

August 29, 2017

**MEMORANDUM**

**TO: YOLANDA POLLARD**

**FROM: SUZANNE HAMMELMAN, ELLEN SCOTT-BELLI**

**RE: FOLLOW UP PROPOSAL**

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Thank you for taking the time to talk with us earlier today. The following is a summarized and slightly revised version of the proposal and plan that John outlined for you and Charles the other day. Our goal is to build an independent organization that can support – starting immediately upon your program and budget authorization – to provide high level “GrassTops” and real, organic grassroots support for projects designed to (quoting you!) “make New Orleans whole.”

The big idea is to build a sustainable independent organization that will start by promoting the need to build the New Orleans Power Station (ideally the 226 MW option). If built for the long-term, this organization can advocate for any number of projects within its mission that are also supported by Entergy New Orleans.

The organization will be designed to be a credible advocacy group that provides third party, expert and citizen support. It will be created initially by a few respected New Orleans civic, labor, religious, minority and community leaders. Some groups that you have already recruited to support the project – Black Chamber, AFL-CIO, Port of New Orleans, Coalitions of Ministers – might wish to join the organization, but we will also aggressively seek new and unexpected advocates.

The organization and its members will quickly become visible on several levels.

First, we believe that **starting the group as a Facebook community** (albeit, with a recognizable, credible name/s behind it) will create quite a buzz online, particularly given the current environment. There is no doubt that with the appropriate resources, an active Facebook community discussion can drown out the “noise” of the currently loud, but likely relatively few opponents. Building a group of Facebook friends in the thousands will very quickly provide immediate visibility and credibility and give us the

ability to move seamlessly into the post-Labor Day political conversation.

As we use social media to push out interesting, factual and useful information, the organization will also become the **“go-to” source for news** story ideas and information, even as the “real world” organization (the GrassTops leadership, campaign manager, media relations person) is being built.

We would begin the conversation on Facebook, while simultaneously building the GrassTops organization, recruiting and organizing business and community leaders to demonstrate their support for the New Orleans Power Station by testifying, asking their members (if head of an organization) to help, submitting OpEds, make personal contacts (if appropriate) with Commissioners, etc.

Some recognizable names that we might consider for GrassTops membership (and/or leadership) could include suggestions made by Charles, such as **Gary LaGrange**, President of the Port Authority Association and **Noah Lewis**, 100 Black Men of Metro New Orleans, as well as leaders such as **Ruthie Fierson**, Founder and Chair Emeritus of Citizens for 1 Greater New Orleans; **Senator JP Morrell**, who passed the original sewage and water board reforms; **Tiger Hammond**, AFL-CIO, Greater New Orleans President; **Andy Kopplin**, Greater New Orleans Foundation (and former chief of staff for the Mayor); **Joe Jaeger**, a retired developer; Cheryl Teamer, community leader, board member of many organizations. There may also be a **retired Entergy employee(s)** who has remained active in the community, etc. These are just a few suggestions. We have not reached out to any of these people yet, so we not know of their willingness to serve and have also not delved deep into their backgrounds to ascertain suitability.

This top-level support would be bolstered by organized advocacy (both organic and assisted) from the community of grassroots supporters who will be encouraged to participate in hearings (both testifying and demonstrating); demonstrations; calling and writing Commissioners, the Mayor (if needed) and candidates; and submitting Letters-to-the-Editor. These efforts can be – if needed – targeted to specific incumbents/candidates.

**In short, the GrassTops organization provides quality and credibility to an organically-grown advocacy organization that will add volume and increase the noise level of support.**

Time is short as we need to organize a strong show of support for the October 16 public hearing, and particularly as we prepare for the post-Labor Day political barrage of ads and news coverage where it is highly likely the need for the project and the project itself will become an issue (fossil fuels versus renewables). The following lays out an aggressive timeline, with the set up and organizational activity and initial recruitment in September.

The activity/budget phases outlined below are designed – based on our understanding of the process – to fit with the events and decision making points through February, 2018.

**September, 2017**

**\$139,200-\$205,200\***

*\*Higher budget number includes focus groups, in addition to poll; building an online membership of 5,000 members who take an action to join the organization as well as contact a Public Service Commissioner, or other public official.*

- Identify and recruit one or more GrassTops champions who will “create” the organization and be – at least initially – the public face.
- Settle on an organization name:
  - Make New Orleans Work Again (although this MAY bring up visions of the Trump motto in a city where he received little support)
  - Building a Stronger New Orleans
  - New Orleans Forward
  - Prepare NOLA
- Incorporate as a non-profit, 501(c)(4) organization (likely incorporate in Delaware and register to do business in Louisiana); set up bank account, etc.
- Do the research (polling for messaging and targeting, as well as possible distribution – if appropriate – to policymakers; focus groups, if needed; issue and opposition research to build the case book on which all campaign messaging will be built)
- Develop the time-lined campaign plan to use as a roadmap that includes tactics and metrics
- Set up and populate an advocacy website and Facebook page.
- Recruit 3,000-5,000 members online – to also take an action beyond “joining”
- Hire a campaign manager, political field operations director, and media relations person/firm

- Identify, recruit and build out the GrassTops or Leadership organization – create the lists, prepare the materials, personal outreach
- As needed, meet with your team to review strategy, priorities, activities and to provide assistance with internal employee/retiree and existing outreach on the project (advertising, etc.)

**October-November, 2017** **\$124,500 - \$219,000\***

*\*Higher budget number reflects paying two co-chairs, rather than just one; volume of direct mail; volume of phone calls from voters to decision makers; the option to hire a local government relations professional*

- Continue recruitment and activation of GrassTops and grassroots supporters
- Turn out supporters in volume for hearings
- Organize contacts with Council members, as appropriate
- Phone calls, letters and emails to Council members and candidates
- Active paid and earned media to raise the level of the conversation, educate reporters/editors, and promote OpEds and Letters-to-the-Editor.

**December, 2017 – February, 2018** **\$153,500 - \$239,000\***

*\*Higher budget number reflects paying two co-chairs, rather than just one; volume of direct mail; volume of phone calls from voters to decision makers; the option to hire a local government relations professional*

- This phase will likely include most of the same tactics above, but we will likely prioritize some efforts over others to reflect the political and policy environment at the time.

We hope this provides you with the information you need. Thank you once again for the opportunity. We're available at any point – including over the week end/Labor Day – to discuss, answer questions, and revise this, as needed.

**Suzanne Hammelman**  
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