

A LOOK TOWARD 2020

Association Management Plan for the Agricultural Safety and Health Council of America (ASHCA)



ASHCA is a relatively young association which has established itself and grown well despite having been founded during a major economic recession. Like all associations ASHCA and its Members face an uncertain future based on national and global politics, changes in business models, uncertainty around the future of volunteerism and leadership as the Baby Boom generation retires at an accelerating rate without yet having clearly defined the next generations of volunteers and leaders in most cases.

During 2014/2015 our founding Executive Director, Barbara Lee, was ready to pursue opportunities to change her role in order to focus more on fundraising and development of the ASHCA Foundation and Ag Safety Hall of Fame. In observing many associations over the years it was determined that ASHCA was at a stage where it must begin a well planned growth and expansion process immediately, or expect at best to retain similar size and scope as an association. Associations historically have a limited number of opportunities to break-out and grow/expand during their lifetimes and leadership felt ASHCA had arrived at one of those opportunity points by late 2015 with our current slate of officers and improved US economic conditions.

Over the course of 2015, ASHCA leadership determined the association to be at a crossroads requiring them to address the following questions during 2015 and 2016:



- ASHCA management structure going forward.
- Documenting 5 year budgets, including expected income streams.
- Resolve the relationship and interactions of ASHCA, ASHCA Foundation, and Ag Safety Hall of Fame.
- Revisit and clarify ASHCA's key growth and service area priorities for the next five years, with clear goals and widely agreed-upon strategic plan to direct and measure progress.
- Significantly grow outreach to new people and organizations, extend safety message/culture to the agribusiness community including producers of all kinds, producer's supply chain partners, to shift the overall safety paradigm to the grass-roots level throughout agriculture. To be addressed in strategic planning and operating structure proposals.

- Define and develop ongoing roles and interactions of formal ASCHA management team, fundraiser(s), Board, Contractors, and other service providers and allies.

Despite being formed just before the economic downturn that has been called "the great recession" ASHCA has continued to grow its presence in just under ten years. Leadership believes the association is at a point where it has significant opportunity to grow and reach out further during the period 2015 through 2020 or 2021. We believe there is current demand for broader agricultural safety outreach and education and that the agricultural industry as a whole is increasingly willing to see safety as an important economic and ethical issue.

As current leadership ASHCA participants begin to consider their own retirement and/or repurposing options it is time for ASHCA to make decisions on how to attract retain the short and long term professional association management teams it requires to achieve strategic plans, fully fulfill ASHCA's mission potential, and lead the organization into growing relevance and national recognition.

Multiple alternative management approaches were proposed, discussed, and analyzed. In the end it was determined that the only viable alternatives were to either hire a part-time professional association executive with agricultural and safety experience and a passion for the work of ASHCA as a direct employee of ASHCA, or find a leader with similar experience and capacity to hire as a contractor and relocate the ASHCA headquarters to the location of the new Manager/Management Contractor.

After significant discussion with ASHCA leadership and Board, Frank Gasperini established an Association Management Company (AMC); FGasperini Associates, LLC as a Virginia business established in April 2015. This "boutique" agricultural business LLC was designed to acquire one or more small associations or other non-profit groups serving the agricultural industry. ASHCA will be the first client and relocated operations to Leesburg, VA (suburban Washington, DC) on March 1, 2016.

ASHCA will benefit from being located in the Washington DC area, partnering more closely with other national and regional agricultural associations and business/association networks, and readily available high quality association professional service providers in the area. Additionally a targeted AMC offers enhanced strengths and opportunities for future succession planning.

Based on our Board approved five (5) year budget proposal, ASHCA formally contracted to engage FGasperini Associates, LLC as the part-time Executive of ASHCA, renewable annually.

