

Community Education & Policy Committee Meeting

Minutes: July 20, 2017

Attendance: Zach Alexander (CHIP), Erin Brown (School on Wheels), Megan Henderson (Anthem), Emmy Hildebrand (HVAF), Cheryl Reed (Anthem), Stacy Stuber, Caleb Sutton (CHIP), Jeri Warner (Trusted Mentors), Amanda Wilkerson (Damien Center)

Crisis Communication Plan: Committee members reviewed the draft Emergency/Crisis Communication Plan drafted last month. Amanda explained that the Blue Print Council asked this committee to draft a plan to be better prepared for future homeless camps closing. Jeri suggested adding the faith-based community, along with the PBSO, for improved communication. Caleb shared that Leon met with Rev. Greene to discuss blended outreach efforts. He shared the concerns of the committee with Leon last month and is hopeful there will be continued discussion. Jeri would like to amend the first bullet to better explain need to obtain facts. Caleb would like to add a Goal Statement to define the purpose of the document. Jeri would prefer the goal be something like: Provide framework for response in the event of a crisis (i.e. camp closing). Zach and Amanda also want the goal to ensure uniformity of message. Cheryl would also like to designate a camp resident to have a seat at the table during this process. Zach stressed that improved communication should also include the points of contact at the City. Erin asked if we have anyone from the City that participates with CoC. Caleb responded that Jennie Fults is involved, but she is not usually the one involved in camp closing. Megan suggested perhaps working with the probation department or IMPD, they seem to know in advance camps are closing. Caleb would like to broaden the plan to respond to a variety of crisis situations. Amanda wants to ensure the CoC is more effective in crisis situations. A better functioning CoC reflects well on our community when competing for funding. A crisis plan will help better respond to camp residents and share appropriate information with service providers. We need to define who is responsible in our goal statement, and also determine when the plan takes effect (upon a rumor, official news story, etc).

Emmy suggested the Blueprint Council Chair should establish a relationship with the City so notification is shared from the City. Jeri and Caleb suggested perhaps CHIP could take the lead. Zach added that we may need an ad-hoc committee that contains appropriate point persons from the City and various agencies can be at the table. Amanda asked for a list of committee member positions (not specific names) of who might serve on an ad hoc committee. Zach explained that the charter allows the Blueprint Council to appoint ad-hoc committees. This structure would be similar to the elections committee that reports directly to the Blueprint Council. The ad hoc committee should include all stakeholders and also have the responsibility of directing a response and messaging information to the CoC.

Spirit and Place Event Exhibit Discussion: Zach shared the Spirit and Place ideas that were compiled on the Google document. This 10-day festival hosted by IUPUI and the exhibit will be on display November 3-Thanksgiving. This year's theme is Power. CHIP proposed an exhibit for the festival called Homeless Voices and will reflect the story of being homeless in Indianapolis. It will be at the Tube Factory artspace in Garfield Park. Zach has reached out to Don Sawyer and another videographer to add their talents to exhibits. If anyone has ideas to add please add them to the Google document. If you're interested in helping develop exhibits, CHIP welcomes the assistance. CHIP is also seeking volunteers/agency staff that may be interested in building the exhibits. Organizations should plan to utilize the exhibit space during November. Amanda asked when we should plan to set up. Zach assumes it will be available the last week of Oct/first week of Nov to finish set up. Amanda asked about a budget for exhibits. Zach will be the point person to facilitate funds for exhibit building.

Jeri encouraged Zach to ensure that the exhibits blend well together and tell a full story, so some of the ideas may need editing and implementation assistance. Zach will develop a template to establish a baseline for each exhibit and determine budget information before the next meeting.

Increase Engagement with Homeless/Formerly Homeless: The Executive Committee asked this group to begin determining how to better engage with homeless/formerly homeless members of our community. Jeri suggested providing food and accessible location to encourage participation. Amanda stressed the location must be downtown. The Central Library might a great option. The time of the event is also important, perhaps early evening to accommodate those who work and have other commitments during the day. We should also revisit the structure of CoC meetings to be more participatory. Other thoughts are better advertising and kid-friendly events. Amanda is going to reach out to a group of individuals that are homeless/formerly homeless to ask their thoughts about encouraging participation.

Next meeting will be August 14 from 3-4:30 at HVAF.