

**THE LAKE CHAPALA SOCIETY**

**STRATEGIC PLANNING PROCESS  
RECOMMENDED LCS PHILOSOPHY  
WORK DOCUMENT**

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**July 31, 2009**

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## Introduction

The Board of Directors of The Lake Chapala Society has decided to adopt a strategic direction to lead the organization for the next 10 years. To assist the Board in its endeavour, they retained the volunteer services of Conrad LeBlanc, a consultant and group facilitator in the area of strategic planning, decision-making structure and human resource management systems.

The initial step in the process was to interview 17 persons based on a questionnaire prepared by the consultant and approved by the Board. Each interview lasted from 1.25 to 2.5 hours. The following persons agreed to participate in the interview process:

Ken Caldwell	Nancy Creevan
Rick Feldman	Wendee Hill
Hebina Hood	Tod Johnson
Bonnie Kleffle	Robert Kleffle
Charlie Klestadt	John Rider
Mary Alice Sargent	Betty Schrader
Karen Shirak	Charlie Smith
Terry Vidal	Cora Lee White
Luz Zepeda	

This Work Document contains the recommended LCS philosophy based on the consultant's analysis of the interviews.

There are four (4) components in the Philosophy of an Organization: Vision, Mission, Mandate and Values. They are defined as follows:

1. The vision defines the ultimate or ideal result the organization is striving for.
2. The mission statement defines in one sentence the identity of the organization (its name), its clientele, the territory served and its purpose or "raison d'être".
3. The mandate defines how the organization accomplishes its mission. It basically defines the purpose of programs, products and services provided by the organization to its clientele.
4. Values are principles that guide our decisions, our actions and our behaviors.

The appendices explain in more details the rationale that supports the consultant's recommendations.

## RECOMMENDED LCS PHILOSOPHY

Based on his analysis of the results of the interviews, the consultant recommends the following statements: Vision, Mission, Mandate and Values.

### 1. Vision Statement

The consultant recommends the following Vision Statement:

**Our vision is a future where community residents, Mexicans and non-Mexicans, interact amongst themselves as they participate and contribute in meaningful ways to community life by mutually sharing their knowledge, expertise, culture, heritage and language.**

For more information, see Appendix A.

### 2. Mission Statement (Options)

The consultant recommends two (2) options for a Mission Statement:

**A- The mission of The Lake Chapala Society is to foster the development of community life of Lakeside Region residents.**

**Or**

**B- The mission of The Lake Chapala Society is to contribute to the enrichment of the Lakeside Region community life.**

For more information, see Appendix B.

### 3. Mandate

The consultant recommends the following mandate for LCS:

**The Lake Chapala Society accomplishes its mission by the following interventions:**

- 1. To facilitate the integration of Non-Mexicans into the Mexican community.**
- 2. To contribute to the development of the Mexican community.**
- 3. To foster interchange between Mexicans and Non-Mexicans.**
- 4. To establish partnerships with the Mexican community.**
- 5. To manage resources and operations.**

For more information, see Appendix C.

## **4. Statement of Values**

The following values guide our decisions, actions and behaviours:

### **4.1 Community Values**

- We have a profound respect and understanding of the Mexican culture. We welcome and enjoy the richness that the Mexican culture offers to community residents.
- As guests of the country of Mexico, Non-Mexicans enjoy deploying their talents to assist in the development of the community.
- Contribution to developing a sense of community amongst the Non-Mexican community enriches the whole community.
- By working together, residents improve the whole living experience in the community.
- Partnerships with Mexican institutions and businesses contribute to the harmonious development of the community and its residents.

### **4.2 Service Values**

- We provide quality services.
- Our services are courteous and friendly.
- Our services are based on reliable information.
- Our services are relevant to needs of our guests.
- We adapt to the needs of our guests.
- Our guests are proud to be a part of our Society.
- Our services are inclusive and non-discriminatory.

### **4.3 Decision-Making process**

- Our leaders make policy decisions that protect the integrity of our Society. Decisions are made for the common good of community residents and members.
- Policy decisions are respectful of the Vision, Mission, Mandate, Values and Priority Long-Term Goals of the Society adopted by the members.
- Personnel and service volunteers are accountable to the Board of Directors who in turn is accountable to the membership through the Annual General Meeting.
- Our leaders are visionary, open to innovative ideas and proactive when dealing with the resolution of issues.
- Governance decisions are respectful of the decision-making processes established in the Governance / Operational Structure and the Constitution and Bylaws.

#### **4.4 Operational Values**

- Our effective teamwork ensures that everyone is driven by the same priority goals and objectives.
- Operational decisions are the result of meaningful consultations with personnel and service volunteers.
- We express our gratitude for work well done.
- Our communications are based on trust, mutual respect, cooperation and integrity.
- We treat everyone equally and equitably.
- We take into consideration the mutuality and diversity of interests of residents, members, personnel, service volunteers and partners.
- We strive to make decisions by consensus.
- Our deliberations are confidential and we show solidarity with decisions made within the Organization. When formal decisions are made, they are shared transparently with the members, personnel and service volunteers.
- We competently manage the resources and the operations of the Society.
- We believe in the sustainable development of our ecological environment.

For more information, see Appendix D.

## APPENDIX A

### 1. VISION

#### Definition

During the interview process, the consultant had defined the Vision Statement as follows: The vision defines the ultimate or ideal result the organization is striving for.

#### Suggested Vision Statement for interview purposes

The consultant suggested the following Vision Statement for The Lake Chapala Society for interview purposes: "Our vision is a future where Lake Chapala residents live in communities known for their quality of life, vitality and prosperity."

#### Interviewees Comments

Interviewees made the following suggestions to improve the Vision Statement:

- "Quality of life" applies to all clientele irrespective of their status in the community.
- LCS should be a principal force in the whole community where everyone works together in improving the whole living experience in the community.
- Expats should consider themselves as guests in their country of adoption: Mexico.
- The Vision Statement should mention the fact that interactivity between expat and Mexican communities enriches everyone. It is a 2-way street enrichment program. It is a win-win-win situation.
- How does LCS improve prosperity of the region if it is only there to meet the needs of the gringos?
- We could use the notion of "enriching" in the Vision Statement.
- LCS is a source of affordable education, wellness and other contributions to the quality of life for the Mexican community.

#### Consultant's Comments

- The Vision Statement is the most generic statement in the philosophy of an organization.
- The recommended Vision Statement captures the essence of what kind of community interviewees want to live in.

#### Recommended Vision Statement

The consultant recommends the following Vision Statement:

**Our vision is a future where community residents, Mexicans and non-Mexicans, interact amongst themselves as they participate and contribute in meaningful ways to community life by mutually sharing their knowledge, expertise, culture, heritage and language.**

## APPENDIX B

### 2. MISSION

#### Definition

The mission statement defines in one sentence the identity of the organization (its name), its clientele, the territory served and its purpose or "raison d'être".

#### Suggested Mission Statement for interview purposes

The consultant suggested the following LCS Mission Statement for interview purposes: "The mission of Lake Chapala Society is to promote the educational, cultural, civic and social enrichment of Lake Chapala area residents."

#### Interviewees Comments

Interviewees made the following suggestions to improve the Vision Statement with respect to the name, the clientele, the territory and the general purpose of the Organization:

##### 1) The name of the Organization

There is agreement that the official name of the Organization is "The Lake Chapala Society".

##### 2) Who is the clientele of LCS?

The interviewed persons answered as follows with respect to LCS clientele:

##### 2.1) Mexican residents

The following comments were noted with respect to Mexican residents as the clients of LCS:

- "Currently, Mexicans are perceived as second class citizens on LCS grounds. Neill James would turn over in her grave if she saw this."
- Some members are ambivalent about Mexicans on LCS grounds.
- Some members are somewhat hostile to the presence of Mexicans on LCS grounds: "What's this Mexican kid doing here in the Library?"
- 25% of the LCS budget is directed to the Mexican community.
- The Wilkes Education Centre is considered the Mexican component of LCS.

## **2.2) LCS members**

The following comments were noted with respect to LCS members (gringos, expats, Non-Mexicans) as the clients of LCS:

- LCS exists for its members who pay their dues. Those who pay their dues should get the services that they paid for.
- Some members feel that LCS should not only be self-serving.
- It is important that LCS provide services to members only, not to free riders (non-members). There are non-members (Mexicanos & gringos) who use LCS services. There is no control of who should have access to services paid by members.
- If the clientele is restricted to members, this excludes the Mexican community from receiving services from LCS.
- The expats should integrate themselves in the community that they have adopted in the areas of culture, traditions, customs, language, etc. Red necks are better off staying amongst themselves.

## **2.3) Two clientele**

The following comments were noted with respect to the fact that LCS actually has two types of clientele (members and Mexicans):

- There are 2 types of clientele: Mexicans and members (ex-pats).
- Add “members” to the Mission Statement which could read as follows: “The mission of Lake Chapala Society is to promote the educational, cultural, civic and social enrichment of members and Lake Chapala area residents.” (3)
- The clientele “residents” in the suggested Mission Statement is too broad. It should mention members and the Mexican community.
- The clients of LCS are Mexicanos, members and non-members.
- The LCS clientele should be the members and other Lake Chapala area residents.

## **3) What is the territory served by LCS?**

The following comments were noted with respect to the territory served by LCS:

- “Lake Chapala area” should be replaced by “Lakeside Region”.
- Lakeside Region includes the municipalities of Jocotopec and Chapala.
- Take out the territory (Lake Chapala area) from the suggested Mission Statement. It fences you in.
- Can Guadalajara residents utilize LCS services? Does it exclude residents from elsewhere?
- If LCS is involved in a student exchange or interchange with Guadalajara students, could that be acceptable? Consultant’s answer: Area students would benefit from such an exchange.

#### 4) What is the purpose or raison-d'être of LCS?

The following comments were noted with respect to LCS purpose or raison d'être:

- To promote the education of Mexican residents. This is first and foremost.
- To promote the well-being of community in following areas:
  - Physical (medical, exercise, yoga, line dancing, etc.)
  - Intellectual (library, video, conferences, lectures, discussion group, etc.)
  - Recreational (music, shuffleboard, etc.)
  - Emotional well-being (happiness, mental state, counseling, dealing with death & dying, coping with loss, group support, etc.).
- To facilitate the social integration of new ex-pats.
- To promote the well-being of ex-pats and Mexican residents.
- To promote the overall well-being of the community and its residents (a holistic approach).
- To foster happiness in retirement in the Lakeside Region.
- We should add medical and historical.
- The purpose is OK.
- To enrich the lives of members and other Lake Chapala area residents.
- The Mission should be centered on interaction between local community and expats. We should help expats integrate and participate in meaningful ways in community life. A small number of persons want to ignore community. They only want to make life easier of expats in the community. Membership is changing, younger persons are coming in. Some want to be comfortable others want a meaningful community lives.
- The LCS should be set up as a bridge between Mexicans and expats: The Mexican community enriches the expat community. We live here gracefully. It is wrong to be self-serving.
- LCS is a welcoming friendly service organization catering to the educational, recreational, social, emotional, entertainment, and wellness need of expat community.

## **Consultant's Analysis of the Comments**

Based on the results of the interviews, the consultant makes the following analysis of the situation.

### **1) Definitions**

There is a need for some definitions to ensure clear communications. The consultant puts forth the following definitions.

Community residents include all persons who live permanently or on a part-time basis in the community, irrespective of country of origin.

Community at large includes community residents who are not LCS members.

Expatriate is short for "expatriate". The dictionary defines "expatriate" as a person "who withdraws oneself from one's country". Most Non-Mexicans who establish residence in the Region are referred to as "expats".

Gringo: The dictionary defines "gringo" as "a white foreigner, especially as used in Mexico and South America, an American. It is often used as a derogatory expression.

Lakeside Region includes the municipalities of Chapala and Jocotopec.

Member is a person who has paid his/ her membership dues to LCS in exchange for services provided by LCS. Members have the right to vote at the General Meetings of the Organization.

Mexican : The dictionary defines "Mexican" as "a native or inhabitant of Mexico, a country in southern North America. A person of Mexican descent.

Non-Mexican is a person who is a native from a country other than Mexico.

### **2) Clientele**

#### **a) Two clienteles**

LCS tradition confirms that LCS has two (2) clienteles: Mexicans and Non-Mexicans.

In A History of The Lake Chapala Society, the first paragraph reads as follows: "On January 15, 1955, a group of foreign residents met to form a society, which all foreign residents of Chapala would be invited to join. The goals of the Society

were expected to benefit both the foreign residents and the community of Chapala as a whole.”

The original purpose of LCS was to facilitate the integration of Non-Mexicans into their new community of adoption. This resulted in LCS providing programs and services that would meet the need of English-speaking clients. The other original purpose was that residing Non-Mexicans would have an opportunity to assist the Mexican community in its development.

“By the end of 1991, (...) Neill James donated legal title of her estate to LCS. LCS also obtained legal title to the Ed Wilkes’ house” that became the Wilkes Education Centre whose programs were aimed at Mexican families.

#### **b) Services to members and non-members**

Some interviewees (very few) felt that services should be provided to members only because they are the ones who pay to receive such services. The great majority of LCS members are Non-Mexicans. If such a position was taken by LCS, this would exclude all services provided to non-members who are basically Mexicans.

Another issue put forth was the fact that LCS provides the same services to members and non-members alike. This is perceived as being unfair by those who have paid their dues. This is a management issue more than who should be LCS clientele.

It is the opinion of the consultant that this “control” issue in the provision of services should be dealt with. It is recommended that LCS:

- Determine the services provided to members who have paid for them.
- Determine what services LCS wants to provide to the community at large (non-members) without any fees attached to them or on a fee-for-service basis.
- Determine what programs and services LCS wants to provide to enhance the development of the Mexican community.
- Establish policies and procedures that ensure the required control of services to members.

### **c) LCS & WEC: Two Territories – Two Nationalities**

The comments received from the interviewees also raise other questions, such as:

1. Are the LCS grounds basically utilized by Non-Mexicans and the Wilkes Education Centre by Mexicans?
2. If the answer is “yes”, does LCS want to maintain this situation on the long-term basis?
3. If the answer is “no”, does LCS want to foster, on a long-term basis, more integration of Mexicans and Non-Mexicans in both locations?
4. The answers to these questions will have a fundamental impact on the future strategic directions of LCS. It will impact building and land design, programs design and delivery, relationships with the Mexican community, etc.

### **3) Territory**

It was suggested that Lakeside Region would be a more appropriate designation of the territory served by LCS. The Lakeside Region includes the municipalities of Jocotopec and Chapala.

It was also suggested that the territory be deleted from the Mission Statement because it would fence in the Organization. It is the opinion of the consultant that it is important to define the territory because LCS’ marketing strategy will be determined by territory. For instance, there is a difference between Lakeside Region, State of Jalisco, etc. Distance can become a crucial factor in our capacity to deliver services to clientele and channel our marketing & promotion strategies.

One question was asked about the territory: “If the Mission Statement stated Lakeside Region as its territory and if LCS were involved in a student exchange program with Guadalajara students, would that restrict such an activity by LCS? Consultant’s answer: Since Lakeside Region students would benefit from such an exchange, this program would be respectful of LCS Mission Statement.

Another good question was asked about the territory: “Can Guadalajara residents utilize LCS services? Does it exclude residents from elsewhere?” Consultant’s response: Guadalajara residents could become LCS members and could access services provided by LCS in the Lakeside Region. The expectations would be very clear to this member that LCS services would not be available on location in Guadalajara. If a Guadalajara resident were a non-member, he would pay established fee-for-services established by LCS.

#### 4) Purpose or raison-d'être of LCS

Interviewees have made many good suggestions for defining the purpose of LCS. It is important to note that the purpose in the Mission Statement has to be consistent with the Vision Statement and the clientele served by LCS. The Mission Statement is still a very generic statement.

Furthermore, many suggestions by interviewees dealt with categories of programs such as

- Physical (medical, exercise, yoga, line dancing, etc.)
- Intellectual (library, video, conferences, lectures, discussion group, etc.)
- Recreational (music, shuffleboard, etc.)
- Emotional well-being (happiness, mental state, counseling, dealing with death & dying, coping with loss, group support, etc.).
- Historical.
- Educational
- Social
- Entertainment
- Wellness.

These programs and services are referred to the mandate and possibly long-term goals.

In the recommended Mission Statement, the consultant puts forth a generic clientele "Lakeside Region residents". It is generic and inclusive as it includes Mexicans and Non-Mexicans, members and non-members, which are categories of the overall clientele residing in the Lakeside Region.

#### **Recommended Mission Statement (Options)**

The consultant recommends two (2) options for a Mission Statement:

**A- The mission of The Lake Chapala Society is to foster the development of community life of Lakeside Region residents.**

**Or**

**B- The mission of The Lake Chapala Society is to contribute to the enrichment of the Lakeside Region community life.**

### 3. MANDATE

#### Definition

The mandate defines how the organization accomplishes its mission. It describes the key interventions to the clientele of the organization. These key interventions will rationalize the various programs and services provided by LCS to various clientele categories.

#### Suggested Mandate for interview purposes

For interview purposes, the consultant suggested the following LCS Mandate based on the LCS objectives stated in the Revised Bylaws of October 2002:

The Lake Chapala Society accomplishes its mission by assuming the following mandate:

#### a) Services to the Mexican community

To provide the following services to the Mexican community:

1. Financial assistance to Mexican students.
2. Access to facilities for educational and informational programs to Mexican children, parents and adults.
3. Access to facilities by community organizations.

#### b) Services to members

To provide the following services to members:

1. Access to facilities.
2. Education and Information services
3. English language library
4. Video tape library
5. Artistic and cultural services
6. Recreational, civic and social services.

#### c) Operations

To manage LCS operations and resources.

## **Consultant's Analysis of the Comments**

Based on the results of the interviews, the consultant makes the following analysis of the situation.

- Most suggestions related to programs and services. These ideas were referred to the section on long-term goals.
- One interviewee made the following comment: "The Mandate should include a disclaimer to the effect that it is subject to the policies established by the Board of Directors. The consultant considers that the governance and operational policies and procedures should be respectful of the philosophy of LCS (Vision, Mission, Mandate and Values) and the priority long-term goals, which are adopted by the Annual General Meeting of the members.

## **Recommended Mandate**

The consultant recommends the following mandate for LCS:

**The Lake Chapala Society accomplishes its mission by the following interventions:**

- 2. To facilitate the integration of Non-Mexicans into the Mexican community.**
- 2. To contribute to the development of the Mexican community.**
- 6. To foster interchange between Mexicans and Non-Mexicans.**
- 7. To establish partnerships with the Mexican community.**
- 8. To manage resources and operations.**

## 4. VALUES

### Definition

Values are principles that guide our decisions, our actions and our behaviours.

### Suggested Statement of Values for interview purposes

The consultant suggested the following Statement of Values for interview purposes:

The following values guide our decisions, actions and behaviours:

1. We provide quality services to our members.
2. We take into consideration the mutuality and diversity of interests of stakeholders and partners.
3. Our effective teamwork, communication and partnering are based on trust, mutual understanding and respect, cooperation, integrity, transparency, reliable information and visionary leadership.
4. We treat everyone equally and equitably.
5. We strive to make decisions by consensus.
6. Our deliberations are confidential and we show solidarity with decisions made by the Association.

### Suggestions made by Interviewees

Interviewees made the following suggestions to improve the Statement of Values:

**Value: “We provide quality services to our members.”**

### Comments by Interviewees:

- Quality services should be provided to everyone including members, Mexican community, etc.
- We should provide courteous and friendly services. People feel welcome irrespective of one’s status (Mexican, Non-Mexican, member or non-member)
- Improve the quality of service by a kinder approach to giving information.
- Services should be relevant / pertinent to the need of people according to their age, income levels, handicap, etc.
- We need to create enthusiasm and pride amongst members.
- We need to identify needs and adapt slowly to them. There are different needs in the area. We have to adapt while respecting those who have moved on with times. Services have to be pertinent to needs. We need flexible adaptation to needs.
- LCS should put a smile on faces of Mexican and ex-pat communities. We should have a non elitist attitude.

- Inclusivity is a major value.

**Value: “We take into consideration the mutuality and diversity of interests of stakeholders and partners.”**

**Comments by Interviewees:**

- The notions of stakeholders and partners need to be defined. Are the Red Cross and the Municipality of Chapala partners?
- Should we consider service providers from outside LCS providing services within LCS as stakeholders? (Insurance, health providers, travel agencies).
- The notions of “Partners” and “stakeholders” are not relevant. They should be deleted. Replace them by members, volunteers and Board of Directors.

**Value: “Our effective teamwork, communication and partnering are based on trust, mutual understanding and respect, cooperation, integrity, transparency, reliable information and visionary leadership.”**

**Comments by Interviewees:**

- Some people have a problem with the practice of secret meetings with no accountability. We need “accountability” in our value statement, in our policies and procedures.
- When making decisions, leaders have to constantly protect the integrity of the organization.
- As a value, we should be more proactive and less reactive to issues.
- We need values on how to treat employees. Values should be attributed to employees.
- Values should apply to everyone.
- Our values should include “Appreciation of volunteers”.
- All decisions should be for common good without any personal agendas.
- Board decisions should be relevant and practical (easily implemented by staff and volunteers).
- Top down decision-making creates a disconnect between Board, staff and volunteers.
- Add to operational values the notion of efficient and effective use of resources. Competent management.
- Need for consultation with staff prior to decision-making by the Board of Directors.
- Be open to new and innovative ideas.
- Need to be much more consistent. We command “trust” when we are not wishy-washy.

**Value: “We treat everyone equally and equitably.”**

**Comments by Interviewees:**

- We endeavour to treat everyone equally and equitably.

**Value: “We strive to make decisions by consensus.”**

**Comments by Interviewees:**

**Value: “Our deliberations are confidential and we show solidarity with decisions made by the Association.”**

**Comments by Interviewees:**

- Need to clarify the notions of “Confidentiality”, “Solidarity” and “Transparency”.
- The policy on open meetings and public minutes is an issue.
- Minutes should remain an internal document and not be circulated publicly. However, information arising from decisions made by the Board should be shared with the membership in the name of transparency.
- The value of confidentiality seems to contradict the current practice of open meetings. Historically, there was an abuse by the Chair during 4 years where no minutes were taken. Thus the decision to have open meetings.

**Suggested Community Values by Interviewees**

- The highest value at LCS should be “altruism”: Helping others. People helping people. This should be LCS’ top value.
- Add the value dealing with sustainable, ecological or environmental impact.
- Add: Good will of the community.
- LCS fosters a sense of community among expats.
- The majority of members feel that we should have more inclusivity and interchange between LCS members and Mexican Community. This would suggest integration of Mexican on LCS grounds instead of keeping them at a distance at Wilkes Executive Education Centre.
- We should be against self-serving attitude and arrogance. We would be better served by improving our understanding of Mexican culture and ways of life.
- Value: Respect of Mexican culture. Not try to assimilate them to ours.
- Everyone works together in improving the whole living experience in the community.
- Interactivity between expat and Mexican communities enriches everyone.

## **General Comments on Organization Philosophy**

With the following comments, one interviewee questioned the necessity of a philosophy for an organization like LCS:

- “What impact will philosophy have on volunteers?”
- “It is just jargon that has minimal impact on people.”
- “We are retired and want to enjoy our retirement without having this kind of jargon thrown at us”.
- “The suggested language in the statements (Vision, Mission, Mandate and Values) is too vague and too broad.”
- “Statements should be brief”.
- “These values are just buzz words. Get rid of the Statement of Values. Values are only apple pie. Dissension is nature of the beast.”

## **Recommended Statement of Values**

The following values guide our decisions, actions and behaviours:

### **1. Community Values**

- We have a profound respect and understanding of the Mexican culture. We welcome and enjoy the richness that the Mexican culture offers to community residents.
- As guests of the country of Mexico, Non-Mexicans enjoy deploying their talents to assist in the development of the community.
- Contribution to developing a sense of community amongst the Non-Mexican community enriches the whole community.
- By working together, residents improve the whole living experience in the community.
- Partnerships with Mexican institutions and businesses contribute to the harmonious development of the community and its residents.
- We believe in the sustainable development of our ecological environment.

### **2. Service Values**

- We provide quality services.
- Our services are courteous and friendly.
- Our services are based on reliable information.
- Our services are relevant to needs of our guests.
- We adapt to the needs of our guests.
- Our guests are proud to be a part of our Society.
- Our services are inclusive and non-discriminatory.

### **3. Decision-Making process**

- Our leaders make policy decisions that protect the integrity of our Society. Decisions are made for the common good of community residents and members.
- Policy decisions are respectful of the Vision, Mission, Mandate, Values and Priority Long-Term Goals of the Society adopted by the members.
- Personnel and service volunteers are accountable to the Board of Directors who in turn is accountable to the membership through the Annual General Meeting.
- Our leaders are visionary, open to innovative ideas and proactive when dealing with the resolution of issues.

- Governance decisions are respectful of the decision-making processes established in the Governance / Operational Structure and the Constitution and Bylaws.

#### **4. Operational Values**

- Our effective teamwork ensures that everyone is driven by the same priority goals and objectives.
- Operational decisions are the result of meaningful consultations with personnel and service volunteers.
- We express our gratitude for work well done.
- Our communications are based on trust, mutual respect, cooperation and integrity.
- We treat everyone equally and equitably.
- We take into consideration the mutuality and diversity of interests of residents, members, personnel, service volunteers and partners.
- We strive to make decisions by consensus.
- Our deliberations are confidential and we show solidarity with decisions made within the Organization. When formal decisions are made, they are shared transparently with the members, personnel and service volunteers.
- We competently manage the resources and the operations of the Society.

### **Consultant’s Comments on the Recommended Statement of Values**

#### **1) Appreciating the richness of the Mexican Culture**

“We have a profound respect and understanding of the Mexican culture. We welcome and enjoy the richness that the Mexican culture offers to community residents.”

It is important for LCS to clearly state its principles with respect to the Mexican Culture. Like any other culture in the world, one can never fully appreciate the richness of the Mexican culture.

The Non-Mexican cultures are not better or worse than the Mexican culture. Each has a richness of its own that needs to be appreciated and valued. If one is very comfortable with one’s own culture, there is no need to impose one’s cultural values on another. There is no need to assimilate the Mexican culture to a Non-Mexican culture. In a spirit of open-mindedness, we welcome and enjoy the richness that the Mexican culture has to offer.

One interviewee stated: “The majority of members feel that we should have more inclusivity and interchange between LCS members and Mexican Community. This would suggest integration of Mexican on LCS grounds instead of keeping them at a distance at Wilkes Education Centre. We should resist self-serving

attitude and arrogance. We would be much better served by improving our understanding of Mexican culture and ways of life.”

## **2) Inclusivity**

Suggested Values: (1) “Our services are courteous and friendly.”  
(2) “Our services are inclusive and non-discriminatory.”

It is important that anyone who enters LCS grounds feels welcome irrespective of one’s status (Mexican, Non-Mexican, member or non-member). LCS should be a place that puts a smile on faces of Mexican and Non-Mexican guests. Adopting an elitist attitude does not serve any guest.

## **3) Equality and Equity**

“We treat everyone equally and equitably.” The application of this value depends on the context the decision is made. When we deal with people with common needs, we treat them equally. When we deal with people with different needs, we treat them equitably.

## **4) Consensus**

“We strive to make decisions by consensus.” There three (3) types of decision-making:

- ✓ Unanimity requires that everyone is in agreement. When this happens, everyone wins. If one votes against, that person exercises his veto power. When this happens, everyone loses.
- ✓ Majority decision requires a decision accepted by the majority (50% + 1). The end result is win-lose.
- ✓ Consensus means being able to answer the question: “Whether I agree or disagree, can I live with the decision?” This brings about a win-win situation.

## **5) Confidentiality – Solidarity - Transparency**

“Our deliberations are confidential and we show solidarity with decisions made within the Organization. When formal decisions are made, they are shared transparently with the members, personnel and service volunteers.”

When persons attend a meeting, they want to feel free to express themselves and contribute actively to the exchange of ideas. Upon leaving the meeting, participants, by not divulging who said what during the deliberations, respect other participants and the principle of confidentiality. There are also sensitive

matters that require privacy, such as personnel or personal issues. Policies should be established to govern such situations.

When the Board of Directors or a committee makes a decision, all participants at that particular meeting show solidarity by being supportive of the decision after the meeting. Should a participant be in total disagreement with the decision, he will show solidarity by either supporting it publicly or remaining silent. Condemning the decision is a behaviour unbecoming of the principle of solidarity. If the disagreement is a matter of principle, one may want to consider resigning from the Board or Committee.

Many have been demanding that the Board be more transparent. The consultant has been informed that for a few years, no Board minutes were written. It was total secrecy and no transparency whatsoever. As a result, it was decided that all Board meetings should be open. Extremism engenders extremist.

There are other ways for a Governing Board to be transparent without having open meetings on a regular basis. There are other ways to be transparent without distributing meeting minutes. The Board has the power to adopt strategies, plans and policies based on the recommendation of the Executive Director who has consulted his staff and service volunteers. These Board decisions can easily be shared on the Web site and still be transparent. If members duly elect a Board of Directors, they must also trust the trustees that they have elected to work on their behalf towards the long-term and strategic goals that they have adopted at the Annual General Meeting.

