

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

Steering Committee Members Present

Neighborhood Associations (4)

1. Baxter - Marian Barrera-Young
2. Easttown - Olivia Destrades-Mendoza
3. Easttown - Pamela Benjamin Director
4. East Hills- Kathryn Caliendo

Residents Present (2)

1. Ray Tromp
2. Alice Menninga

Law Enforcement Present (3)

1. Sgt. Elliott Bargas – South Service Area
2. Lt. Eric Payne - South Service Area
3. Officer Jim Wojczynski - Baxter Community Officer

Kent County Prosecutor's Office Present (1)

1. Tim Doyle

Drug Enforcement Agency Present (1)

1. Michael Yasenck

City Of Grand Rapids Present (1)

1. Haris Alibasic

Members Absent

Department of Justice (1)

Madison Avenue Neighborhood Association (resigned/open) (1)

South East End (SEENA) (1)

Non-Voting Attendees (4)

1. Kristine Jaros - Site Coordinator
2. Dr. Debra Ross (GVSU)
3. Aaron Rider (GVSU intern)
4. Kathryn Lett (Grand Rapids Police Department)

Others Attending (5)

1. Melanie Beelen (Baxter Community Center)
2. Chana' Edmond-Verley (Jubilee Jobs)
3. Jim Carpenter (Easttown Ministries)
4. Pearl Banks (Neland Avenue Christian Reformed Church)
5. Elijah Libbett (Neland Avenue Christian Reformed Church)

## **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. Guest Speakers**

1. Melanie Beelen from Baxter Community Center distributed information describing the programs offered. She explained “Around the Table” is a new project that carries families from survivability to sustainability and healthy community development. It coordinates a pilot year or workshops, enrichment classes, and reaching within the Baxter community population to expand the services of the center for families. Culinary arts, family dynamics, and employment issues are included in this range of services. A request for \$3,500.00 was made for funding the various components of “Around the Table.”

2. Chana’ Edmond-Verley presented a request for \$7,002.00 for Jubilee Jobs. The specific program, Youth Employment Success for You” (“YES 4 U!”) targets urban youth from 14 -21 years old. Some of the issues addressed by this program include: generational poverty, lower literacy, educational deficiencies, household poverty, and disconnected relationships. Mentors will assist in individual development and attaining economic and educational goals.

3, Jim Carpenter, Director, explained how Eastown Ministries provides a safe place for children and youth in the Central City Weed and Seed Area, and is a designated Safe Haven. He requested funding for several programs. The Homework House provides study skills and homework assistance, and mentoring with volunteer tutors. The Thursday Night Program works with the teens by teaching, organizing activities, and providing appropriate presentations to the youth by a variety of knowledgeable individuals. Teens learn how to reduce and avoid the influence of violence, drugs, poverty, crime, gangs, and how to develop patterns that help them succeed in life. The request for funding of these specific programs is \$17,900.

4. Pearl Banks and Elijah Libbetts represented the Young Men Activity Support Program. This new program targets the young men of the SEENA Neighborhood and the Central City. The funding request of \$7,500 is for the weight-lifting room, woodworking room and curriculum development for this program. The weight room will be used by young men ages 18-21 and the woodworking program is for those aged 14-21. Goals include team-building, skill development, discipline, and recreation in an approved alternative site.

## **IV. Approval of Minutes**

The minutes of the December 19, 2007 meeting were presented. Debra Ross made a motion to approve these minutes, seconded by Kathryn Caliendo. The minutes were passed by the Steering Committee.

## V. 2008 Budget Reduction

Kristine Jaros informed the Steering Committee that the Department of Justice has reduced the 2008 budget by 25 %. This results in a loss of \$50,000.00 to Central City Weed and Seed. Some of the programs and projects that were tentatively funded for FY 2008 can be picked up by the FY2007 budget. This list includes:

1. Office copier machine for Baxter Neighborhood Association (Seed)
2. Raid jackets for police - gang unit officers. (Weed)
3. Eastown Community Association mural art competition and the Block Captain training series. (Seed)
4. Wealthy Heights initiative land trust project (Seed)
5. Baxter Community Center "Around the Table" (Seed)

Funding for the above five items will be transferred from FY2008 to FY2007.

Cuts from the FY2008 budget include the following examples from various categories:

1. Personnel \$4,599.00 (salary cuts)
2. Travel fund reduced to a total of two trips from four
3. Gun holsters cut \$596.00
4. Eastown Ministries cut \$2,100.00
5. Camp O'Malley scholarships \$3,500.00
6. Police Overtime curfew sweeps cut from 4 to 3
7. Police overtime drug interdiction cut by \$1,624.00

### **The summary of total costs cut is as follows:**

- A. Personnel total cuts = \$5,802
- B. Fringes = \$386.00
- C. Travel = \$2,910.00
- D. Equipment = \$6,372.00
- E. Consultants and contracts = \$34,503.00
- G. Other costs = \$29.00

**For a total budget reduction of \$50,000.00, 25% of total .**

The proposed ratio of Weed to Seed in t the FY2008 budget was

51% Weed and 49% Seed.

Following the \$50,000.00 cut, the ratio now for FY2008 presents as closer to

50% Weed and 50% Seed.

Tim Doyle proposed a motion to shift the Wealthy Initiative appropriation of \$7,500.00 to the 2007 budget from the 2008 budget. Marian Barrera-Young seconded the motion. The motion was passed by the Steering Committee.

Elliot Bargas made a motion, seconded by Alice Menninga, to move the Baxter Community Center "Around the Table" program from FY 2008 budget to FY2007 budget. This motion was approved.

Haris Alibasic made a motion that \$1,617.00 be transferred from Jubilee Jobs to Neland Christian Reformed Church Young Men's Activity Support Program, and with an understanding

that Jubilee Job will receive a funding for FY 2007 budget in the amount of \$5085 even though Jubilee Jobs had not previously requested it. It was seconded by Tim Doyle and passed by the Steering Committee.

#### **VI. CCDO Strategy Development Conference**

The National Conference will be held in Portland, Oregon on March 3-6 2008. Delegated to attend are Alice Menninga, Pamela Benjamin, Kristine Jaros, Tim Doyle or Elliott Bargas.

#### **VII. Announcements/Up-Dates**

Kristine Jaros announced that the budget of FY 2007 should be back to the Department of Justice by February 1<sup>st</sup>, 2008. It was suggested that a vote by e-mail be considered to approve the FY 2007 budget. Elliott Bargas made a motion to vote via e-mail for the 2007 final approval. This motion was seconded by Tim Doyle. It was moved that e-mail be the vehicle to approve the final FY2007 budget. *(This was completed on 2/1/08 at 5pm with 100% yes vote)*

The next Steering Committee meeting is scheduled for Wednesday, February 27, 2008 at 12:00 noon at GRPD, Room 3061.

#### **VII Adjournment**

The meeting was adjourned at 2:13 pm.

Respectfully submitted,  
Raymond Tromp

# **WEED AND SEED**

## **Steering Committee**

### **MEETING**

#### **Wednesday, February 27, 2008**

**12:00 noon**

**GRPD – Room 2057**