

**Steering Committee Meeting**  
**Thursday, May 28, 2009 at 11:00 am -1:00 pm**  
**GVSU Criminal Justice Grants Office**  
**638 West Fulton 49504**

Voting Steering Committee Members Present

1. Sergeant Elliott Bargas - Grand Rapids Police Department
2. Captain Eric Payne - Grand Rapids Police Department
3. Ray Tromp - Baxter Neighborhood Association: Resident
4. Kathryn Caliendo - East Hills Neighborhood Association
5. Stacy Stout - Baxter Neighborhood Association: Resident
6. Scott Vogel - Madison Avenue Neighborhood Association: Bus.Rep.
7. Sandra Latham - Southeast East End Neighborhood Association
8. Michael Yasenachak - Drug Enforcement Administration
9. Haris Alibasic - City of Grand Rapids

Voting Members Absent:

1. Tim Doyle - Kent County Prosecutor's Office
2. Marian Barrera-Young - Baxter Neighborhood Association
3. Pamela Benjamin - Eastown Community Association
4. Kaye Hooker - U.S. Attorney's Office

Non-Voting Regular Attendees and Guests Present

1. Debra Ross - Grand Valley State University
2. Kristine Jaros - Central City Weed and Seed Site Director
3. Aaron Stevens - Grand Rapids Police Department Community Officer
4. Paul Haan - Healthy Homes Coalition of West Michigan
5. Daniel Snyder - Drug Enforcement Administration

**I. Call To Order/Introductions**

The meeting was called to order at 11:09 am by Co-Chair Capt. Eric Payne. Members introduced themselves and a quorum was present.

**II. Approval of Agenda**

Scott Vogel made a motion to pass the agenda which was seconded by Kathryn Caliendo. The motion was passed and the agenda was approved.

**III. Approval of May 28, 2009 minutes**

A motion was made by Kathryn Caliendo to approve the minutes of the April 30, 2009 meeting. Dr. Ross stated that the report regarding the site of the Anti-Gang- related convention was incorrect and that it would be held in Tampa, Florida. With this correction the minutes were seconded by Scott Vogel. The minutes were approved.

**IV. Paul Haan: Executive Director, Healthy Homes Coalition of West Michigan**

Paul Haan presented information about how the agency operates. Located at 750 Franklin St. S.E., it serves all of Kent County, including the Weed and Seed areas. He explained why this agency is important to the Weed and Seed neighborhoods. A clinical study on 150 children revealed that as a child is exposed to lead, it correlates with an increase in crime. As the exposure increases, so does the increase in criminal tendencies for that child. The child develops in volatility and impulsivity; simultaneously, the brain begins to lose the rational capability within the child and certain characteristics begin to emerge

and present themselves in behavioral patterns.

From the tested sample of 150 children, 24% of the children had this lead-based behavioral condition. In the Baxter Neighborhood area, 90% of the children were tested, and 1.2% already had lead poisoning. The findings in the children from the John Ball Park Neighborhood area and from the East Hills Neighborhood area were higher than those in the Baxter Neighborhood area.

When the program first began, it was concentrated on getting the lead paint out. Other contributing factors were then discovered including the presence of radon and of carbon monoxide which contribute to negative developmental growth in children. Animal allergies and lead dust were also revealed to be causes that needed eradication. Paul Haan stated that on the average lead dust levels that were found in Grand Rapids exceeded by 10 times the level that the U.S. EPA standards allowed as a safe level for children. Paul Haan attributed the identification of hazards to the work done by the CLEARCorps teams that originally began the lead removal process.

Paul Haan discussed the problem of carbon monoxide in the home. The source of the carbon monoxide problem largely lies within the home heating system, causing more than 450 deaths nationwide and 15,200 emergency room visits annually; presenting a cost factor as well as family disruption. In 2008, Healthy Homes Coalition partnered with the Kent County Health Department to place alarms to detect monoxide in 120 homes in Grand Rapids using FEMA funding.

Radon testing is done without cost in homes with young children. Do-It-Yourself testing kits are available for homes without young children at both agencies, according to Paul Haan. Despite a \$5:00 per kit cost, only 1% of homes in the City of Grand Rapids have been radon tested. Radon is credited with being a leading cause of cancers, second only to tobacco-smoking. Even if there is no tobacco smoking with the home, or among family members, radon is the number one risk of lung cancer within the house.

As described by Paul Haan, Healthy Homes works with many partners, and the most important connection is with the families served.

## **V. FY 2009 Budget Reduction**

Dr. Debra Ross reported that the Department of Justice sent information that the 2009 budget would be reduced by \$33,000.00. Thus the Steering Committee needs to consider this reduction.

## **VI. Reports**

### **a. Fiscal Report**

Dr. Debra Ross presented on-screen the current 2009 budget which must be reviewed and reduced.

Following various suggestions and a discussion, the following cuts were made: by the Steering Committee to the FY 2009 budget:

1. Personnel was cut by \$4,572 -- \$1,186 each for Drs Crawley and Ross and \$2,200 for evaluation
2. Travel was cut by \$6,000
3. Supplies was cut by \$125
4. Consultants was cut by \$21,375 -- \$242 for Easttown, \$264 for Neland's Young Men program, \$262 for Neland's School of Hope program, \$9,758 for Jubilee Jobs, \$6,000 for Project C.O.O.L., \$300 for Urban Family Ministries Building Bridges program, \$2,490 for National Night Out and \$2,049 for GRPD overtime

The reason for these selections and reductions included the knowledge that these programs were receiving significant funding from sources other than Weed and Seed. The Steering Committee believed that in addition

to significant funding from other major sources, the "Project Cool" contract serves youth from outside of our funding area.

Dr. Ross announced that according to the mandate in the official Narrative, the Weed monies must be between 50-60% of the budget. The FY2009 ratio is 57% weed and 43% seed.

Haris Alibasic made a motion seconded by Scott Vogel that the revised budget be approved. The motion passed unanimously.

b. Site Director Report (*order reversed from f.*)

Kristine Jaros stated that all the money allocated for FY 2007 has been spent. The money from FY 2008 is being spent and invoiced and will be included in the next Progress Report of the Grand Rapids Central City Weed and Seed. Phil Potter, from the GRPD is assisting with maps and statistics of the Weed and Seed area to assure that compliancy is achieved to the original Narrative.

Kristine distributed copies of an e-mail communication from Georgia Taylor representing Baxter Community Center "Around the Table" program. This program made a request to re-allocate the FY2008 funding for purposes other than those originally granted. The new uses for the allocation would be for (a) children's art project in conjunction with the new community garden across from Joe Taylor Park and (b) for speakers and supplies for classes for "Around The Table." (as originally planned).

A motion was made by Kathryn Caliendo and seconded by Stacey Stout to permit the re-allocation of funding as per request. The motion passed.

c. Weed Report (*order reversed from b*)

Captain Eric Payne introduced Sgt Elliott Bargas who informed the Steering Committee that the first foot patrol would begin first weekend of June. Three curfew sweeps are scheduled for the summer season.

d. Community Meeting Plan (*order reversed from c.*)

Captain Eric Payne said that the community meeting will be held at the annex of Wealthy Street Theatre. There will be a \$25.00/hr rental fee. The tentative date is July 18, 2009. A discussion ensued related to this site. A church in the Weed and Seed area would be cost-free. The committee preferred a "neutral place" for perceived "comfort" of the residents. The committee was to check back to the Theatre on the cost issue.

e. Seed Report - R.A.K. Day (*order reversed from d.*)

The Random Acts of Kindness Day is June 27, 2009 as announced by Aaron Stevens. He anticipated involving all the neighborhood youth in the Weed and Seed area. Each area is encouraged to do a random act of kindness during that day within the area. Youth and their leaders may report to Neland Ave. CR Church to receive a t-shirt and a brief lunch starting at 11:30am.

f. Gang Talk Thursday Up-Date (*order reversed from e.*)

Stacy Stout reported in reference to the anti-gang tele-conference "Civil Injunctions Against Gang Members as a Strategy to Thwart Turf Gangs in Communities," and "A Youth Program Model Used in Providence, Rhode Island To Serve Troubled, Hard-To Serve At-Risk Youth" that more information was requested by Steering Committee members. A letter from James McDougal Deputy City Attorney in Los Angeles addressed several of the fundamental concerns raised by the Steering Committee.

James McDougal, who is a gang prosecutor and has worked for many years in this precise area, noted that "gangsters hate injunctions, civilians love them." He explained that legal challenges to injunctions have been positively resolved and upheld by the state supreme court. He outlined what type of time and expertise are required up-front. The benefits are paying off there at 30-50% reduction in "Part 1 crime," and these benefits "run into the future." He also offered to "assist your local police and prosecutor in analyzing Michigan law with

respect to a potential gang injunction.” Additional information and detail are available as from James Mc Dougal as indicated in the letter.

## **VII. Announcements Up-Dates and Public Comment**

1. Kathryn Caliendo announced that the Wealthy Heights received stimulus money to proceed with the paving and connecting of certain dead-end streets running north off Wealthy Street.
2. On August 4, 2009 “National Night Out” will be observed. A planning meeting will be held at ECA o Thursday, June 11<sup>th</sup> at 9:30am.
3. On Tuesday June 2, 2009 the Domestic Violence Committee will have a meeting at 744 Burton Street to plan for the Fall Domestic Violence Summit.
4. Stacy Stout informed the Steering Committee that she is looking for jobs sites to accommodate 20 students for summer work. The students will be assigned with supervisors.
5. The next meeting is scheduled for Thursday, June 25, 2009 at 11:00.

## **VIII Adjournment**

The meeting was adjourned at 12:37 pm

Respectfully submitted,  
Ray Tromp  
Secretary

**Next Steering Committee Meeting:**  
**THURSDAY**  
**JUNE 25, 2009**  
**11:00 am - 1:00 pm**  
**GVSU Criminal Justice Grants Office**  
**638 West Fulton Street**