

TASK FORCE FOR CHILDREN IN POVERTY MEETING MINUTES

February 23, 2020

Attendees: Frances Craig, Cary Dahl, Becky Earhart, Chris Earhart, Nancy Headifen, Charlie Huppuch, Linda Owens, John Peterson, Ron Ramsey, Bill Roberson, Peggy Roberson, Brandan Sommerfield, Robyn Sommerfield, Kathleen Wilkers, Sarah Wolf

Devotions by Cary Dahl and Approval of January 2020 Meeting Minutes

I. POTENTIAL PROGRAMS

A. Community Childcare – presented by Linda Owens (Board Member for 3 years and current Board President) (lowen0608@gmail.com)

- 32 Park Boulevard, Staunton
- Background: Established in 1971 by Jane Shields and Elsie Chittum
- Linda volunteers to honor her mother, who worked for Head Start, and Jane and Elsie
- Aims to provide quality, safe, and affordable care
- Organization has a new director (Christa Huffman – background in middle school teaching – EDCommunityChildCare@gmail.com) and is currently in transition
- Provides full time care for ages 2-11 years (5th grade) and serves 50 to 60 kids – currently, there is a waiting list
- 40% receive DSS subsidies; 30% pays on a sliding scale based on financial need; 30% pay full tuition
- No longer part of Head Start
- Receives funding from United Way, CAPSAW, Community Foundation, and Donors
- Those who interact with the kids as a volunteer needs to undergo a background check
- CURRENT NEEDS:
 - o Read stories to children (in small groups)
 - o Clean (spread mulch, clean outside play area)
 - o Clean toys or other areas
 - o Copying, collating, create new binders for teachers with new DSS regulations
 - o Refer new board members or advisors (specifically need people who are grant writers, can provide additional support or can be a contact for emergency facility needs)
 - o Assist with Open House Thursday, April 2, 2020 – celebrate the new director, show outside improvements, help with a station
 - o **CONTACT LINDA IF YOU WOULD LIKE TO VOLUNTEER**

B. Blue Ridge CASA – presented by Frances Craig

- CASA – Court Appointed Special Advocate
- Frances has been a CASA for three years and is on her fourth case

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- Often a child is found to be in home that lacks a certain degree of executive function; CPS is called in and a court summons is issued; the judge in hearing the case may find that the child needs a CASA – whose goal is to keep the family together, when possible, and provide information that will aid in the court making a decision – CASA represents the INTERESTS OF THE CHILD
 - Frances is a CASA and collects and compiles data (medical, school, criminal, counseling, history, family history, etc.), conducts interviews, and does monthly visits with her assigned child to create a monthly report; and then a full report for the judge
 - Six week training (1 day a week for 3-4 hours); and you are assigned a case manager who guides you and oversees the process
 - A CASA does not provide legal advice and consists solely of volunteers
 - **If interested in becoming a CASA, contact JP Berrizbeitia, Executive Director (540) 213-2272 at Blue Ridge CASA**
- C. Shelburne Middle School – Ron Ramsey is working towards getting a request to help ready to go out to the congregations
- D. Building Bridges – David Stahl was unable to make the meeting – hope to have an update for our next meeting
- E. CONSIDER having a Task Force volunteer sign up education day between services or during Happy Half Hour this summer
- II. BUDGET
- \$500 has been assigned to our Task Force from the Outreach surplus budget
 - o \$100 will go towards Project Grows – Cary will receive a receipt or invoice and send to Peggy for reimbursement
 - o \$400 remaining for Task Force specific projects
- III. CURRENT PROGRAMS
- A. Helping Hands
- Contact Sarah Brodie or Cora Leigh Clark if you would like to volunteer
 - Specifically looking for a co-leader to help Cora Leigh with programming
- B. Boys and Girls Club
- First Fridays:
 - o First Fridays in February went very well
 - o Two upcoming dates: March 6, April 3 – let Robyn Sommerfield know if you want to volunteer
 - The Boys and Girls Club of WSA is creating the Community Engagement sub-committee (falling under Finance/Resource Development) to work on parent engagement, community projects, and communications
 - Karen and Janie are planning a Moment for Mission in March
 - Janie brought a group to prepare and serve a healthy snack on Feb. 5 – there was the realization that a child has a peanut allergy and the staff will be posting signs

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in all rooms warning of allergies and there will be binders placed in each room to state which child has what allergy

- Youth summer programming call for volunteers – sheets were passed out for those wishing to sign up to volunteer this summer
- Robyn Sommerfield is running an art program in the morning June 15, 16, and 18 in Staunton; and will run the same program June 22, 23, and 25 in Waynesboro – let her know if you would like to volunteer and help. Current blocks are:
 - o June 15-26 Art, Performing Arts, Music
 - o June 29-July 10 Sports and Nutrition
 - o July 13-July 24 STEM

IV. COVENANT Webpage – send updated articles and information to Linda Foster:

A. <https://www.covenantpresstaunton.org/serve/children-in-poverty-task-force/>

Closing Prayer

FUTURE TASK FORCE MEETING DATE(S): April 26