

Easter Group – *Rebirth of Hope*

EIN: 80-0647738

MINUTES

Friday, August 10, 2012, 12:15pm – 1:15pm

St. Peter's See House

1. CALL TO ORDER and ROLL CALL

Present: Mim McConnell, Dorrie Farrell, Judy Ozment, Jack Ozment, Sharon Stitz, Ted Laufenberg, and Mary Wegner

Guests: Ellen Daly, Gwen Lazzarini, Amy Zanuzoski, Michael McGuire, Kathy O'Gara

2. APPROVAL OF AGENDA

The agenda was approved with the addition of a report on Jericho Road (aka A St. House) by Michael McGuire and Amy Zanuzoski from Sitka Counseling and Prevention Services (SCPS).

3. APPROVAL OF MINUTES – 7/6/12 Minutes

Dorrie pointed out that Brock Bauder and not Beau Bauder will be the Boot Auction auctioneer.

Jack moved and Judy seconded to approve the minutes as amended. Motion passed.

4. GUESTS & PUBLIC BUSINESS FROM THE FLOOR – Michael McGuire, Amy Zanuzoski and Kathy O'Gara were welcomed to the meeting.

Jericho Road Report: Michael reported that Jericho Road currently serves three adult males who are chronic inebriates, some of who receive services from SCPS. Without Jericho Road, these individuals would most likely be homeless. Jericho Road was initially started using funds from the Mental Health Trust to serve the chronically inebriate who receive SCPS services. Until recently Jericho Road was funded by a Behavioral Health grant; however, the funding agency ended this relationship, and consequently there is no longer any staff support dedicated to running this facility. Volunteers combined with limited support from SCPS help Jericho Road remain a functional community resource. Housing Jericho Road in the current location is somewhat problematic, and there might be changes in the future regarding the use of this facility. Michael reported that he expects to see Jericho Road continue as is for at least the next 60 days.

Women with Children Treatment Program: Michael reported that SCPS recently received a \$290,000 grant approved by Governor Parnell to upgrade existing facilities so they can more functionally house women in a substance or mental health treatment program who have children. The women would be able to stay in the program for 6-9 months and would receive 24/7 treatment. It is likely that this new program would draw families from around SE Alaska. There is a possibility that the house that currently serves Jericho Road would transition to serve this new program.

Low Intensive Substance Abuse Residential Program for Women: Michael reported that this new program would be similar to Aurora's Watch, and would provide six beds for this purpose.

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Homeless Shelter/ESG Partnership Discussion: Through our conversation with Michael and Amy, we discussed the on-going need for a homeless shelter in Sitka. Easter Group could serve in an advisory role; however, services would need to be provided by professionals in the field. We discussed the possibility of applying for an Emergency Solutions grant (ESG) in partnership with SCPS and the Salvation Army. Michael will look through files at SCPS to see if he can find the previous ESG proposal, and will communicate with Mim regarding the feasibility of discussing this as an option.

FIT Grant Report: The discussion about the ESG possibilities led to a discussion about our request to re-purpose the FIT Grant that the Easter Group received to support start-up funds for a homeless shelter. Ted reported that the FIT Oversight Committee did not approve our request to repurpose the FIT grant funds, as it would make the use significantly different than was originally intended. The money will be returned to the Episcopal Diocese of Alaska, and is no longer available to us, although we could write another FIT grant proposal in the future.

5. **PRESIDENT’S REPORT** – None

6. **VICE-PRESIDENT’S REPORT** – None

7. **TREASURER’S REPORT** - Jack reported that we have \$9,150.32 in our account.

8. **PROJECT REPORTS**

a. **Blessings in a Backpack:** Kathy O’Gara shared information and a flyer (included below) about the Blessings in a Backpack program. This new-to-Sitka program provides food over the weekend to children who are in the Free/Reduced lunch program. The overall goal of the program is to increase the health, test scores, positive behavior, and attention span of elementary-aged students. Kathy’s starting goal for Sitka is to secure funding for 50 students at Keet Gooshi Heen (grades 2-5). The program budgets \$2.10/weekend/child for a total of \$80-\$85/child/year. Kathy reported that Wal-Mart in Juneau has agreed to meet the price point allowed by the program, and she has already secured support from both Keet and the District Office. The national program will send Kathy backpacks for free, although to avoid stigma the food will go home in green plastic grocery bags. The backpacks will be repurposed for use with homeless students in general. The first food bags will go home with students for the weekend beginning September 7th. Individuals and organizations can make donations to the program through the national website if they identify the Sitka program on any donation.

Ted moved and Jack seconded to donate \$1,000 to the Sitka Blessings in a Backpack program. Motion passed unanimously.

b. **Boot Fundraiser:** Dorrie reported that she is delivering the last two pair of white boots immediately after the meeting ends, although Ted reported that he had at least one pair of white boots at his house still available for painting. The auction will be held at the September 15th Farmers Market in an outside tent. Vern Culp will make a sign for the painted boot display at

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Kettleison, which will begin starting the first week of September. Brock will be our auctioneer.

- c. **Homeless Summit/Fall Mini PHC Event - Monday, November 19th:** Ted has agreed to be the lead organizer of the Homeless Summit that will be held in the morning. Nancy Jo has agreed to work with Dorrie on identifying the service providers that would be available during the Fall Mini-PHC Event that will be held in the afternoon. We will hold a worksession in September dedicated to planning for this day.
- d. **Application for 501 (c)(3), Form 1023, status:** Dorrie, Jack, and Mary finalized our application and accompanying documents, and Dorrie worked with both an attorney and an accountant to provide feedback regarding our application. Mim and Dorrie signed the document where needed at the meeting, and Dorrie and Mary will make the few edits necessary to finalize our application. The attorney that reviewed our application did submit a bill for \$300.
- e. **Homeless Shelter:** See GUESTS & PUBLIC BUSINESS FROM THE FLOOR discussion.
- f. **ESG partnership:** See GUESTS & PUBLIC BUSINESS FROM THE FLOOR discussion.

9. NEW PROJECTS and TASKS

- a. **Wells Fargo Grant Application, due August 15:** We do not yet have a project clearly identified nor are we able to meet this looming deadline. We discussed the possibility of applying for a Wells Fargo grant during the February grant window.

10. ADDITIONAL EASTER GROUP BUSINESS and COMMENTS/REPORTS - None

11. SET NEXT MEETING DATE(S) AND AGENDA ITEMS

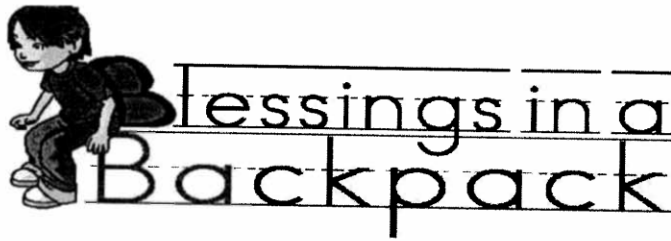
- a. **Friday, September 28th from 12:15-1:15 pm– location TBA:** Homeless Summit/Fall Mini-PHC Worksession
- b. **Friday, October 5th from 12:15-1:15 pm – location TBA:** Regular Easter Group Meeting

12. ADJOURNMENT – *Jack moved and Judy seconded to adjourn the meeting. Motion passed.*

Meeting was adjourned at 1:40 pm.

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Providing Weekend Nourishment To School Children in the Federal Free and Reduced Meal Program

The Program

Blessings in a Backpack is a national program to provide needed food over the weekend to children enrolled in local schools' free lunch programs. A local champion works with the school to identify the needs and the logistics of the program. Once a school is adopted, the Blessings in a Backpack program will provide the framework for implementation and ensure that **100% of all monies raised for a new or existing school program go directly to food purchased for the local schools.**

Sitka is engaged in the initial steps to begin this program. **Our goal is to feed at least 50 children at Keet Gooshi Heen during the school year.** We need to raise approximately \$5,000 in order to meet the anticipated food cost of \$80-\$90 per child for 38 weeks of school. Volunteers will load kid friendly food in anonymous bags each week for distribution each Friday. We may be able to feed more children depending on the amount raised.

The Results: Nourished Kids Ready to Learn

Students who participate in the Blessings in a Backpack program show marked improvement in school attendance, test scores, behavior, and health. Food is an essential building block, and in this case truly is a blessing, especially to a hungry child!

Typical Backpack Food Items

The backpacks include ready-to-eat food items such as granola bars, peanut butter, tuna, crackers, mac & cheese, cereal, 100% juice boxes, etc. Blessings in a Backpack reviews its standard menu with a nutritionist annually to make sure the food is kid-friendly, nutritious, non-perishable and easy-to-prepare. While we will attempt to have the healthiest food possible, please be aware, most of these kids live in a world where some food is better than no food.

How to Help

Sitka's local contact is **Kathy O'Gara @747-8710.** Checks to sponsor one or more children can be made out to "Blessings in a Backpack". It will cost about \$85 to feed one child in Sitka for the entire school year. Please include "Sitka Schools" in the Memo line. Every donation will receive a tax-deductible letter in the mail. Visit the Get Involved section of the website to find out the various ways in which you can help Blessings in a Backpack feed even more children (<http://www.blessingsinabackpack.org/getinvolved>).