

Minutes
Bridges Outreach, Inc.
Board of Trustees Meeting
January 19, 2016
Summit First Aid Squad, Summit, NJ

PRESENT: Lois Bhatt, Amanda Parrish Block, Alison Bryant, Michele Damodaran, Coni Frezzo, Laura Zinn Fromm, Coleen McCaffery, Kathy McHale, Jennifer Rooney, Joshua Schor, Victoria Smith, Beth Tulloch, Geoff Worden

ABSENT: Brian Ginsburg, Malcolm Mead, Jon Maslin

Meeting was called to order by Amanda Parrish Block at 7:18 pm.

CONSENT:

Consent Agenda: November 2015 minutes

A motion to approve the Consent Agenda was made by Coni Frezzo and seconded by Victoria Smith. Motion passed unanimously.

EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR'S REPORT:

Lois Bhatt informed that winter goods have been distributed in preparation for cold weather. The Community Holiday Party on December 12 was a successful endeavor. Bridges hosted; several Summit organizations contributed toys, warm clothing and more; and TTH organized games and treats. Newark Museum has offered space at cost for the upcoming art exhibit from the photography project. Currently, the ID program at Project Connect outweighs housing and employment assistance. It will be scaled back to bring the programs into balance.

DEPUTY DIRECTOR'S REPORT:

Beth Tulloch reported that the Annual Appeal brought in 150K. Some income, from online donations through Network for Good and the sale of donated stock, has not yet been posted. The response rate was high, and the appeal generated 20k above last year's appeal. All but two board members contributed, with five contributing 5K or more. We still have a sizeable untagged list.

The volunteer event hosted by Bridges for Martin Luther King was successful. Planning is now underway for BridgeFest, which will take place on Saturday, May 7, 2016 at the Morris Museum. Save-the-date notices will be sent out. ***Sponsors, advertisers for the event journal an auction items are all needed.***

TREASURER'S REPORT

Kathy McHale presented financial information for June 2015 through December 2015. The Annual Appeal generated 30K more than last year and 20k more than budgeted. Payroll expenses are lower than projected due to fewer staff at Project Connect. Program expenses are slightly higher than expected due to graphic design costs associated with the Annual Report. Overall, the budget is close to target on the expense side. A cash flow graph from 2014 to present has been generated to help Bridges manage funds more effectively.

AUDIT COMMITTEE REPORT

Michele Damodaran informed that audit proposal bids have been sent to three firms: ZBT; Nisivocchia; and Morey, Nee, Buck and Oswald. All have significant experience with non-profits. Bridges has been pleased with the services of the current auditor, Jim Wood, and he will be asked to update his fees as well. This process is a periodic review to make sure that our auditing needs are being met most effectively.

STRATEGIC PLANNING:

Coni Frezzo reported that SWOT analysis has been completed for the following committees: Project Connect, Runs and Board Structure. Documents are in Google Docs if board members wish to review them. The Strategic Planning committee will be meeting next week. A draft will be presented to the board in March, and the final version will be presented in May.

BOARD STRUCTURE

Coleen McCaffery outlined board strengths, weaknesses and recommendations generated by the Governance committee.

Strengths:

- Board size is appropriate.
- New "committee structure" provides a good base.
- Management has been strengthened with the addition of a Deputy Executive Director. Staff members are excellent, particularly Dan Rosenhanst and Sakinah Abdul-Hakeem.

Major Weaknesses:

- Board Succession – No methodical recruitment process. No Vice Chair for Board Chair.
- Individual board members may not have considered their own goals within the organization.
- Each board member needs to be cognizant of the expectation of time, talent and treasure.
- There is no orientation for new members.

- Board meetings are spaced too far apart. There is a lack of continuity and no method to address issues that arise in the interim.
- Runs vs. Project Connect – The two need to be intentionally integrated to continue the original outreach and move individuals into PC, where funding is more readily available.
- Bridges has been unable to target Newark supporters.

Minor Weaknesses:

- Board is not engaged enough in Social Media.
- Meeting space is dreary.
- Committees need to be well defined with specific short- and long-term goals. Committees should provide the board with a year-end achievement summary.

Recommendations:

Board

- Development and recruiting – Develop a matrix of current board’s mix of contributions of time, talent and treasure.
- Board members should explore where they best add value to board and Bridges, based on experience, skills and connections.
- Consider conference calls in off-months to ensure continuity and board familiarity.
- Consider a board social event prior to new member appointment.
- Board Chair succession planning – Vice Chair
- Board members need to consider their own goals within the organization.

Staff

- Provide staff development opportunities.
- Develop a stronger internship program with an eye toward staffing hires, developing and adding Newark connections.

Documentation

- Amend bylaws to reflect new mission/vision, homeless representation, new range of number of board members and possibly committee details.

Management

- Create more intentional integration of PC and Runs

Other issues to consider for the future

- Give or get policy
- Nominating committee that meets throughout the year, perhaps as part of Governance
- Information technology assistance via board member or intern
- Term Limits – This may not be appropriate or necessary now, but perhaps each board member should have an annual meeting with the board chair or Governance committee to determine continuing interest.

NEW BUSINESS:

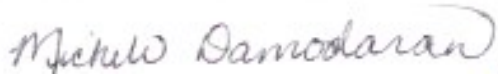
Amanda Parrish Block asked board members for feedback on three prospective board members: Seth Ruderman, Stephen Woitsky and Stephen Fromm. Amanda will email the board soliciting questions and an unofficial vote on whether to move forward. If the board is in favor, a social event or Run will be scheduled to meet prospective members. Additionally, she will request each board member's bio/C.V. to facilitate compilation of the current matrix of skills within the board. Joshua Schor asked that members include their geographical location.

Lois Bhatt noted that Mary Conway, planner for our 2015 Bash, has agreed to plan the 2017 Bash.

Amanda Parrish Block moved to adjourn the meeting. Coleen McCaffery seconded. The meeting was adjourned at 8:48pm.

UPCOMING MEETING DATES:

Monday, March 7
Monday, May 2



Respectfully submitted by Michele Damodaran