and external environment (SWOTs)
- 3) Identify strategic issues facing the group
- 4) Begin developing broad goals/strategies for addressing issues

## ATTACHMENT C

### Strengths:

- solid foundation
- well thought out
- good people involved with it
- good financial investment (strong, not weak)
- Flexibility available to donors at low cost.
- Well funded administrative endowment.
- Support of volunteers.
- Our people
  - a. First and foremost, our executive director
  - b. Our board of directors
  - c. Our officers and committee chairpersons
  - d. Our founding donors
- Our administrative endowment fund
- Our strong collaborative relationship with the other local non-profits
- Our unrestricted fund
- Our donor-friendly policies (low fees, investment management options, pass-through options, etc
- Great advisory board
- Strong and able director
- A community aware of and willing to support the foundation
- It is financially sound.
- Excellent board.
- Excellent staff.
- leadership, both from the board and the director
- enthusiastic response from donors and from organizations
- speed with which the Foundation has developed effectively.
- Excellent leadership
- Outstanding community support and acceptance by the local institutions
- Established administrative endowment.

- Wide Community involvement
- Operating as a holding/support organization not with an agenda of our own
- good reputation with in the community
- strong board,
- boards understanding of the communities needs,
- broad based board with no personal agendas,
- willingness to be customer friendly are just a few.
- “Worthiness” of our purpose
- Our Administrative Endowment
- Diversity and strength of Board Members
- Wide and diversified range of support it has received
- Solid base, which has been built within the community
- Time and effort given by volunteers
- Positive, supportive community perception of GCSF.
- Outstanding, leadership on the GCSF BOD.
- The BOD is comprised of well, respected community leaders.
- Outstanding Executive Director who is well respected within the community and committed to excellence and taking the GCSF to the next level.
- Leadership in the executive positions
- Leadership in the committee positions
- Diversity in the make-up of the board at large
- Willingness of the leaders to learn from/seek the advice of similar boards in other communities.
- Dedication of board
- Increasing awareness of foundation
- Administration, board, community
- Board members representative of the community
- Initial funding a HUGE success
- Early grants very positive
- Willingness of Board members to work
- Excellent leadership by Board officers

## ATTACHMENT D

### **Weaknesses:**

- Our mission -- more precisely, a sense of unease/uncertainty about what it should be
- Our people -- more precisely, a lack thereof in terms of support staff
- Our "presence" -- there are still lots of folks out there who have no clue who we are or what our mission is
- internally there aren't any weaknesses that come to mind.
- Because of the strength of our leadership we seem to address issues before they become weaknesses.
- Community awareness needs to be broader, including money managers, givers and organizations
- Trying to be all things to all people
- Development of large diverse donor base takes time.
- Some Board members lack understanding of the mechanics for the operation of the Foundation (probably being remedied by the Board retreat) such as what is expected from the board members when the Foundation president e-mails referencing grant requests etc.
- Existing lack of support staff (clerical) for Executive Director allowing her the time for additional one on one donor contact and public speaking.
- "Learning curve" event struggles
- Too much too soon - not having the time to identify, understand or deal with future problems
- Key volunteers become disenchanted or disinterested in organization
- Foundation may succumb to what on the surface appears to be a great opportunity but may not be from the standpoint of foundation goals and policy-it may be ostrich like to say that weakness does not exist but at this point the foundation is very strong.
- Probable lack of experience of most board members in a city-wide formation of this type.
- Neither the name of nor the purpose/goals of the GSCF is well known to the citizens of

Salina and the surrounding area.

- not really weakness, but the fact that it is new and we have not had time to develop philosophies, ideas and ways of the foundation are not known in the Salina community
- Under staffed.
- Deception among board of directors on procedures and direction of Foundation
- Awareness of the Foundation
- Lack of employees so Betsy can be available for community education and outreach
- Most work being done by a one person staff and the rest volunteers - sometimes almost to overload on some.
- Being a new young organization we are still finding our way through some of the problems and concerns
- We may not be fully aware of the opportunities we have for community enrichment.

## ATTACHMENT E

### Opportunities:

- We have the opportunity to become the single most important, most influential, and most impactful non-profit organization within an enormous geographic area – Nebraska to the north, Topeka to the east, Wichita to the south, and Hays to the west. I want to emphasize that this is not a personal "goal" of mine, nor do I think it should be a "goal" of the Foundation itself. I strongly believe, however, that if we continue with our "can-do" attitude and "donor-friendly" policies, and if we place most of our emphasis on education, it will only be a matter of time before this happens. All other opportunities are a subset of the foregoing.
- Unlimited, we can become the thought leader in community giving and planning.
- Developing a financial base to cover philanthropic activities for the future.
- Intelligent Investments
- Publicity
- Future Growth
- Long term Leadership
  - To help facilitate increased charitable giving to the betterment of our community
- Providing a major conduit for all donors to assist their community.
- Being a primary forum to educate benefits of giving.
- The amount of unrestricted funds may allow allocations be more in number of greater amounts and much more recognized by the community at large of the value and purpose of the foundation
- The foundation provides a vehicle for those who want to direct their estate monies and properties to allow the most benefit to the community at the least possible tax burden.
- The opportunity to be the catalyst to other communities developing community foundations.
- To develop an organization of excellence
- Make the name, Greater Salina Community Foundation, recognizable to the citizens of Saline County.
- Expose the purpose/goals of the GSCF to as many individuals as possible, especially



those who might have the opportunity to become involved.

- Because of our existing community support and our leadership, we have an outstanding opportunity to set the stage for our future and clearly define and design our role for the coming years.
- Opportunity to "do more" in the way of meeting the needs of our community through grants, loans, and scholarships.
- Opportunity to be the first organization that people think of when they desire to give a charitable contribution that will "keep on giving" long after they are gone.
- Opportunity to streamline charitable giving and make it an enjoyable experience for both the donor and the recipient.
- chance to invest in the community, really give support when unique opportunities present themselves---we are not tied to one main theme or idea
- The opportunity to tap into the greater Salina community area
- Addition of more affiliates
- We have so many we need to discover some of the key ones and use them as priority and make certain the others don't get lost.
- To help bring concerns of the area to light by helping meet some of the needs through grants and scholarships.
  - To enable the enrichment of the lives of the people of the area.

## ATTACHMENT F

### Threats:

- We must get our organization staffed appropriately. It is time to investigate hiring a "bookkeeper/accountant" type, who might also double as a receptionist/secretary. If we don't, then we risk hamstringing our executive director, or worse, losing her.
- We must get FIMS up and running as soon as possible. If we don't, then we'll not only get hopelessly behind, but we'll also miss out on the database advantages FIMS offers. FIMS needs to be largely in place before the typical 2001 year-end crunch of gift giving.
- We must develop a plan for developing leadership continuity on the board -- chairman, vice-chairman, treasurer, and committee chairpersons -- and perhaps even the executive director as well. If we don't, then we'll be scrambling around trying to fill the holes in the dike whenever and wherever they appear. Just think – if any of these persons had been in the World Trade Center yesterday, our Foundation would have a serious leadership void today.
- economic change would be my main concern right now.
- Being perceived as a competitor to other organizations in the community.
- Hurting our reputation by either not managing the funds wisely or not distributing wisely.
- Loosing support of participants by not meeting the donors' wishes.
- Setting rules so tight that it looks like we are treating funds as our money not as a responsible overseer.
- war on terrorism in our country could affect the overall economy.
- Reduced tax incentives to give to charities
- Public perception that we are building an "empire" (high costs and duplicity of efforts)
- Failure to perform
- Trying to be everything for everybody
- Wavering from policies too easily
- Becoming or appearing to become a fund raising competitor
- Over aggressive acceptance of gifts of various properties.

- Flexing rules or procedures or policies to accommodate special donor requests.
- At this time, some threats have been indicated.
- The volatile condition of the Stock Market.
- Reduction in charitable giving due to recent terrorist attacks and the effect on the total economy. Decreased income/earnings potential on assets due to unstable market conditions.
- Being viewed by other charitable organizations as an organization that will take funds away from their mission or reduce the amount of funds they would have received if given directly to their organization.
- Allowing an attitude of over-confidence or an element of lack of diligence to develop because of our quick/sudden fast success.
- To lose any of the present hi-degree of public confidence
- The acceptance of any gift/donation which. In the final analysis, may not be in the best interest of the Foundation.
- Economic downturn for investment return and additional contributions
- Default on pledge payments because of economy downturn in economic times....how will that be seen by the public and community
- we become unwilling to see and take new pathways
- Poor returns on the invested funds
- Weak economy that might hinder gifts to be given thru the foundation.
- Missing timelines for grants to be requested and awarded
- Any sense in the community that the foundation has not handled money to the best advantage for earnings (in this time of difficult financial markets).

## **ATTACHMENT G:**

### **Three issues for GSCF to address in next 2-3 years:**

- Donors
- Economy
- Board Members
- In light of current events, deciding where to invest our funds. Can we maintain a 5% payout?
- Wisely choosing which organizations will be grant recipients
- Choosing methods we should use to increase foundation resources.
- Should the Foundation's primary growth focus be on education or solicitation?
- If education, how do we go about it in an efficient, yet far-reaching manner?
- If solicitation, how do we go about it without offending the other local non-profits?
- Methods to educate community on benefits of foundation
- Economic instability of nation
- Definition of direction the Foundation will go
- growth
- community education
- management (staff needs)
- Making more people aware of the GSCF and what we have to offer and do.
- Keeping the momentum we have established going.
- Making sure that individuals and organizations that are participants in the GSCF know how we operate, what we can do for them and what they can and cannot do.
- The economy as reflected in the stock market investments (Poor returns)
- A prolonged recession will cause a reduction in contributions.
- And as a consequence the need for more grants and awards that can't be met.
- Implementing new computer records system with minimum employees.
- Spreading the word of the Foundation's availability and potential to assist donors.
- Not expanding beyond manageable perimeters.
- Re-examine and/or re-validate our purpose or mission
- Determine appropriate strategies to affect our mission or purpose

- Increase awareness of GSCF both with public and centers of influence
- Fulfilling all that we have promised
- Continuing to meet the demands of the Donors, Investment Advisors and Charities while continuing to operate within the 501(c)(3) requirement
- Leadership and management
- Some offers of real property coming to the attention of the foundation are better not accepted if this may create integrity of the foundation.
- Continued and growing request of foundation funds that may not fully meet qualifications
- Examine all avenues of investing the foundation money for the best possible return.
- How to bring the small contributor in to the Foundation.
- The ever changing economic climate.
- Keeping public relations efforts at a high level.
- Greater visibility of the Foundation in the Salina Area
- Stronger income from investments
- Focus for grants from non-designated money