



Thames River Heritage Park Foundation – Three Year Strategic Plan Proposed 12/11/19. Amended 2/24/20 & 3/5/20

Revised Mission

The Thames River Heritage Park Foundation is a nonprofit organization whose mission and purpose is to promote, support, and sustain the Thames River Heritage Park, a collection of heritage sites linked by water which capture the history and culture of life along the Thames River. (added 2/24/20)

Revised Vision Statement

The Thames River Heritage Park will make the heritage and culture of the Thames River region vivid and relevant to all. The Park will connect people, communities, institutions, sites and stories to the historic waterfront and natural landscape of the Thames River Estuary.

Goals

1. To increase partner site visitation by 15% (5% each year)

Programming for mission

- Develop compelling tours featuring the stories found in and around the Park (programming committee, partners, staff)
- Establish boat route to the Nautilus Museum (Ad hoc committee and staff)
- Build Native American stories (programming committee)

Programming for partnership

- Support partners efforts to tell their stories in and outside of their sites (programming, partners and staff)
- Develop collaborative thematic programming (programming, partners and staff)
- Develop park-wide events and programs with partner sites (programming, partners and staff)

Programming for revenue

- Establish Boat Tour for Submarine Force Museum route (Ad hoc, Nautilus EDs, staff)
Maximize 90-minute Boat Tour offerings to increase revenue (programming and staff)
- Grow mid-week Group Tours to maximize use of the boats and potential revenue (programming and staff)
- Increase off-season program for year-round, weather independent revenue

2. To increase fiscal stability by shifting the budget from

65% state and municipal funds/35% organizational revenue to
50% state and municipal funds/50% organizational revenue

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DOT funding

- Confirm the source and nature of DOT funding for sustainability (ED and Board)
- Maintain legislative relationships to secure continued funding (ED and Board)

Municipalities

- Increase or sustain multi-year commitments from the three municipalities

Ticket Sales

- Develop ways to generate revenues on and off season and to promote partner sites and the Park other than from boats and admissions (For ex., suncatchers collection)
- Determine profitability margins and strategically focus programming and marketing efforts on those with greatest net revenue
- Expand ticket sales for off-season programming (non-boat)

Corporate support/ Sponsorships

- Continue to build relationships with businesses in Groton and New London (staff and Board)
- Continue corporate sponsorship package offerings

Grants

- Seek non-local grant funds and resources for grant writing support (such as Cultural Coalition)

Private investors/membership/donations

- Leverage “ask” among our partner sites to generate more revenues including ticket sales, membership and annual appeals (staff and board)

Marketing

- Collaborate with state and regional tourism agencies for promotion (staff)
- Encourage partner attractions to co-brand (staff and partners)
- Design and deploy directional signage (staff)
- Create cross promotional opportunities with sites and other Eastern CT attractions (staff)

3. Maintain high functioning, consistent facilities and the staff necessary to implement programs that meet organization mission and vision

- Maintain boats and docks (water taxi committee, BOD President, staff)
- Secure a third boat for tours and charters (BOD President, water taxi committee)
- Secure a 4th boat to use for support (BOD President, water taxi committee)
- Improve informational signage at the docks
- Staff structure – Put forth a staffing structure to support the goals (ex. Data analyst, grant writer, program director) (staff, ex. committee)
- Secure low-cost office space (staff)

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- Develop program for volunteer recruitment (staff)
- Develop a tour guide internship program for boat tours (staff)
- Recruit and train Group Tour Leaders (staff)

4. Build a diverse, engaged Board of Directors with 100% financial and committee participation

- Create a Board recruitment and succession plan (executive committee, nominating committee)
- Create an onboarding procedure for new board members which clearly communicates board expectations and participation (president and staff)
- Reserve/recruit a corporate, educational and partner seat/representative to the board (nominating committee)
- Increase the diversity of the Board to reflect the diversity of the communities of the Park
- Nominate Board Chair and create a strong succession plan
- Build consistent and impactful Programming, Nominating, Communication, Development Committees
- Develop a consistent annual or biannual board donation campaigns

Revisions to By-Laws

Article II Mission, Vision and Purpose

1. Mission. The Thames River Heritage Park Foundation is a nonprofit organization whose mission and purpose is to promote, support, and sustain the Thames River Heritage Park, a collection of heritage sites linked by water which capture the history and culture of life along the Thames River. (added 2/24/20)
2. Vision. The Thames River Heritage Park will make the heritage and culture of the Thames River region vivid and relevant to all. The Park will connect people, communities, institutions, sites and stories to the historic waterfront and natural landscape of the Thames River Estuary. (added 2/24/20)
3. Purpose (as currently written)

Article III Board of Directors

1. Composition. The affairs and property of the Foundation shall be managed by a Board of Directors of not more than thirty (30). Each Director shall have one vote. The Board of Directors shall have two classes of Directors: Ex-Officio and At-Large Directors. The designations and qualifications of the Directors of such classes shall be described herein.
 - a. Ex-Officio Directors shall consist of representatives of partner organizations necessary to the sustenance and quality of the park, including:
 - i. Mayor of the City of Groton
 - ii. Mayor of the Town of Groton
 - iii. Mayor of the City of New London
 - iv. Executive Director of the Southeastern CT Council of Governments
 - v. Representative from the CT Department of Energy and Environmental Protection
 - vi. Representative from the Submarine Force Library and Museum



- viii. Representative from the U.S. Coast Guard Museum Association
- ix. Representative from the CT Department of Transportation (added 2/24/20)
- x. Representative from the CT Office of Military Affairs (added 2/24/20)

Each Ex-Officio Director may designate in writing an individual to attend meetings to vote and act on his/her behalf. If an individual designated as an Ex-Officio Director is precluded from serving as such by reason of legal, regulatory or other job limitations, such individual (or their designee) may attend Board of Director meetings as an advisor and observer and may serve on any formal or informal committees the Foundation may establish from time to time.

- b. Directors-at-Large. Directors-at-large shall consist of Board of Director members nominated and elected as provided by these By-Laws. Directors-at-Large shall be individuals who are interested in actively supporting the mission and activities of the Foundation and are expected to make annual financial contributions and participate on Foundation committees. (added 2/24/20)

Article VI Committees

Add to standing committees (new #7) Development Committee. This committee leads fundraising efforts for the Foundation including grant exploration, corporate requests, annual Board appeal and fundraising campaigns and events. (added 2/24/20)