**Our Lady of the Prairie Retreat Center**

**Strategic Planning Session with Advisory Committee**

**May 16, 2022**

**SWOT Analysis**

**Strengths**

Staff

Place

Quiet

Mission

Location

Cleanliness

Programming

Buildings

Culture of the religious communities

Having committed volunteers

Life changing

**Weaknesses**

Communication

Marketing

Culture of religion

Lack of Youth

Measurement of success

Finances

**Opportunities**

Busy-ness

Desire and need for this kind of place

Online opportunities for program and marketing

Lay Leadership

We need to collaborate and think outside the box

Director does not have to live here

People have a need for healing

People are becoming more interested in spirituality

**Threats**

Gravel Road

Busy-ness of today’s world

Aging CHM

No religious Sister available to be the face of the Prairie

Weather

**Strategic Priorities**

**Based on the SWOT analysis above, what are the four most important topics we want to address?**

1. Leadership / Director
2. Finances / Long-Term Sustainability
3. Communications and Marketing
4. Programming and Assessment

**Brainstorm Session on Strategies (Based on the Strategic Areas identified above, what are some possible ways to address each area? The Strategic Priorities are articulated as Strategic Questions and the process asks people to brainstorm possible ways to answer those questions.)**

**(After discussion, Communications and Marketing were combined with Programs for this step.)**

1. **HOW CAN WE REPLACE/REDEFINE OUR DIRECTOR?**

Director does not have to live at Prairie

Manage the place/ maintenance/ work with staff

Communication skills among staff, sisters and volunteers, committees

Be the “face” of the Prairie

Be a presence in the community and beyond

Someone in charge of gardens (Environmental style)

Be able to delegate tasks

Be a person of faith, talk the talk –Christian

Knowledgeable about “care for the Earth”

Does not have to be a religious “Sister”

Charismatic – contemplative

Spiritual

Tech Savvy

Accountability – Lead board and committees

Strong Leadership qualities

1. **HOW CAN WE SUSTAIN THE PRAIRIE LONG TERM? (Including Finances)**

 Capital Campaign/Fundraiser

 Build upon the board designated fund-Grow/Add to

 Collaboration/Partnerships

 Franciscans, Benedictines, Dominicans, Carmelites, etc.

 Create separate 501 c 3 Board

 Value of Property – Leverage? – Reduce size of Property?

 Do more to connect w/the land

 Expand/Grow Volunteer Corps

 Overnight volunteer opportunities

 Conduct a cost- benefit analysis

Increase fees?

Increase Hosted Retreats

Offer Environmental Classes

Partner with Wapsi and Nahant –Put flyers in their centers

NEED a BENEFACTOR! (Director’s responsibility)

1. **HOW CAN WE ENHANCE OUR COMMUNICATIONS & MARKETING (including Programs)**

Overnight health day – rejuvenate

Need more $$ for Marketing and Communications

Marketing Firm - complete evaluation

 John Cooper did a survey/evaluation

Target Audience-Service the youth; gardening groups; working the land

Increase signage – Big Rock Road

Create separate website –separate from Humilities

Printed brochures = 1X year? 2X year?

Messenger and Bulletin – Lisa

Parish contact person – Lisa

QC Times Event page – FREE

Use Church Websites

Use social media: Facebook, twitter, Instagram, Tik Tok

**Strategic Priorities + Strategies:** **Based on the ideas identified in the last session, what are the three major themes that emerged from each Strategic Priority? (These become Strategies for each Strategic Priority.)**

1.  **DIRECTOR**

1.1 Re-define Director Responsibilities

1.2 List qualities of new Director

1.3 List Job/Leadership Roles

2. **Long Term Future**

2.1 Create Partnerships

2.2 Fundraising/Cap. Campaign (specifically for what?)

2.3 Decide if we become a BOARD Vs Advisory Committee

**3. Marketing**

3.1 Devote more resources to marketing

3.2 Survey Target Audience

3.3 Expand Social Media /Website