

IMPACT POVERTY TASK FORCE MEETING MINUTES
May 19, 2011

Members Present: Sherry Anderson, James Berry, Brenda Brown, Olivia Burr, Anitha Davis, Danny Fugate, Randy Greene, Lisa Heine, Deanna Henschel, James Hudson, Patty Mills, Maurie McGarvey, Bill Mogan, Melanie Nunn, Cal Ross, Cintia Sutton, John Williams, Sr., Kristin Williams, Ashley Wright

Members Absent: Gary Adkisson, Glenda Adkisson, Jim Brown, Michael Byers, Bill Evans, Doug Harnice, Jon Hayden, Tina Hayes, Georgann Lookofsky, Chris McNeill, Gerry Montgomery, John Operle, Terri Osucha, Marianne Potina, Stephanie Reese, Charlie Ross, Mark Rowe, Cynthia Sanderson, Rosa Scott, Nancy Waldrop, Gerald Watkins

I. Welcome & Introductions

II. Housekeeping

- a. Because of the light attendance discussion from the Housing portion of the panel will be moved to the next meeting.
- b. Getting Ahead Graduation will be held on June 14th at Broadway United Methodist Church in Igert Hall
- c. Then next full Impact Poverty meeting will be held on June 17th at Broadway United Methodist Church in Igert
- d. Moving forward from our large panel discussions to the smaller group discussions the Getting Ahead Facilitators were asked to address and report back the following issues:
 - i. What concerns do you have as you become a part of the Impact Poverty panel?
 - ii. What do we need to be sensitive to?
 - iii. What is important to you?
- e. Kristin stated she will soon send out a survey to the task force that will help to break down all the information gathered into small topical areas
- f. During the June 17th meeting the investigators will begin participating in the Task Force so this will be a “getting to know you” type meeting
- g. Kristin discussed the Small Groups:
 - i. The small groups will operate independently from the larger task force. There will be a leader for each small group, the United Way staff and others will take notes and help facilitate, also, there will be expectations for what will be reported back and there will be a written process for the groups to follow
 - ii. This is where strategy begins. In the smaller work groups we will go into more depth for your area if necessary bring in the experts we have already heard from to get more in depth information. Bring in any other resources to help your small group
 - iii. Once these groups have completed Ashley and Kristin will synthesize the information into a draft document which will be distributed to the group
 - iv. In September we will then have another large group meeting to create a final draft of our plan
- h. One of the panel members had a concern about the commitment of the task force members and how this might affect the process going forward and the comment was made that it might be time to recommit to the group. Ashley commented that she believes the commitment is still there and there has been communication from most members when not attending the meetings which she felt was a sign of continued interest.

III. Getting Ahead/Community Assessment

- a. Brandi Harless & Melanie Nunn discussed that the Getting Ahead groups were asked to complete the Community Assessment activity to help them in their process of “Getting Ahead” and now is inviting the Impact Poverty Task Force to participate as well in order to help the Task Force to understand what the Getting Ahead participants face on a daily basis. The questions were in the areas of:
 - i. Wages
 - ii. Protection from Predators (i.e.; payday loan businesses, cash advance businesses, used auto dealers, drug dealers, etc.)
 - iii. Job Opportunities
 - iv. Education
 - v. Transportation

- vi. Health & Nutrition
- vii. Leadership
- b. There were several interesting issues to come from this activity:
 - i. The GA investigators were surprised to learn that for a family of three a person has to make \$17.00/hr. to be considered as earning a living wage while to be considered as being at the poverty level a family of three one would be earning \$7.80 or less. It was surprising to them that the poverty level hourly wage is higher than the current minimum wage which is what most of the participants are earning. They are already at a disadvantage.
 - ii. In the area of Education the Getting Ahead Investigators saw the value of being able to take college courses while in high school.
 - iii. In the area of Transportation the IP Task Force felt there are certainly transportation barriers within our community but the Getting Ahead investigators did not think transportation was a hindrance for them.
 - iv. Both the IP Task Force and GA investigators gave the lowest rating to the Leadership in our community.

IV. Basic Needs

- a. Sally Michelson, Community Kitchen – Ms. Michelson commented on the folks coming into the Community Kitchen every day:
 - i. Open five days a week to anyone who is hungry.
 - ii. A lot of elderly folks coming to the kitchen
 - iii. Many people coming to the Kitchen have poor healthcare
 - iv. Lots of young mothers and their children attend every day
 - v. Many are under educated
 - vi. Visitors have no vision/hope for tomorrow
 - vii. Some trends are more disabled people on coming in for lunch
 - viii. The kitchen is a social place for many who come in because they are in the same situation
 - ix. More transients
 - x. More smaller children
 - xi. The Kitchen serves about 150 – 250 per week
 - xii. Eight churches are committed to supporting the Community Kitchen on a regular basis.
- b. Pam Truitt, Family Service Society – Ms. Truitt discussed her agency with the Task Force:
 - i. Provide crisis resources to residents in Paducah-McCracken County such as;
 - 1. Food
 - 2. Clothing
 - 3. Medication
 - 4. Utility Assistance
 - 5. Dental Care
 - 6. Household goods/personal items
 - ii. This community is very giving and responsive.
 - iii. Seeing a lot of homelessness
 - iv. This is not a “one-size-fits-all” problem; there are a variety of people for a variety of reasons visiting the Family Service Society.
 - v. The Family Service Society is now utilizing Charity Tracker which is a web based tracking system that prevents duplication of services, abuse of services and helps to communicate needs between agencies.
 - vi. After a client has been given financial assistance once they are required to take a Money Matters class before they can receive further financial assistance.
 - vii. Ms. Truitt stated that she does see a good deal of clients who are in generational poverty.
 - viii. The elderly population has increased and seeking:
 - 1. Medication assistance
 - 2. Commodity assistance
 - ix. They do have some clientele with mental illness.

- x. Our community lacks mentoring programs
- c. Ashley Wright, United Way of Paducah-McCracken County – Ms. Wright discussed the United Way
 - i. We do have a very generous community.
 - ii. A trend we are seeing is an increase in the number of clients our partner agencies are seeing every year.
 - iii. Two things that came out of our recent community assessment are:
 - 1. The need for more drug treatment programs
 - 2. Lack of mentoring programs in the community
 - iv. In order to combat the lack of mentoring programs the UW started a program called Reading Buddies that matches students with volunteers in the community who meet each week with students and read a book with them helping to develop reading skills as well as serve as a role model to the student.
 - v. There is a large reliance on the social services in our community.
 - vi. Many agencies are experiencing difficulties because of federal funding cuts.
- d. QUESTION - Is Paducah-McCracken county doing more as compared to other like communities; are we doing more, doing less, are more giving, do we offer more social services, is there something you wish we were doing differently?
The panel answered:
 - i. We are doing more than other communities
 - ii. We are a very giving community
 - iii. We do have more social services, but we don't communicate as well as other cities that would reduce duplication of services
 - iv. We don't have the mentoring programs or enough drug rehab facilities
 - v. We should pay more attention to the children in the schools
- e. QUESTION – Are we seeing an influx of low income people coming into our community because the word is out that we are such a giving community? Answers and comments:
 - i. That is the case based on various conversations with clients.
 - ii. We do have people coming to Paducah who are not low income just because they love Paducah
 - iii. People are coming into Paducah because there are not services in the neighboring counties
 - iv. It is nationally known that Paducah is the place to be if you are homeless so we are drawing transients to our community.
 - v. People are coming to Paducah for education
- f. QUESTION – If there is one thing you think we could/should be doing as a community, as it pertains to poverty, what would it be?
 - i. Expand and improve on the existing programs.
 - ii. Work more with children on life skills
 - iii. Creating more mentors

V. Wrap-up and Adjourn

- a. Please do your best to attend the Getting Ahead graduation at Broadway United Methodist church on Tuesday, June 14th from 11:30 – 1 pm.
- b. Next Impact Poverty Meeting will take place at Broadway United Methodist church on Friday, June 17th at 8 am – noon.
- c. Begin preparing yourselves for surveys that will be sent out and for the upcoming small groups by visiting the United Way web site to review previous minutes and other information and review your personal notes