

Lancaster Downtowners Steering Committee

May 14, 2007

Minutes

Present: Jim Kalish, Fred Pargeon, Rod Houser, Jane Phillips, Charles Lane, Ken Nissley, Nancy B. Rogers, Mimi Shapiro, Gene Aleci, Lois Good, Michael Sprunger, Rod Houser (facilitator)

Absent: Nancy B. Rogers

1. **April minute review**—No changes to minutes
2. **Review of contacts since last meeting**
 - Jane Phillips reported on a meeting with Alice Yoder of Lancaster General Hospital who set up a meeting for Friday, May 18 with Jeff Eddoros, senior vice president for Senior Services, a newly organized unit of LGH. The purpose of this meeting will be to acquaint Jeff with our program, establish him among our group of consultants and possible set the stage for future funding from LGH.
 - Jim reported on a meeting with Doug Levering of Lancaster County Community Foundation. The sense was that Doug is expecting us to apply for a grant. If we make such application, we will need to work quickly to meet deadlines. Jim also learned that a new pool of money will be available so provide management assistant for non profits. Jim encouraged us to download the application forms from lancastercommunityfoundation.org.
 - Jim and Jane met with Bob Thomas of Tabor Housing to explore possible fiscal sponsorship. Bob is positive toward our mission and asked that we provide evidence of ways that the two organizations, Tabor and Downtowners, could be supportive of each other. Such information would be useful to Bob to take back to Tabor's board for further discussion. If Tabor were to become our fiscal sponsor, they would likely hold about 10% of contributions coming in to us for the administrative services that they would provide.
3. **Lancaster Campaign**—**possibility for fiscal sponsorship**
 - There has been some informal discussion with Sherry Riggs of Lancaster Campaign. Lancaster Campaign could be a more attractive alternative for fiscal sponsorship. They would likely be less expensive. Fred, Jim and Jane will work on scheduling a time to meet with Sherry to establish a relationship with Lancaster Campaign.
4. **Fiscal Sponsorship**—There is agreement that we need more information before taking definitive action on who we should ultimately approach to be our fiscal sponsor. Tabor and Lancaster Campaign are currently on the table as possibilities.
5. **501 (c)**—While we have interest in finding a fiscal sponsor for the short term, we do want to move as quickly as possible to acquire 501 (c) 3 status. Jim will contact attorney Will Campbell about possibility of his working pro bono to help us with this goal. Gene Aleci also suggested Dan Herr and Mike Saladik as possible resources, although not likely available pro bono.
6. **Promotion packet**—Our current draft promotion packet includes:
 - Intro letter to potential donors drafted by Jim Kalish
 - General information page titled What is Lancaster Downtowners?
 - Examples of persons who might be served by Downtowners
 - Work Program Summary
 - Start-up agenda
 - Draft budget
 - Director job descriptionThe group agreed that reviewing these draft documents as a group is far to challenging. Consensus is that Nancy B. Rogers should take the information that we have pulled together so far and rewrite/edit it into a marketing package that could be brought back to the group for approval.
7. **Next meeting**—June 11, 7 p.m.

Recorded by Rod Houser

Addendum: Michael Sprunger joined the group for the first time at this meeting. Upon reflection following the meeting, Michael offered these observations and his personal suggestions of an approach we may want to consider for this stage in our development:

1. **Get under a 501 (c) 3 umbrella so we can accept funds** (not only from foundations, but donors in general). We don't need accounting services or support staff yet. A consultant will provide their own space and can be hired without all the accounting and benefits that come with regular employees.
2. **Get a grant using that 501 (c) 3 to get the money to hire a consultant** (maybe Jessica King, maybe someone else) who will construct a business plan. We spent a lot of time discussing all the elements of a business plan without a lot of direction or information.

3. Decide whether or not to appoint a start-up board and raise money to start the organization.

I don't want to disappoint anyone but this could take a year in itself (with a Fall 2007 mail campaign tossed in). What we have heard so far are great ideas but don't have a good fix on the market. What a start-up plan can tell us is:

- a) How many people might need this service (census data could provide that)
- b) What people will need.
- c) What people are willing to pay.
- d) A trajectory for the introduction and expansion of services, budget for the first few years.
- e) Logical partners.
- f) Governing Structure.

Under this scenario, the current interim board needs only to secure the umbrella, construct and send an RFP for a consultant, review responses and hire consultant, receive and process results, and appoint the next board to follow through. Timetable: 1 year from now to get 1, 2 and 3 done above. The next board will set the timetable for the execution of the plan. If we have these things in place, raising money won't be hard.