**Memo**

Date: February 27, 2023

From: Larry Mandelberg  
 Board Member

To: The NSITSP Board and the Executive Search Taskforce

Some thoughts on the roles of Amy and Karl in the search process. In this memo

Karl and Amy carry far too much weight for any task force member, board member, or otherwise, to avoid giving any of their input excessive weight. I believe these two have the potential to exert too much influence on the decisions the task force makes. I propose the following as a draft of instructions to Amy, the Board President, and Karl, the current Executive Director:

Instructions for Amy and Karl:

First, both of them have a primary responsibility to ensure the Task Force does not get off track. Whether that’s making assumptions, or not recognizing assumptions and assuming they are facts. There is a boatload of ways the task force could go off course, and it's up to you two to make sure that doesn’t happen.

You are the traffic cops. Think of the street cop on a downtown Manhattan street corner waving traffic through, slowing them down, speeding them up, and stopping them when need be. This is my red light, green light, yellow light approach. You two need to observe and listen, NOT contribute to task force debate–see below for more on this.

As long as you see green lights, you leave the group alone and let them go. If you see something that’s a problem, red light – stop them and explain why. Then back off and let them change course. If you see something you’re not sure about or have any concern about, yellow light, slow them down, stop if necessary, and get that light changed to red or green.

Doing this does NOT require either of you to participate in any dialogue or debate within the task force. You are simply traffic cops. If the group needs direction, they ask one of you, and that person answers.

Second, there will be times when the task force will not have the information necessary to effectively or properly do whatever they’re trying to do at a particular moment and it’s up to you two to make sure they aren’t acting without knowledge.

That means when a discussion starts going off track because there is information one or both of you have that the task force doesn’t, misinterprets, or doesn’t remember (correctly or at all), one of you needs to turn that Yellow light green by stopping the process, providing the necessary information (or training), then back off and let them go.

Again, you two should not be engaging in discussion or dialogue, you just have too much influence.

Should you two be answering questions? Absolutely, all but one. “Who would you (Amy or Karl) pick?” or anything close to it. Empower them and make them do their job, do not do it for them. This makes you exclusively reactive, NOT proactive in your contributions.

Finally, proprietary roles “I’d like to see” for you two.

Other than traffic cop, the Board President's purpose is to ensure each candidate understands what the Board, with her as the current Chair, expects the ED to do, that is, his/her purpose or goal. The ED steers the ship, the Board gives him/her the destination and available resources (people, time, money) and lets them drive the ship. This role will also be needed by the task force at the beginning for context and foundation, and something each candidate should ask and be told. By Amy. The other board members should NOT be answering those questions.

Other than traffic cop, the Executive Director's purpose is to ensure the candidate understands what the ED, with Karl as the current ED, believes he/she is expected to do by the Board AND what you believe he/she needs to do to ensure the organization is successful. Think of it this way. If you were new to this job, what would you want to know? Interview yourself and get some insight. You might find it entertaining and enlightening.

Another way to think of these roles for Amy and Karl is, how will/should the Board measure the performance of the new ED? You two need to ensure those KPIs, goals, objectives, whatever you want to call them, are strategic, realistic, and objectively measurable.