

Meeting Notes

Date: 6-16-09, 9 a.m.

Location: Room HS25, University of Wisconsin-Rock County

RE: CORD Steering Committee Meeting

The following CORD Steering Team members and others were present: Bob Borremans (presiding), Gail Graham, Janine Peterson, Jim Stickels, Lisa Furseth, Mary Frederick, Amy Loudenbeck, Bud Gayhart, Sharon Kennedy, Mary Fanning-Penny, Eric Kuznacic, Sue Conley (arrived later), Gregg Bosak (recording) along with Tammie King (Community Action), Terry Nolan (City of Janesville), Kerri Parker (YWCA of Rock County), Theresa Marshall (Janesville Community Day and Night Care), Brad Lichtenstein and Nicole Brown (independent filmmakers), plus *Janesville Gazette* reporter Stacy Vogel

Following introductions, Bob provided background on the advent and functioning of CORD for the new members and guests.

Theresa provided an overview of the Community Day- and Night-Care organization and problems or gaps in existing services. Because many parents are experiencing financial difficulties, their services have been affected. They now close earlier (7 p.m.) than in the past, they have 88 children enrolled compared to 115 last year, and they are cutting back on teachers' hours and positions. They are currently \$3,000 over budget, which is a large amount for a non-profit organization. They had been using reserve funds to assist the very low-income families, but that is gone and many W-2 families can't meet co-payments.

Kerri explained how their before and after-school services at 12 elementary schools have been affected, much in the same way that Theresa's programs have been hit. They have been serving 600 children a year from 400 households, but many families are either dropping out or may choose just a breakfast program or even leave kids unsupervised. Parents are picking up their children earlier after school, grandparents are sometimes picking them up and even making payments, and some have gone from five days a week to one or two. She said they've never had slots open—now they do. That creates severe revenue shortages for them, where staff cuts may need to be made. During January-May of 2009, they are at 87% from last year (600 fewer hours), with December, 2008 experiencing the biggest drop. Also facing increasing state licensing fees, staff cuts are almost inevitable.

Bob asked if there was any assistance the CORD group could provide. He said the finance group could be an example whereby bringing the key organizations together might help to provide possible actions.

Next Tammie and Terry spoke about transportation issues. Tammie updated the group on what the Rock County Transportation Committee was initiating. She explained what "Mobility Management" was, the need and functioning of the Rock County Transportation Coordinating Committee, membership, identified needs and gaps and what might happen next. Gaps included the need for increased evening and weekend transportation, options for low-income employees, and just understanding how to use the system/services. Terry reviewed the survey results from the Beloit-Janesville Express. Like the other committee found, increased Saturday and week night service was desired.

Brad spoke about the documentary project he has going on, highlighting Janesville and its economic problems and how it is striving to overcome those barriers. His purpose is to "put a face" to the documentary by having individuals talk about themselves and how they have overcome the obstacles, helping Janesville to 're-invent' itself and recover. PBS is very interested in the project and may help underwrite a large portion of it through funding by the Corporation for Public Broadcasting. It will be a 'cinema verite' type of documentary, i.e., stories told through the actions and words of people, not narration. He asked the CORD group to consider being involved either through referring persons deemed a logical choice for a subject or being personally involved if asked to participate. Brad can be found on Facebook (be sure to get the correct Brad Lichtenstein), e-mailed at iblich@gmail.com, or 'tweeted' at bradleybar. Some of his works (such as

his documentary on Attica or “Almost Home”) can also be found at 371productions.com or almosthomeoutreach.org or almosthomedoc.org.

Eric reported on the meeting set up to deal with Health and Education issues. Unfortunately, only Eric, Mary Fanning-Penny and Josh Smith were able to attend, but they did develop some plans. They will also involve Karen Cain, Rock County Health Officer, who is very familiar with the issues and is currently working with another committee. She will convene the group. That will help to avoid duplication. They decided to center on health at this time and wait until later in the summer or early fall to involve the educational component.

Lisa updated the group on the capacity building grant situation, with money available through the ARRA (Federal Stimulus). The funds available are for smaller not-for-profits (less than \$1 million) with a \$75,000 grant match necessary, such as from United Way (20% match). They may also involve the Stateline United Way and others. However, this also may all be a moot point as the State is considering applying, which would negate the local efforts.

Lisa spoke about the Mortgage Foreclosure Grant process (which is really a misnomer given their overall efforts). They are now looking at funding opportunities, including ‘The White Paper,’ submitting an unsolicited grant application. One fact Lisa brought up that is astounding is that fully 30% of the foreclosures now are GM workers, and it will probably get worse.

Jim mentioned that he has written a letter of support for Connie Robers and they did submit a grant application.

Bob asked the group whether we should invite Dr. Ed Montgomery, Director of Recovery for Auto Communities and Workers. Bob mentioned that earlier James Otterstein had cautioned that we may want to wait until a more appropriate time. Mary Fanning-Penny had a suggestion that we compile a compelling presentation and the consensus was that we should move now (quickly), especially since we really need to ‘get on the radar screen.’ CEAP/Larry Molnar has indicated they will help us. Bob will work on assembling a committee to work on the process/invitation. He will also take the suggestions made regarding the final draft of the matrix and add in a couple of recent edits and send out the final plan to committee members.

Bob also mentioned that the full CORD Group was desiring information/an update on what is happening, so it may be a good idea to bring together the entire group soon at future meeting.

The meeting ended at 11 a.m.