



Barbara H. Lange

Delivering a Strategic Plan

As I write these words, I am preparing for the October Board meeting in Los Angeles, just ahead of the SMPTE Annual Technical Conference and Exhibition. Like all Board meetings, there is a lot of content to prepare. Board officers, i.e., the Executive Committee, must prepare reports of activities since the last Board meeting. The same is true for the home office staff and me. This meeting is also the point where we present the upcoming year's annual budget, which is always a fun activity.

This October Board meeting will be somewhat different, as it will include, I hope, the approval of SMPTE's long-term strategic plan—a significant milestone. Back in 2014, as we were actively planning the SMPTE centenary, the Board suggested that we embark on a fundraising effort with the notion of attracting funds from donors to be used expressly for once-in-a-century investments. I am pleased to say that we have amassed nearly \$2 million in pledges, much of which we have already received. These contributions, referred to as the Next Century Fund, remain safely in a restricted account awaiting the Board's direction.

With the centenary behind us, the Board set out to develop a three-year strategic plan, which we called Vision 2020. The goal behind Vision 2020 was to strategize on SMPTE's future and outline a plan for sustainable growth for years to come. Well, as can happen, there was much to be said at many meetings, with a great deal of input from volunteers and members from all aspects of SMPTE's family. The talking took a little longer than we had hoped, such that our plan now runs from 2019 to 2021. Still, sentimentally, I will continue to refer to it as Vision 2020.

Despite the extra year of discussion, I am delighted with where we have landed with the plan. It starts with defined values. These are our guiding principles that speak to our global beliefs and ethics. The Board approved the value statements at the February and June 2018 Board meetings. The values define us as:

- a global organization that must operate and represent itself as such;
- three pillars of activity: Standards, Membership, and Education;
- inclusive;
- valuing and nurturing our volunteers;
- striving to understand the common needs of all our stakeholders;
- objective;
- seeking to realize real and valuable synergies with the HPA and all of our partners;

- working to return a net surplus each year to sustain and grow the organization.

The Board also tackled the key strategies at the June meeting that will lay the path for future investments. These strategies are the basis for the three-year goals and annual objectives. The 2019 budget represents the first year of the plan, including the investment required to reach 2020 and 2021 targets. Much of the investments will come from the Next Century Fund.

Together with a robust measurement of key performance indicators, I am encouraged that we will realize our goals. But this is just the beginning of this process. As we navigate through the first year of the plan, we will inevitably encounter issues that require a course correction. Because we will have our roadmap outlined, I believe we will be able to steer our way toward the end goal successfully, then to do the exercise all over again.

I would like to thank the staff, the Executive Committee—particularly President Matthew Goldman and Executive Vice President Pat Griffith—for their valuable input and commitment to this plan. I would be remiss if I did not thank Kevin Joyce for helping guide us in this process. His sage advice and a good sense of vision (and humor) were immensely helpful in crafting a plan that inspires both staff and Board.

