**Guidelines for Implementing the Mission Statement November 2020**

**Program Committee Mission Statement**

Produce programs for the RMA that educate and inform our members on broad issues, such as science & technology, economics, arts & literature, sports, history, law & justice, health and world & political affairs, as well as the operations of local businesses and governments and service organizations of particular interest to RMA members. Our principal program objective is to offer to our members and the invited general public, stimulating and educational presentations on a wide range of subjects by persons knowledgeable in their area of expertise. Our intention is to provide a good experience for our speakers and to establish a positive relationship with them, both for future programs with them and for their contacts and suggestions for other speakers.

**Procedures for Proposing Speakers and Ideas for RMA Programs**

Any member of the RMA, the community, or the Program Committee is invited to propose a speaker or an idea for a program. Ideas or speaker proposals should be submitted to a member of the committee or the committee chairman. If they meet the criteria for programs, they will be presented to the Program Committee for review, discussion, and action which may involve approval, a request for more information, or rejection.

Many ideas or speaker proposals come from the connections of RMA members. Often their friends, family members or business associates have stimulating suggestions for speakers or program ideas based on their professional or personal experience.

Program Committee members should be on the lookout for speakers based on people they meet or concepts and distinguished experts they identify based on their interests.

Program Committee meetings include brainstorming to identify topics of high interest to RMA members. When a topic is identified, a committee member is assigned to research it and identify the best speakers available to address the subject.

Another source of speakers comes from semi-annual meetings with representative from the six Fairfield Senior Men’s groups that sponsor speakers. The purpose of meeting with other groups is to exchange program information and recommend the best speakers each organization has heard in the preceding six months.

Speaker ideas also come from other organizations in the community. The RMA has established itself as a prime venue for groups that wish to sponsor speakers. In particular, the RMA has developed partnerships with other Greenwich institutions, such as the Greenwich Library.

A final important source of speaker recommendations comes from speakers we have engaged. Many of the professionals, experts and academics who have addressed the RMA have extensive networks of colleagues. Recommendations from these distinguished leaders in their field offer almost unlimited potential. To take advantage of this network, it is of prime importance that all speakers have a good experience at the RMA and the presenter, program committee and RMA members establish a good relationship with the speakers, as stated in the Mission Statement.

**Criteria for Selecting Topics and Speakers**

* **Subjects of High Interest:** The Program Committee's primary goal is toidentify topics of broad interest to RMA members and our communities.
* **Diversity:** The Program Committee strives to identify a variety of topics. Programs may involve controversial social and political issues, little known cultures or histories, tales of adventure, local groups and businesses of interest or spotlights on the arts, sports and entertainment.
* **New Concepts:** The Program Committee welcomes programs on unusual topics such as new discoveries in science or new interpretations and knowledge about history.
* **Controversial Issues and Multiple Perspectives:** Many significant contemporary issues can be viewed as controversial. The Program Committee seeks experts on these issues and welcomes their individual opinions. Experienced speakers will usually identify contrary opinions and offer rebuttals, but an individual program is not expected to present balancing points of view or avoid expression of controversial opinions. When a speaker represents an organization with a mission or cause, the RMA welcomes hearing arguments and evidence in support of their view without constraint. The Program Committee is committed to hearing diverse opinions even if controversial. We seek to invite credible experts who can enhance our understanding of significant issues. Multiple perspectives and different points of view are sought for controversial topics and speakers representing those views are invited to the RMA if they meet our other criteria.
* **Issues of Particular Interest to RMA Members:** Some topics will be selected that address particular concerns of our membership.
* **RMA Members, Family, and Friends:** The Program Committee encourages presentations by its members and their families. Many RMA members have experiences and passions that are of broad interest to the community.
* **Greenwich Community Leaders:** The RMA further encourages presentations from the many accomplished members of Greenwich, including Town officials, business owners, and others distinguished in their field.
* **Credentials:** The Program Committee endeavors to identify speakers who are recognized in their field. Topics of high interest may be identified and then followed by research to determine the best available speaker to discuss the topic.

**Precluded Topics:**

* Narrow, or overly specialized, with little broad appeal
* Advocacy for implausible conspiracies, cults, fetishes, or unscientific medical theories
* Proselytizing for religions, sects or cults
* Advocacy of hate speech of any kind
* Solicitation for funds, contributions or business engagement
* Advocacy for political candidates or parties. Candidates for political office are not invited to speak during the six months prior to an election.

**Finally, the RMA is a non-partisan organization and its speakers and programs are not intended to represent the views of the RMA or its members.**