

CORD STEERING TEAM MEETING NOTES

March 24, 2009 9 a.m., Room H, Rock County Job Center

Present: Bob Borremans, Gregg Bosak, Sue Conley, Mary Frederick, Lisa Furseth, Bud Gayhart, Gail Graham, Carrie Hermanson, James Otterstein, Mary Penny, Janine Peterson, Josh Smith, Steve Ullrick

Bob apologized as he had another meeting and could only be present for a short time. The group reviewed the March 16 Regional Workshop. James indicated a concern where at some of the tables, the agency representative left after only 15-30 minutes if they weren't busy, not considering some may have wanted to see them but were at another table. Lisa mentioned there were some present, such as a business owner and clergy, wondering how they could take advantage of the agency services. Bob indicated we could still get them and others with similar concerns involved through the follow-up process.

James felt that this Steering Committee could serve as the facilitator to support the process by coordinating development, avoiding duplication, and encouraging collaboration. To be considered in the future—how often do we meet and should others be involved? For now we will continue to meet every two weeks unless it is determined we need to meet more frequently. Also some actions if necessary could be conducted by subgroups.

The group discussed sending a mass e-mail to those participating in the March 16 workshop. Does Larry have any advice or templates/best practices in working with other groups? Bob mentioned there's a phone conference with Larry tomorrow and he'll ask him. We also should ask for any evaluations from the session. Bob also mentioned we have extra CDs that were distributed as a part of the packets. These could be shared with any of those important/critical organizations that were not in attendance.

Josh emphasized that we follow Larry's advice—we encourage attendees to develop short (2-3 page) proposals and get them submitted. However, obtaining legislative backing for those proposals was very important.

Mary P. took over upon Bob's leaving. James felt we had two different situations—one traditional method where grants are seeking funding, but another where there is funding seeking grants. He felt we needed to bring those two together. Lisa indicated her disappointment that HHS was not present and felt their (Community Action) and many others in attendance's needs weren't met. We must find a way to include them. James suggested we connect at the state level first, then progress to the federal level.

It was agreed the next step should be a targeted e-mail to the agencies best suited for HHS funds. The possibility of hosting a workshop at the Job Center was discussed, however, Lisa advised that first we may want to contact the State HHS to see what is available, and if appropriate, indicate they would be invited to attend the workshop to help coordinate efforts. Lisa also said that they (Community Action) have a voice at the HHS state table.

Janine mentioned that she attended a workshop on Friday (March 20) at the Job Center hosted by HHS where a number of topics were covered, such as stimulus dollars, food assistance, housing, community development block grants, expanding economic opportunities, neighborhood stability (foreclosure), Head Start expansion, emergency management (rental

assistance), workforce investment, job training, and green jobs, among others, handled mainly through existing agencies.

Josh indicated we needed to keep track of what's happening and build from the base up, encouraging those interested to send ideas. The committee determined that we send a targeted e-mail communication based on agency strategies. Sue said we needed to foster applications, to be the "hub" and perhaps offer space to meet. James indicated collaboration is the key and ***now is the time to strike!*** There may only be 30-45 days to submit proposals, and those getting there first will have the best chances for success. He also said we can't force them to do anything, but let them know what's available.

Mary P. said the next steps, then, would be to draft a follow-up communiqué, asking for their cooperation, encouraging collaboration, and keeping them informed of what is happening. Mary F. added we also needed to address those organizations that attended but may not have found an appropriate agency for them to meet with. Gregg said we needed to communicate systematically, without too much information in the initial e-mail so as to overwhelm those receiving it. Follow up would be encouraging and prescriptive, but also would emphasize the short timeline.

Sue Conley said they have an upcoming gathering at the So. WI Community Foundation building that will include many organizations that may be interested without the capacity to write grants. They'll be looking for leadership—do we have grant writers available? Bud indicated he was willing to work with Sue to assist. Bob had indicated earlier that the possibility of securing grant writing assistance might exist.

James re-emphasized that we need to get the communication out immediately, as we basically have a 60-day window to get preliminary concepts submitted in order to receive priority placement in the process. It also was emphasized that legislative support was critical. James also added that we can encourage, but the final steps/action was up to each organization.

In the e-mail, included should be the topics of seeking brief proposals (using Larry's format) and seeking collaborations. Mary F. felt that with his experience and expertise, Andy McGrath (BTC) should also be a part of this committee. Sue felt we needed any initial responses to the first e-mail within 10 days (not necessarily the actual grant request, but at least indication they would be interested). The e-mail needs to emphasize the need for urgency to submit proposals.

A Transportation Needs meeting is being held at BTC from 3-5 p.m. on April 2—it may fit with this process.

The meeting adjourned at 10:30 a.m.