

Steering Committee Meeting
Tuesday, December 16, 2008 at 11:00 -1:00 pm
Baxter Community Center Grace Conference Room

Voting Steering Committee Members Present

1. Sgt. Elliott Bargas - Grand Rapids Police Department
2. Aaron Stevens - Grand Rapids Police Department Community Officer
3. Ray Tromp - Baxter Neighborhood Association: resident
4. Marian Barrera-Young - Baxter Neighborhood Association
5. Kathryn Caliendo - East Hills Neighborhood Association
6. Sandra Latham - Southeast East End Neighborhood Association
7. Scott Vogel - Madison Avenue Neighborhood Association: business representative
8. Michael Yasenachak - Drug Enforcement Agency
9. Janet Strahan U. S. Attorney's Office (rep for Kay Hooker)
10. Haris Alibasic - City of Grand Rapids
11. Tim Doyle - Kent County Prosecutor's Office
12. Amber Kilpatrick - Eastown Neighborhood Association (rep for Pamela Benjamin)

Non-Voting Regular Attendees and Guests Present

1. Kristine Jaros - Weed and Seed Site Coordinator
2. Debra Ross - Grand Valley State University
3. Dr. William Crawley - Grand Valley State University

Steering Committee Members Absent

1. Captain Eric Payne - Grand Rapids Police Department - excused
2. Stacy Stout - Baxter Neighborhood Association - excused
3. Pamela Benjamin - Eastown Neighborhood Association - excused
4. Kaye Hooker - U.S. Attorney's Office - excused

Non-Voting Regular Attendees Absent

1. Johannah Jelks - East Hills/Wealthy Heights Neighborhood Association
2. Kathryn Lett- Grand Rapids Police Department

I. Call To Order/Introductions

The meeting was called to order at 11:02am by Sgt. Elliott Bargas, in the absence of the Chairperson Pamela Benjamin and of the Assistant Chairperson Captain Eric Payne. With the arrival of Scott Vogel, the meeting was turned over to him by Sgt. Bargas, thus respecting the order outlined in our policies and procedures. Members introduced themselves. A quorum was present

II. Approval of Agenda

A motion was made by Kathryn Caliendo, and seconded by Sandra Latham to approve the agenda as presented. The motion was passed and the agenda was approved.

III. Approval of Minutes of the November 25, 2008 Meeting

1. Marian Barrera-Young stated that within the minutes of the last meeting and regarding the budget section, her issue was incorrectly reported. The part of the November 25, 2008 minutes that is in dispute is as follows:

“V. Written Committee Reports (originally VII.. Written Reports)

A. Budget Committee

“All invoices must be in by November 30 for Fiscal Year 2007. All of the 2007 invoices

have been received and filed, except for one, and that is the invoices related to Baxter Neighborhood Association for supplies. Marian Barrera-Young discussed the missing invoice issue with Kristine Jaros. Dr. Debra Ross explained to Marian Barrera -Young that the invoice must be presented in order to make the payment and to complete the books for Fiscal Year 2007.”

In regards to this missing invoice for supplies that she had purchased for Baxter Neighborhood Association in 2007, she informed the Steering Committee that the problem was not that she had been withholding an invoice for the supplies, but rather that the whole incident had never occurred.

2. Marian Barrera-Young made a second complaint related to the following portion of the minutes of the November 25, 2008 meeting:

“IX. Neighborhood Update (Eastown, Baxter, East Hills, & SEENA)

Baxter - .

Marian Barrera-Young announced that she may conduct a workshop to tell the neighbors how the court system works, and to discuss the housing stock in the area.”

Marian Barrera-Young stated that this information was incorrect and then stated that she “had already done it.”

Note: The **Baxter** section of the minutes of the November 25, 2008 concludes with this information not in dispute by Marian Barrera-Young:

“A resident from Sigsbee Street has made a chart about the housing stock on three blocks: the 800, 900, & 1000 blocks of Sigsbee. This chart shows ownership status and relative condition of each house.

On December 16, at Eastern Avenue Christian Reformed Church, a recognition event for Baxter Neighborhood block captains is scheduled. Exact time should be announced later, presumably to be held in the early evening. Details to be forthcoming, report follows. ”

A motion was made by Kathryn Caliendo to table the approval of the minutes of the November 25, 2008 meeting. The motion to table the approval was seconded by Sandra Latham. Kristine Jaros will work with Marian to correct the November 25, 2008 minutes. **The minutes will be resubmitted for approval at the January 2009 meeting.**

IV. 2009 Application - Budget Discussion, Requests For Funding, Allocations, & Approval

A. Budget Information

Kristine Jaros provided a notebook for each Steering Committee member titled “Requests For Co-Sponsorship Responses & Draft FY 2009 Budget.”

In the 2009 Budget Application, the budget distribution percentages are 50% towards Weed efforts, and 50% toward Seed efforts. Within this configuration, there is an adjustment needed for the program called “Lies That Bind” which could be placed in either category. If placed directly in the Weed category then the ratio would be 51% Weed and 49% Seed. According to CCDO guidelines, the Weed portion may not exceed 60% of the total budget.

Due to the requirements of the closing of the grant, Kristine Jaros’ contract will be for 14 months in our last year rather than 12 months and her pay will reflect this accordingly.

B. Weed Proposals

1. Grand Rapids Citizen’s Police Academy

Discussion developed around the Weed section of the proposed budget involving the Grand Rapids Police Department Citizen Police Academy. The question related to the possibility of targeting identical groups; namely, the Citizens Police Academy could be targeting the same population as “The Lies That Bind” program. Another related question arose: Could the GRPD Citizens Police Academy be staffed by Grand Valley State

University Staff/Criminal Justice students or must this academic entity be conducted by the more expensive GR Police personnel? Also, is it possible that the “Lies That Bind” program could incorporate the Citizen’s Police Academy? A major issue relates to the total cost of each program. This factor must be addressed in detail. After the cost factor is known, then the concomitant issue of categorizing the “Lies That Bind” program can be successfully determined.

Sgt. Elliott Bargas noted that the “GRPD Citizen’s Police Academy was “serving 25 participants in the Academy.” Since Central City Weed and Seed has allocated funding for this academy, the Steering Committee is interested in being assured that a certain defined percentage of the participants in the Citizen Police Academy are residents of Central City Weed and Seed area. In order to accomplish this, and to fully insure that the money allocated will be used by Weed and Seed residents, “the Baxter area would have to send at least 10 participants to each class,” according to Sgt. Bargas.

Discussion ensued around the fact that (a) Weed and Seed had provided enough funds to serve ten participants in each session of the academy, and (b) how to guarantee the recruiting of ten residents to attend. Concerns arose about recruiting and whether students from GVSU and from the “Lies That Bind” Program could be a source for recruitment. If so, the same considerations could apply to administration - Could these same GVSU students and the “Lies That Bind” program supply administrative needs, reserving the GRPD as a resource for perhaps the teaching of some highly specialized issues in the academy?

2. Grand Rapids Police Department Overtime

The Police Department overtime request was cut to \$34,373.00. Some police overtime will be covered by various other grants. The report displays that the overtime for 2008 as \$36,338.00, representing a difference of - \$1,965.00 in the 2009 budget. GRPD states that the W&S Goals can still be met with this reduced funding.

3. “ Neighborhood Ventures”

This program will facilitate and manage Security and Crime Prevention by Environmental Design (CPTED) training in the Weed and Seed areas. Topics included in this training are: personal security, security through building up-grades, repair and maintenance, burglary prevention procedures, and counterfeit money, bad checks, credit fraud and identity theft. Many personnel resources will be used in the training: police department, insurance agencies, banking institutions, property repair agencies, and area crime prevention officers. Participants will include area residents, businesses, and non-profits.

4. Urban Families Ministries “Building Bridges Program”

This organization represents a neighborhood-based solution to the community revitalization efforts within the Central City Weed and Seed area. It will connect youth with professional and community leaders, by working with 17 probation officers, and youth on probation, with job training provided for 4 hours a day for 4 days a week. Field trips will be offered to present a broader view of the neighborhood environment. The youth will help area businesses by doing light maintenance and clean-up to keep the area attractive for business and the community. This will improve the safety and security of the area. Other partners are Bethany Christian Services and the 17th Circuit Court Family Division thus improving the sustainability of the program.

B. Seed Proposals

1. Eastown Ministries has requested \$3,000.00 for computers for the Homework House, and \$750.00 for monthly newsletters. They also requested \$1,200.00 for a summer work program, in partnership with Calvin Christian Reformed Church and Wedgewood Christian Services. This program will run for three days a week for six weeks. Two hours a day they will offer free services to people in the community, providing high-quality measurable work to instill a good work ethic for employment. The Steering Committee has decided to deny both the computer and the newsletter request. The stipend for the Homework House Coordinator may also be discontinued. These cuts are based upon an anticipation that other sources may be found.

2. Eastown Community Association requested \$5,048.00 for the Summer Youth Program. This eight-week session in conjunction with Mosaic Life Church and the Grand Rapids Public Schools will provide

field trips within the Grand Rapids area, work on computers at the church, and have projects with Eastown Community Association.

3. Neland Avenue Christian Reformed Church requested funding for “Young Men Activity/Support Group” and “Youth Education for Tomorrow.” The United Way has selected Neland as a pilot site for the “Schools of Hope” part of the Y.E.T. program. This program is also supported by the Private and Public Ventures of Philadelphia. The “School of Hope” will provide continued literacy programs in the area of reading concentration to the students of Alexander Public School on Neland Avenue. Youth who test one to three years behind grade level will be the participants in the literacy program. The YMA/SG has been functioning for three years targeting young men in the SEENA Area. The request for \$5,400.00 will expand the program to include more activities. Other funding and in-kind contributions are in place.

4. Jubilee Jobs “Youth Employment Services For You” (YES4U)” requested \$10,000.00 for supplies and wages. Other funding and in-kind donations reflect the sustainability of the employment program for youth.

5. Mosaic Life Church requested \$10,000.00 to expand their capacity and to provide more services, obtain equipment and supplies, and to meet wages for a program manager. The funding will include the costs of teaching computer skills and organizing a job club.

6. “Project C.O.O.L.” is a service through Brown-Hutcherson which mentors youth, teaches life-skills, good decision-making, and choosing with whom they will associate. The request is for \$10,000 for 8 internships for 20 weeks at \$7.40 per hour. \$528.00 will be used for student materials. The total budget for a year including administrative salaries is \$239,660.

7. Baxter Community Center “Around The Table” program requested \$10,000.00 for salaries and supplies. This program teaches good nutrition and good manners with hospitality.

8. Baxter Community Center “Life, Literacy and the Pursuit of Happiness” program requested \$10,000.00 for salaries and literacy supplies. This literacy program increases vocabulary and reading skills.

D. Allocations of the FY 2009 Budget

a.. The Steering Committee allocated SEED funding requests for the Fiscal Year 2009 as follows:

1. Eastown Ministries request of \$8,825 was funded at \$2,625.
2. Eastown Community Association was funded at \$5,048.
3. Neland Young Men’s Activity/Support group requested and received \$5,408.
4. Neland Y.E.T School of Hope requested and received \$5,130.
5. Jubilee Jobs “YES 4U” requested \$10,000 and received \$9,758.
- 6 Baxter Community Center “Around the Table” requested \$10,000 and received \$1,500.
7. Baxter Community Center “Life, Liberty, and the Pursuit of Happiness” requested \$10,000 and received \$0.
- 8 Brown-Hutcherson’s Project C.O.O.L. request of \$10,000.00 was received \$6,000.
9. Mosaic Life Church request of \$10,000 was denied.
- 10 Baxter Neighborhood Resident Group request of \$1,576 was denied.
11. Kent County Health Department- “Building Healthy Communities” request of \$7,500 was denied.

b. The Steering Committee allocated WEED funding requests for the Fiscal Year 2009 as follows:

1. "National Night Out"- \$2500 for all neighborhoods allocated.
2. Urban Family Ministries "Building Bridges Program" requested \$10,000 and received "\$6000.
3. Neighborhood Ventures requested \$10,000 and received \$500.
4. GRPD Citizen Police Academy requested and received \$8062.
5. GRPD Overtime requested and received \$34,373.

Funding these listed requests results in a 52% Weed and 48% Seed Distribution.

E.Approval of FY 2009 Budget

Haris Alibasic made a motion to approve the funding requests as listed above.

Kathryn Caliendo seconded this motion. The motion was passed, approving the FY2009 budget.

V. Meeting Dates/Time discussion

Haris Alibasic explained that due to his role on the City Commission staff, a conflict develops because their meetings coincide with the Steering Committee meetings. Thus he requested that the Steering Committee meetings be scheduled for a Thursday rather than Tuesday which is when the G.R. City Commission meets. His request for change was limited to the day and did not include the time of the meetings. It was the consensus of the Steering Committee to honor this request for a change of day from Tuesday to Thursday for the future monthly Steering Committee meetings.

VI. Announcements/Updates/Public Comment

The next scheduled Central City Weed and Seed Steering Committee will be held on Thursday January 29, 2009 at 11:00 am to 1:00 pm at the Grace Room in the Baxter Community Center.

There were no updates, nor comments by the public.

VII. Adjournment

The meeting was adjourned at 12:49 pm.

Respectfully Submitted,
Ray Tromp
Secretary

Next Steering Committee Meeting
****THURSDAY****
JANUARY 29, 2009
11:00 am - 1:00 pm
GRACE ROOM
BAXTER COMMUNITY CENTER