



Strategic Planning Committee Meeting May 2025

**ABC Organization
12:00 - 1:30 pm**

Greetings!

As the facilitator of next week's Strategic Planning Committee meeting, I wanted to share some important information and background material with you. I hope this will provide useful grounding and context, as well as let you know how the meeting on the 28th will work.

This will be a great group gathered in support of ABC Organization, and I am excited for the opportunity to work with you all. We will have members of the Strategic Planning Committee, the ABC staff, and members of the volunteer team participating.

If everyone could take a few minutes and review these materials in advance of the meeting, it would enable all of us to arrive prepared to work through the activities that are planned.

Thank you in advance for your commitment to ABC.

Best

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Marshall".

Marshall H. Ginn
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Important Notes about the May 28th Meeting

- The meeting will last from 12 noon to 1:30pm, with an additional 30 minutes at the end available for those who can stay and wish to continue the work we will have started.
- We will have a lot to cover in 90 minutes. As facilitator I will serve as a “timekeeper” to ensure we cover everything. This might require my respectfully cutting off conversations so that we can move on. I am committed to ensuring we end on time.
- This meeting is only a single step in the larger strategic planning journey. We will not solve all of the problems, address all of the issues, or answer all of the questions on the 28th. That’s ok, and we need to give ourselves permission to leave things feeling “unfinished.”
- We will have a flip chart where we can capture ideas, questions, or concerns that are raised but which we will not have time to address.
- At this meeting, we WILL:
 - Talk about the overall planning process and the proposed components of the new strategic plan
 - Keep the conversation at a high level, focused on strategy and purpose
 - Explore several big-picture questions about ABC and its work
 - Consider how the answers to these questions might inform or shape the strategic approach that ABC takes to accomplish its mission
- At this meeting, we WILL NOT:
 - Wordsmith or group edit the draft strategy statements shared in advance
 - Be choosing which programs or initiatives will or will not be maintained, expanded, or concluded
 - Be discussing programs or projects in detail, though we might refer to programs as examples when we’re talking about strategies
 - Be developing a budget or financial model for the coming years
- Refreshments will be provided; we know this is lunchtime. Plus, meeting on an empty stomach never helped anything!



In preparation for the May 28th Meeting

- Review the materials sent in advance
- The draft strategic plan components being shared in advance are just that - a draft. These have been developed to provide a starting point for future conversations. Sometimes it's easier to react to something than to stare at a blank sheet of paper.
 - The Team has been hard at work doing research, reviewing materials, talking to committee members, and talking to staff. These drafts are emerging from that work.
 - These draft statements are what prompted the big-picture questions we will discuss at the meeting on the 28th.
 - These drafts are for internal use only and are not to be shared with the public.
- The draft Strategic Checklist is also still in formation. For those who can stay, we can take a look at how such a tool might be useful in the future.
- Come prepared to focus on ABC's future; leave your regular work and tasks at the door. They will be there when the meeting is over.
- Since many of us will not know each other, we will spend time at the beginning getting to know one another. As mentioned earlier, our overall time will be limited, so our introductions will need to be brief. To help with this, I offer the following suggestions:
 - Arrive at least 15 minutes early and make a point of introducing yourself to folks you do not know.
 - Think ahead of time how you would introduce yourself to the group in 30-45 seconds. (That means the essentials only, perhaps your name, role with the organization, and maybe a single favorite ABC memory.)
- Arrive with the intention of participating actively in the discussions, respecting and appreciating that there will be differences of opinions and perspectives in the room.
- If you need to participate via zoom, we will make every effort to make sure you are included in the conversation, including the break outs.



MAY 28TH MEETING - DRAFT AGENDA

Item	Description	Time
Greetings, Intros and Agenda Review	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Getting oriented for the goals of the meeting and how we will work together 	20 min
Planning & Context	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Share what's been done so far by the team Review the overall structure of the Strategic Plan 	10 min
Today's Big Task	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Big framing conversation starters A series of questions, explored in small groups and as a whole, to promote thoughtful conversations about ABC and its strategic direction. 	5 min
Break out/Small Groups	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Each group will be given a conversation starter. Groups will be asked explore the questions they are given and capture big-picture ideas or reactions to conversation starters prompt 	20 min
Gather Back & Share	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Each group will share the conversation starter they were provided and some of the reactions or ideas that came up The entire group will discuss what they've heard and will help to explore what meaning might emerge from these discussions 	30 min
Next Steps	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The concepts discussed today will be reviewed by the team to see how they might inform changes/revisions to the draft plan They will also be used to create a survey through which ABC members and volunteers can share their reflections on these big-picture concepts 	5 min
	IF PEOPLE CAN STAY - Optional Additional Work Time – 1:30 - 2:00pm	
Strategy Statements Discussion	Additional thinking on how today's discussion might shape the elements of the Strategic Plan	20 min
Using Strategic Tools	Introduction to other "tools" to be added to the Plan that will guide ABC as it works through programmatic planning.	10 min



TIME TABLE - JUNE TO OCTOBER - SUBJECT TO REVISION

Task	Date/Time Frame
Strategic Planning Committee conversations	June Team members continue to keep conversations going with members of the Planning Committee
Send survey to Members and Volunteers	June Members and Volunteers are asked to reflect on strategic themes developed at May 28th meeting
Community Input Meetings (to be confirmed)	July Two, possibly three, community meetings to inform them of direction of new strategic plan Locations and participants to be determined ABC staff to manage logistics
Finalize Scenario Planning	July Team will make sure that scenario plans are included in the draft plan for the board
Board Meeting/Workshop	July 24 ABC Board Meeting Focus of meeting will be the draft of the plan Strategic Planning Committee members are invited to attend Team members present as able; Marshall to facilitate discussion on-site
Final Draft Review	August into September CEO will review, as well as other staff Strategic Planning Committee will review (perhaps at a meeting to be held in September) Board will be given an opportunity to review
Editing Final Draft	September Team completes wrap up of plan and all documents
Board Approval of Plan	Board meeting on October 23rd Board Approves Plan Team Members present as able Marshall will be on site to facilitate



Meeting Participants

Strategic Planning Committee

ABC Staff

Planning Team

Project Lead

Marshall H. Ginn

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What do we mean by “Big framing conversation starters?”

To prompt big-picture thinking about an organization and to explore high-level issues related to its purpose, we’ve developed “conversation starters.” These are designed to be provocative but not challenging. They are multi-part, complex, and they are used to get a strategic conversation started!

Conversation starters are not shared in advance. It’s important to get fresh reactions, and encourage groups to explore these ideas from the same starting point.

However, here is an example - *from a completely made up organization* - that gives you an idea of what these conversation starters will look like.

Laptops for Learning focuses on providing laptop computers to young people living in several of the city’s nonprofit housing developments. It believes that having good technology at home enables young people to be better students. The organization talks about its ongoing work of “*bringing a laptop into every living room.*” It also focuses messaging on the end point by highlighting the goal of “*a laptop in every home*” even if that takes several years to achieve.

- How is “bringing a laptop into every living room” the same as or different from “a laptop in every home.”?
- How might these two ideals shape the way Laptops for Learning talks about its programs and the potential impact those programs might have?
- What might happen if the end result was achieved, and there was a laptop in every home? Does Laptops for Learning have anything else to do?
- Could a primary focus on “bringing a laptop into every living room” be interpreted as excluding anything? What about internet connectivity or tools to address potential language barriers? Could they be considered part of “bringing a laptop into every living?” or should they be more explicitly identified as a focus?

Again - this is an example only, but it gives you a sense of what you will be provided.