



June 8, 2020

Ms. Joy Young  
The Cultural Council of Greater Jacksonville  
300 Water Street  
Suite 201  
Jacksonville, FL 32202

Dear Joy:

Thank you for taking the time to talk last week about how The Cultural Council of Greater Jacksonville might move forward on strategic planning. While my partner and I have always been strong proponents of adaptive planning and shifting towards strategic frameworks, the current uncertainty underscores this shift even more. We are past the very immediate and dramatic shift of Covid-19, but we're still at the beginning of an unknown transition period where specific and fixed direction is harder to set and likely of little lasting value. We don't know when the pandemic will lift or how we will be impacted.

Our typical planning process includes four phases – Context, Identity, Planning, and Realization. In an adaptive planning format, we focus on Context and Identity, and then work with you to build a screening framework to help you consistently realize strategy without setting specific plans.

The basics of Context, Identity and a screening framework for The Cultural Council can be set either in a single six-hour retreat or three shorter iterative meetings that can include full board and staff participation. We may also have enough time to initially address some measures – both qualitative and quantitative – to show strategic achievement. Before this discussion is held, I would work with you to establish some background context and to design the agenda. We can include your board chair or other staff members as appropriate in that prep work. Measures will require some separate follow up time with staff to establish definitions and baseline.

Who should be involved? We often work with smaller combined board and staff taskforces in more traditional planning formats. The benefit of a taskforce is that it is more flexible and moves more quickly; the downside is that it doesn't include broader perspectives and engagement. Because adaptive planning is a less familiar format, we should have at least some full board and staff discussions, though we can discuss whether everyone is needed for participation in the whole process.

Depending on safety and comfort level, this discussion can be held in person or using online sessions to maintain social distancing. If online, we should break the discussion into iterative sessions. This week, I will be conducting my first socially distanced in-person board retreat using a large ballroom at The Garden Club, plenty of open space, microphones, mask protocol, etc. We have good plans in place, but I expect to learn a lot as part of this step into the unknown.

Cost for an adaptive planning piece as described here – pre-planning, retreat facilitation, measure development, and documentation – is available for \$2700.

We also talked about the possibility of my coming to a board meeting to discuss adaptive planning as an approach. I have readily available material on adaptive planning from past strategic planning workshops; I usually offer at least one annually through the Nonprofit Center of Northeast Florida. Cost for an interactive one-hour discussion like this is \$150.

As promised, this approach is offered for your consideration. I am happy to discuss it and tailor the approach so that it's most useful for The Cultural Council at this time. Thank you again for this opportunity.

Best,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Julia". The signature is written in a cursive style with a large, looping initial "J".

Julia Burns

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