WHY STRATEGIC PLANNING

First, let’s define what it is.

A properly constructed and effective strategic plan (SP) is a document that:

- Defines and articulates the club’s mission, vision, and goals
- Is fact-based, relying on data from multiple sources
- Embraces creative visions and solutions
- Includes an unvarnished examination of the club’s strengths and weaknesses
- Involves and values the input from all relevant stakeholders, thereby earning buy-in
- Turns goals into meaningful and measurable actions
- Provides a vehicle for recognizing and adapting to changing conditions

It doesn’t:

- Tie the Board’s hands
- Empower the club’s cabals and/or autocrats

Why is strategic planning important?

A properly constructed and effective strategic plan is one of the two critical pillars of effective club governance because it will:

- Focus the utilization of the club’s resources, thereby reducing waste
- Empower fact-based decision-making over opinion
- Establish continuity of purpose for the Board, committees, members, and employees
- Establish meaningful and measurable goals and KPI’s
- Empower a process-driven governance system over a personality-driven system
- Bring the leaders’ visions into focus
- Provide continuity throughout board and committee rotations
- Provide clear purpose and direction to the club’s committees
- Define and strengthen the club’s brand
- Disarm the vocal minority and nay-sayers

Strategic planning is sometimes resisted by club leaders who fear the loss of control and or power. It is important to recognize that a club’s power resides in the membership: they are the owners and the highest level of authority in the club. The role of the club’s leaders is to serve the greater good of the club, even if it is contrary to their personal preferences. The theory of the benevolent dictator in member-owned clubs is a myth. Great leaders harness the power of those they work with and for by embracing collaboration and teamwork. Strategic planning is the perfect tool for that purpose.