

KRWA works to be relevant and dynamic

Keeping an organization "relevant" and "dynamic" is frequently a challenge for boards, councils or directors of organizations – and their staff. Complacency and an attitude of smugness about services provided are common within many organizations. Board members and staff sometime too can come to believe that "they" are the organization, instead of being resources to serve members.

Your KRWA Board of Directors and selected staff members recently concluded its annual strategic planning session. This represents the 12th year that KRWA's directors have met with an outside facilitator to

Patricia Shaffer
KRWA President



assess KRWA's mission, strategic objectives, and specific goals for the next year. What's discussed? Anything and everything about KRWA: Why it exists, how it is organized, what is the appropriate staffing level, what challenges and opportunities confront the organization, and most especially, what do members need. During regular board meetings we focus on the on-going Association operations, but during the annual planning session your board focuses exclusively on the why and how questions. Why is KRWA doing or not doing something? How can KRWA better serve the members during these times of change in regulatory, economic, and public expectations?

The all-important Mission Statement

During the deliberations, the board is guided by KRWA's Mission Statement: Provide the education opportunities and leadership necessary to enhance the effectiveness of Kansas' water and wastewater utilities ability to sustain the public health, welfare, and safety of Kansas' communities.

This is a living mission as it is examined and debated each year. Is the mission statement relevant to what members need and the services KRWA provides? During the 2002 planning session, the statement was significantly modified from the language that had been drafted five years earlier. The Mission Statement and KRWA

first reviewed the Association's mission statement ... and then went on to the financial matters. His objective was to ensure that KRWA programs, and your Association's tax-exempt status, accurately reflect the IRS-approved non-profit designation. The comprehensive Mission Statement provided validation for all of the Association's programs and therefore satisfied the auditor.

I am pleased to provide this brief description of KRWA's on-going commitment to self-assessment on behalf of its members. As new opportunities arise, KRWA staff is encouraged to accept them. At the 2004 conference, you will see an example of one such ambitious project. It's KanCap, the new

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remain vibrant and relevant to your needs because of these annual reviews.

Equally important, the Mission Statement defines for the rest of the world who KRWA is and what it does. The Kansas Department of Health & Environment and Kansas Department of Commerce both examine the Mission Statement in determining the appropriateness of supporting and funding KRWA's on-site, technical assistance programs. The auditor from the Internal Revenue Service who spent three days at the KRWA early in 2002

board/council training program that KRWA has been working on and which is being funded through KDHE's Capacity Development program. I am excited about having this new resource to help boards and councils. And not only did KRWA meet the requirements of the contract, but I think has gone far beyond any expectation as your Association works to employ the world's latest software that allows for interactive learning. KRWA appreciates the opportunity to have worked in partnership with KDHE in developing this truly unique product. KanCap will be

showcased on Tuesday, March 23 and again on Thursday, March 25 at the KRWA conference. Plan now to have as many of your board/council members as possible to attend one of these sessions.

What's next with KanCap? A program to provide regional training sessions utilizing the resources developed by KRWA.

Like many other programs KRWA has developed, your Association is driven by the need to provide better services to systems.

The commitment by KRWA's board members and staff to keep your Association vital, relevant, and successful on your behalf is unwavering. Your suggestions about how KRWA can be more effective in supporting you are needed. As President of the KRWA Board of Directors, I invite you to continue the partnership with KRWA to better serve your customers.

KANCAP

Improved Management For Better Drinking Water



I encourage members of your board/council to attend the Annual Conference March 23 - 25 in Wichita and for sure to attend one of the sessions that will introduce "KanCap" -- the new board/council training program.

KanCap, which was funded through the Kansas Department of Health & Environment, is Kansas' new program to provide resources for boards/councils. Not the typical 3-ring binder, KanCap is loaded with resource materials, videos, quizzes and text covering scores of topics concerning technical, managerial and financial aspects of owning, operating and maintaining a public water system.

Presenters for the session include David Waldo and Cathy Tucker-Vogel from KDHE, Ellen Miller and Jen Sharp and moderator Elmer Ronnebaum who was heavily involved in the development of the program.

KanCap will be presented two times on Tuesday, March 23; it will be presented again on Thursday morning, March 25.

Again, I encourage your board/council members to attend. I think you will find KanCap to be a tremendous resource to help you better manage your water utility.

--Pat Shaffer, President, KRWA

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