

Steering Committee Meeting
Tuesday, October 28, 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. Ray Tromp - Baxter Neighborhood Association: resident
3. Pamela Benjamin - Eastown Neighborhood Association
4. Michael Yasenchak - Drug Enforcement Administration
- 5 Stacey Stout - Baxter Neighborhood Association

Non-Voting Regular Attendees and Guests Present

1. Kristine Jaros - Weed and Seed Site Coordinator
2. Dr. William Crawley - Grand Valley State University
3. Tom Mulligan - West Michigan Re-Entry Employment Center Executive.Director.
4. Tamara Surname n/a - Jubilee Jobs
5. Amber Z. Kilpatrick - Eastown Neighborhood Association
6. Zac Blevins - Neighborhood Ventures

Steering Committee Members Absent

1. Haris Alibasic - City of Grand Rapids
2. Captain Eric Payne - Grand Rapids Police Department
3. Tim Doyle - Kent County Prosecutor's Office
4. Scott Vogel - Madison Avenue Neighborhood Association: business representative
5. Marian Barrera-Young - Baxter Neighborhood Association
6. Kathryn Caliendo - East Hills Neighborhood Association
7. Sandra Latham - Southeast East End Neighborhood Association

Non-Voting Regular Attendees Absent

1. Dr. Debra Ross - Grand Valley State University
2. Deputy James Farris - Grand Rapids Police Department
3. Lt. Vincent Reilly - Grand Rapids Police Department
4. Officer Aaron Stevens - Grand Rapids Police Department
5. Johannah Jelks - East Hills/Wealthy Heights Neighborhood Association

Resigned

1. Alice Menninga - Eastown Neighborhood Association: resident

I. Call To Order

The meeting was called to order by Chairperson Pamela Benjamin at 11:05am.

II. Introductions

Members introduced themselves. A quorum was not present.

III. Approval of Minutes

The minutes of the September 23, 2008 were not approved, due to a lack of quorum. Kristin Jaros will send the minutes to all voting members for correction and approval.

IV. Approval of Agenda

Due to a lack of quorum, there was no motion was made to approve the agenda.

V. Public Comment

There was no call for the public comment .

VI. Guest Presentation

Tom Mulligan, Executive Director of West Michigan Re-Entry Employment Resource Center, explained the main objective of the organization to be developing relationships between clients and employers. The potential employer will know that the proposed employee is certified in certain skills and areas including motivation, attitude, and stability. Each potential employee is required to complete two workshops provided by the Center. The initial workshop teaches basic skills with an emphasis on communication, the second one deals with aspects of leading an independent life without State controls. These interactive workshops are designed to develop a successful transition into the workforce. The training thus creates confidence for the employer to balance with the knowledge of past incarceration. The history of success with this training is shown by the growth of employer acceptance of those who have completed it. The original sites numbered seven for placement of graduates, that number of employment sites has increased to the current number of twenty. The current sites include Goodwill Industries, Rockford Construction, Cascade Engineering, and Butterball Farms. Those who have completed the program and have retained employment comprise 81% of the total participants. This is a significant success rate. Material related to this program was distributed to the Steering Committee. Pamela noted that this type of program could be supported by the Seed requirements of the Narrative.

VII. Chairperson Report- “Who Are We Missing?”

Pamela Benjamin noted that as the Weed and Seed Program enters the Sustainability stage we need to be aware of and promote the successful continuation of supported programs which will be without future federal Weed and Seed funding. One strengthening feature for these organizations and for the community development events could be an invitation to representatives of each organization or event to attend the monthly Steering Committee meetings to observe, to learn , to network, and to understand how funding might be maintained without the federal Weed and Seed money. Sustaining programs beyond the federal funding timetable will be a reality for all those who currently receive support from Weed and Seed. As non-voting participants, they will be enabled to further develop the necessary ability to continue their services to the community.

For example, Safe Havens, faith-based services to youth, neighborhood restoration efforts, neighborhood events, such as youth and domestic violence summits, “Lies That Bind,” and “National Night Out” could be served by selecting representatives as attendees at the monthly meetings. They would be no need for adjustment to the policies and procedures to effect such an inclusion, or by of defining a specific part of the public to be regular observers and to speak to the issues.

Pamela Benjamin submitted the resignation of Alice Menninga as follows: “ I, Alice Menninga, need to resign from the Weed and Seed Steering Committees and other Sub-committees. I am not available to come to the meetings due to full-time employment. Thus I am not able to be a representative to vote...I still will help when possible. Thank You Alice Menninga.

The Steering Committee accepted with regrets this resignation and gratefully thanks Alice Menninga for all her devoted help and guidance over the past number of years developing and serving on the Weed and Seed Steering Committee and its sub-committees, such as the Domestic Violence Summits committees. .

It was suggested that Stacy Stout be appointed to fill this position, and the Steering Committee will be voting electronically on this suggested replacement.

VIII. Reports

A. 2007 Budget Report.

Dr. William Crawley informed the Steering Committee that there is \$3,038.26 as a surplus from the 2007 budget. This needs to be spent by November 30, 2008 in order to retain possession of the surplus. This money was highlighted in the financial report of October 22, 2008 compiled by our fiduciary. A suggestion was made to distribute this surplus. Due to a lack of quorum, it will be voted electronically as a proposal to earmark \$500.00 for Neland Young Men Activities, \$350.00 for a quarterly report mailing of Eastown Ministries, \$750.00 for “Lies That Bind” workshops, \$600.00 for supplies for neighborhood association newsletters produced and distributed by Stacy Stout, \$100.00 for books and pamphlets distributed by neighborhood associations, and \$1,033.00 to cover last month’s payroll.

B. Crime Statistics

Grand Rapids Police Department has been experiencing difficulties this past month, therefore crime statistics will be reported at the November meeting for both September 2008 and November 2008.

C. Community Resources Inventory Survey Up-Date

The survey was completed on October 7, 2008 with approximately 130 valid surveys submitted. This is about half of the anticipated returns. The margin of error is 9% , so conclusions will likely be valid as a whole. The results may weaken in validity at the neighborhood association level. All surveys were completed by volunteers this year, in contrast to previous years when surveys were completed by the Grand Rapids Police Department. CRI will present the results to the Steering Committee at the November 2008 meeting.

D. Teen Summit Survey Results

The survey results were included in the monthly meeting package. The total break-down is

contained in the 28 page report , available by e-mail request. Highlights were also distributed with the minutes of the last meeting. There was no discussion, due to a lack of quorum.

E. 2008 Budget Up-Date

The Grant was filed with the CCDO Department of Justice, and additional changes were required and completed by Kristine Jaros and Dr. Deborah Ross. We have re-submitted the budget on October 27, 2008 and are anticipating acceptance.

IX Announcements /UpDates

Kristin Jarosn announced that the November and December Steering Committee meetings are scheduled as follows:

the November meeting will be on Tuesday November 25, 2008 at 11:00 am, and

the December meeting will be on Tuesday December 23, 2008 at 11:00 am

Each will be held at the Grace Room at Baxter Community Center.

X. Public Comment

There was no public comment .

XI. Adjournment

The adjournment occurred at 12:37.

Respectfully submitted by
Ray Tromp
Secretary

Next Steering Committee Meeting

TUESDAY, NOVEMBER 25, 2008

11:00 am - 1:00 pm

GRACE ROOM BAXTER COMMUNITY CENTER