

**Grand Rapids Central City Weed and Seed  
Steering Committee Meeting  
Wednesday, April 23, 2008 - 12:00 pm  
Grand Rapids Police Department Conference Room 2057**

**Voting Members Present (7 Required for Quorum)**

1. Marian Young-Barrera (Baxter)
2. Pamela Benjamin (Eastown)
3. Kathryn Caliendo (East Hills)
4. Sandra Latham (SEENA)
5. Ray Tromp (Resident)
6. Alice Menninga (Resident)
7. Captain Eric Payne (GRPD)
8. Lt. Vincent E. Reilly (GRPD)
9. Tim Doyle (Prosecutor's Office)
10. Kaye Hooker (DOJ)
11. Mike Yasenchak (DEA)

**Voting Members Not Present (with Notification)**

1. Scott Vogel (MANA)
2. Haris Alibasic (City of GR)

**Voting Members Not Present (without Notification)**

N/A

**Non-Voting Members & Guests Present**

1. Stacy Stout
2. Olivia Destrades-Mendoza
3. Sgt Elliott Bargas
4. Kristine Jaros
5. Dr. Debra Ross

**I. Call To Order**

The meeting was called to order by Vice-Chairperson Marian Barrera-Young at 12:03 pm

**II. Introductions**

Members introduced themselves. A quorum was in attendance.

**III. March 2008 Meeting Minutes Approval.**

Kathryn Caliendo made a motion to approve the minutes of the March 26, 2008 meeting. This was seconded by Tim Doyle. Minutes were approved.

**IV. Results of Voting on Board Positions**

Officers were elected as follows:

Chairperson = Pamela Benjamin  
Vice-Chairperson = Capt. Eric Payne  
Secretary = Ray Tromp  
Treasurer = Scott Vogel

## **V. Reports**

### **a. Budget Report**

Dr. Debra Ross stated that the Weed and Seed FY 2008 grant has not yet been awarded and that we continue to respond to CCDO's requests for additional clarification on line items. Generally, the submitted budget language needs to be more specific in certain areas of the document by reducing abbreviations and clarifying some points.

Dr. Debra announced that the program called "Lies That Bind" represented by Ms. Anneshia Freeman received \$1,000.00 as requested in the FY 2007 budget. Kristine is working with Ms. Freeman on the contract.

Marian Barrera Young requested that a copy machine at Office Max costing \$349.97 be purchased for Baxter Neighborhood Association. This figure is under the budgeted estimate of \$1,000.00 by \$602.97. Dr. Ross stated that GVSU has discount arrangements with various stores for equipment, supplies, and service contracts and, therefore recommended that Weed and Seed match this suggested equipment price with a that of a provider that serves GVSU with competitive prices and service. Information related to the copy machine was circulated to Steering Committee members. Kristine will work with Marian to purchase equipment and supplies.

### **b. Weed Report**

Captain Eric Payne introduced Lt. Vincent Reilly as his newly-appointed assistant. GRPD conducted one curfew sweep during Spring Break. There were no arrests made. Foot Patrol will begin soon in the Central City Weed and Seed area. A map produced by Sgt. Elliott Bargas showed an analysis of crimes committed in the area. It included ten domestic incidents, seven robberies, and about a dozen aggravated assaults during the month of March 2008. Officer Gillem is in the process of receiving bids for the budgeted surveillance cameras for Weed and Seed. There will be a total of three cameras available for use by police in the Weed and Seed area.

Captain Payne provided information regarding Service Area Summits to be held in various areas throughout the city. The South Service Area summit will be held May 1, 2008 at 920 Cherry Street in the ICCF building. There will be sharing of information between the community and the police and solutions will be discussed. All neighborhood input from the South Service Area will be included and addressed.

### **c. Seed Report**

Marian Young-Barrera turned the meeting over to Stacy Stout to provide an update on her meeting with the youth at Eastown Ministries for the Youth Conference to be held in September 2008. The concerns presented by the youth about the neighborhood included gang activity and recruitment, lack of jobs available, drug use and associated shootings.

Personal growth needs included the lack of experience in resume writing and up-dating, telephone etiquette and rules, interview skills, and other work skills in finding employment that offers advancement. Stacy suggested segregating the youth by gender for separate discussions

related to potential Juvenile Summit issues. She believes that this would generate even more productive discussions, useful in developing the agenda for the summit.

The probation officers will be sending a significant percentage of youth to the summit but have not yet provided a list of those who will be recommended to attend the summit, according to Marian Barrera Young.

The Domestic Violence Summit "What Isn't Being Said?" is tentatively scheduled for October 25, 2008, perhaps at the MLK Academy site on Henry and Logan St. S.E. Kristine and Alice are involved in the planning of this event with the co-chairs Imelda Martinez and Teresa Vega-Cruz.

#### **d. Site Coordinator Report**

Kristine Jaros announced that tomorrow, April 24, 2008 there is a workshop in Detroit, also a workshop training is scheduled in Chicago on August 18, 2008. . There is money available and time to plan to send representatives to Chicago.

On May 7, 2008 a workshop, "Grand Rapids Gang Awareness" workshop will be held at Neland Ave CRC from 12-2pm. Officer Nowakowski will be leading the workshop.

On June 11, 2008 a workshop, "Brain Gym," will be held, and all steering Committee members are encouraged to attend this workshop, details will be available soon. .

The FY 2007 budget is in process.

A new set of car seats laws are being enforced starting July 1, 2008 as explained by Kristine Jaros and Stacy Stout. Instead of using only age and weight standards, seatbelt and car seat use will also include height of the child. The new law requires all children in a motor vehicle, under the age of eight and shorter than 4 feet 9 inches tall, to be securely fastened in a child safety seat. Information about this enforcement of new car seat codes needs to be dispersed throughout the community. There may be a need to provide booster seats to some families, and to provide solid information about the reason for the new standards and the requirement to enforce them. Education will be necessary to get the message dispersed. Marian and Sandra shared that they are organizing a "Safety Day" and that this might fit well into that. Kristine, Stacy, Marian and Sandra to work together.

#### **IV. Announcements/Updates**

1. Marian Barrera Young passed out a flyer indicating that a group is using the name Weed and Seed as a support for a Town Hall meeting on May 8, 2008. Questions arose about who is organizing this event? Who comprises the Million More Movement ? The contents of the flyer were questioned as to the intent and the purpose of the group and the meeting. A related concern became whether Weed and Seed had exclusive rights, or a copyright, to the title of "Weed and Seed." Is it a generic name which can be duplicated without permission, or, is it to be restricted to the organization connected to and supported by the Department of Justice and the U.S. Attorney's Office? These and other issues will be addressed by Marian Barrera Young as she stated that a person involved would contact her later. Others were interested in getting more information and all agreed to withhold official support until more information is available.

2. The culinary department of Job Corps is willing to prepare the food for the Domestic Violence Conference, as reported by Sgt. Elliot Bargas. Weed and Seed will solicit sponsors for

the meal. The meal could then be prepared by the Job Corps. Ingredients may be taken to the Job Corps directly or volunteers may offer to pick up and deliver the food. Total cost should not exceed the guideline established by the Department of Justice for 'Light Meals Only Policy' which is approximately under \$10.00 per plate.

3. Marian Barrera Young announced a job opening at Community Re-Builders on Wealthy Street for a person to supervise house building (general contractor)

## **VII. Adjournment**

The meeting was adjourned at 1:03 pm

Respectfully submitted,  
Ray Tromp

# **Next Meeting** **WEED AND SEED**

## **Steering Committee**

### **Wednesday, May 28, 2008**

### **12:00 noon**

**Baxter Community Center**  
**935 Baxter S.E. 49506, Grace Room**