

Strategic Planning 2014

From the Desk of Rhonda McKinney, CPI International President

On October 10th and 11th, CPI held its annual Strategic Planning meeting in St Louis, MO at the Drury Inn Airport. I want to thank Strategic Planning Chairman Barb Chapin her hard work in preparing and facilitating the meeting, and our Office Manager Charlotte Rancilio for coordinating with the hotel and making our dinner reservations, and all the members that made time to participate in the meeting in person, and those that joined the conference call during the meetings. I would also like to take a moment to thank the Executive Board and Directors that participated in a conference call in September in preparation for the Strategic Planning session. I am very proud of all the work that has gone on behind the scenes by our leadership team since June, and each of them has demonstrated that collectively we are living “The Power of ONE” theme this year!

Friday, October 10th Chairman Barb Chapin led the team in a very productive and candid planning meeting. Following a morning in which we provided updates on several work-in-progress items (Certification, Membership, and Marketing), we spent the day with laser focus on two key areas of interest to the membership based on the survey results: 1) Expenses; and 2) Revenue. As a group we tackled difficult issues with passion and honesty in order to make sound recommendations to ensure the meeting was productive and resulted in several actionable ideas we could implement in my remaining term. Through the use of poster board listings of ideas during discussions, as well as individuals submitting sticky notes for suggestions or comments throughout the two days, your leaders were assigned specific tasks to create tactical plans for implementation, follow-up, or research gathering to be completed by 11/30th. In addition, we scheduled a follow-up conference call to be held the first week of December to provide updates and to hold each other accountable for our assignments.

On Saturday, October 11th Foundation President Charlie Gordon held the Foundation board meeting, and I facilitated the Executive Committee meeting to wrap-up committee reports and review assignments. I cannot stress enough my appreciation for the deep love and dedication to CPI displayed by the members who provided input for our meeting, offered up solutions, and volunteered to do ONE more thing to ensure our success this year!

Your voices have been heard via the Membership Survey, district and local meetings, and individual conversations with the leaders of this organization. My commitment to each of you is to provide transparency on the actions we plan to take on behalf of the membership. To that end, all the documents reviewed, the agenda, and meeting notes will be posted on the website. Below is a very brief overview of the recommendations and/or actions in progress in the two focus areas, but much more to come.

1. Reduction of Expenses – we reviewed the financials thoroughly and have several items to follow-up on before finalizing recommendations.
 - a. Review all contracts related to corporate office expenses (i.e. Copier, Postage Machine, Telephone/Cell service, etc.) to find any cost savings by eliminating services and/or equipment no longer necessary or find less expensive options.
 - b. Explore cost breakdown on the volume of magazines printed, and have vendor provide cost differences for printing on a less expensive quality paper.

- c. Proposed Bylaw change requiring that all PIPs from 2014 forward will pay membership dues.
 - d. Seeking a bank or credit union donor to donate office space for our corporate office. Approximately 30 letters have been mailed to credit unions in the St Louis area, and we are identifying others.
2. Generating Revenue
- a. Alamo CPI is supporting the raffle of an iPad mini and a \$500 VISA card, and donating a cash prize to the local that sells the most raffle tickets. Please see the website and your District President for details.
 - b. Proposed Membership Dues increase.
 - c. Proposed Bylaw change to create a standing Ways and Means committee tasked to implement yearly fundraisers.
 - d. Exploring additional fundraiser ideas.

In addition to all the effort put into new ideas, I also I want you to remind everyone of initiatives already implemented this year:

- Student Membership Certification Program
- Lifetime Certifications completed and issued
- International Career Club memberships verified and certificates issued
- Membership Survey results reviewed and action items in progress

CPI is at a critical crossroads, once again. Membership is always a balancing act as we add a few new members, but lose others so true growth has dwindled. Rising costs and no steady income stream outside dues has resulted in our expenses weighing our revenue. Membership dues have not been increased in over ten years, and in spite of our best efforts to reduce expenses yearly, it is not enough. That is the bad news, but the good news is that much like other times when the chips have been down, our membership has stood firm and found solutions.

I feel confident that together, we will use our circumstances to generate creative and innovative ways to continue to reduce cost, find new revenue streams, take advantage of technology and social media to market to new members, and to grow our student membership so that CPI will not only survive, but to thrive in the coming years. Individually we are smart savvy business women and men, but collectively we are a driving force of unparalleled will and determination. We will build on existing knowledge and expertise, we will step outside of our comfort level and change longstanding traditions if they no longer serve our mission, and will exercise our power to bring about the change we want, by being the change we need. Together with faith, vision, and courage we will continue to believe and live the principles and purposes of Credit Professionals!