

## **Community Education & Policy Committee Meeting**

Minutes: November 13, 2017

**Attendance:** Amanda Wilkerson Damien Center, Megan Henderson Anthem, Emmy Hildebrand HVAF, Zach Alexander CHIP, Erin Brown Schools on Wheels, Antonio Alexander, Melissa Burgess Horizon House, January Jeter Eskenazi, Michael Schwing, Stephanie Fulk VOA

Rev. Alexander asked everyone to review the minutes and welcomed Melissa Burgess from Horizon House to our meetings.

**Sprit & Place Update:** Zach thanked everyone for their participation with exhibits and attendance. There were 600 people in attendance on the opening night of the exhibit (with the other exhibits at Tube Factory). There is a community conversation tomorrow evening from 6:30-8:30 at the Tube Factory. We have 30 RSVPs so far. Andrea will be leading the first hour (zine making) and Zach will informally guide the discussion, but his intent is that participants drive the discussion. The exhibit is open until Saturday.

**Memorial Service Reminder:** Zach emailed earlier today about the upcoming Memorial Service to honor those who died this year. It will be on Thursday, December 21 at 11 at Roberts Park Methodist Church. Please note the venue change to accommodate more attendees. Promotional materials to share with clients and community members will be available soon. There is a luncheon after the service as well. Melissa asked if any candle holders had been solicited yet. Zach explained that if you have client names, please share those with him by December 1. If you're interested in being a candle holder, let him know that as well.

**Increase Engagement with Homeless/Formerly Homeless:** Rev. Alexander reviewed previous discussions about increasing engagement. One idea we discussed was creating a Homeless Advocacy Council so those experiencing homeless have their own forum that we could attend and provide feedback for the rest of the CoC. Michael expressed that he didn't think a camp council would be appropriate. He ran/participated a camp council that was not successful. In his opinion, camp residents want to be heard and also compensated for their effort. In his experience, past participants were compensated \$15 for each monthly meeting they attended. Michael talked with Mary Jones about it, but he was told that compensation could only be made to non-profits not individuals. Rev. Alexander asked when the previous council last met. Michael indicated that 3 members still meet sporadically, but he felt like their feedback was disregarded. If we could provide transportation and stipends, he felt like more individuals would participate. Rev. Alexander added that he felt like we could provide transportation, but stipends might be more difficult. Stephanie asked if we could host events in transitional housing facilities, since those individuals are technically homeless. Rev. Alexander and Amanda indicated the group isn't limited to those living in camps. We want to make it easy to participate. Stephanie also volunteered VOA (pending approval from VOA) to serve as the non-profit to receive the stipends and distribute to participants. Rev. Alexander would be interested in identifying another funder we may be able to bypass some of the old rules. Zach asked if we had specific actions steps. Rev. Alexander responded:

1. We need to determine if we can get a stipend
2. We need to determine if we can provide bus passes for transportation
3. We need to reach out to interested participants (we could enlist the help of groups already doing outreach to various camps for this step)

Michael explained that we need to have a structure in place to be able to invite people to participate. Melissa asked what the previous time commitment was. Michael explained that it was 1 hour, once a month with food provided. However, most participants were only interested in the stipends—not whether or not anything was addressed. Amanda asked if Michael and Danny could meet with her and Rev. Alexander before next month to brainstorm ideas on how to make a council more effective. Michael will email material from the last committee to Zach, and then Rev. Alexander, Amanda, Danny and Michael will meet to develop a structure. Amanda will reach out to United Way on the stipend issue. Erin asked about possible locations. We'll wait on this issue until after the committee structure has been set, but there are several possibilities (VOA, Central Library, allow the stipend grant manager to host).

**Letter to the Editor for Mayor's 400 Challenge:** Rev. Alexander spoke to Gabie Benson in regard to writing a letter to the editor in support of the Mayor's Challenge. He was told that Alan Witchey at CHIP was going to handle this and asked Zach to verify if it happened or will be happening soon. He'd like to make sure statements of support can be issued in a timelier manner and allow this committee to take the lead on marketing the CoC. Melissa asked for clarification on what this letter is? Rev. Alexander explained that it was to support Mayor Hogsett's initiative to providing housing for 400 homeless individuals and offer any assistance as a CoC. Zach asked if we wanted to send it again and what the timeline would be? Amanda indicated that since the Mayor continues to work this issue, a letter will be timely. We can use the letter to provide updates and explain the plan of action that we've seen. Stephanie wants to make sure we include information about how these units will better our community. Our current plan is to check with Alan to see if this has been done and as a committee to plan to draft this in the next few months. Melissa added that we may want to tie this letter to the PIT count.

**NAEH Letter to Congress:** Zach emailed today about NAEH encouraging communities to contact their members of Congress by December 8. If you're interested, let Zach know. Amanda asked what's required, Zach explained it would likely be formatting the letter, adding information about Indianapolis and getting signatures. Zach will contact NAEH and indicate our interest, obtain material and follow up with the committee.

**Blueprint 3.0 update:** Rev. Alexander provided a handout regarding the last Blueprint 3.0 planning retreat and the timeline. If anyone has any ideas they want incorporated into the Blueprint, please funnel them through him. Rev. Alexander explained that our community drafted two previous Blueprints (strategic plans) for how to coordinate and better serve our homeless community. There is another retreat tomorrow and then ongoing dialogue/planning sessions until the plan is finished next year.

**Classification of Veterans:** Emmy explained the eligibility criteria for veterans to receive assistance in designated veteran programs. Veterans must have a discharge of anything except dishonorable and have served at least 1 day on active duty for GPD/SSVF assistance. Veterans will receive a DD-214 to verify active duty service. Zach explained that it is his understanding that through Coordinated Entry DD-214s are being scanned as part of that process. Amanda explained the confusion is whether or not to indicate veteran status for veterans who may not be eligible for veterans programs. She would like to understand why the number of veterans went up on the PIT count and how this committee might help address that issue. Zach would like to partner with the Veterans Task Force to do an education type campaign for our CoC. Emmy will work with the Task Force Co-chair to discuss this and Zach will work with Rachael at CHIP. Rev. Alexander would like to spend the next meeting working on this issue.

**New Business:** Elections are now open. Please vote! Also, we did not receive a nomination for business partner, so if you a potential candidate let Zach know. If you didn't receive an email today, let Zach know so he can get your membership statement on file so you are an eligible voter.