

**Lakewood Community Collaboration
Monthly All Partners Meeting Minutes
Wednesday, June 10, 2009**

**Lakewood City Hall
6000 Main Street SW
Lakewood WA**

Call to Order – Co-Chair, Claudia Thomas, called the meeting to order at 9:33 a.m.

Attendance - Approximately 45 representatives from various agencies and organizations were in attendance for the Collaboration Meeting.

Agency Spotlight Presentation:

Janne Hutchins of LASA (Lakewood Area Shelter Association) and Alan Brown from Phoenix Housing Network (PHN) spoke about the programs they currently offer to the Lakewood and greater Pierce County community. Janne Hutchins offered a quick history of LASA and recognized that this year is the 20th anniversary LASA in Lakewood. Alan Brown spoke regarding a collaborative effort between PHN and LASA under a grant received for homeless prevention services from the Federal Government under the American Recovery and Rehabilitation Act. The grant funds will provide relief for families that have been impacted by the recent economic downturn. The funds will provide prevention services to assist individuals currently teetering on the edge of homelessness due to recent changes in their economic conditions.

LASA and PHN applied for the grant collaboratively both through Pierce County and the City of Lakewood. Under the grant, they will provide services to citizens in Lakewood and throughout Pierce County. The City of Tacoma has additional funds to assist residents of Tacoma.

Janne Hutchins stated that the spirit of the grant is to assist those recently affected by the economic downturn; and, as such, these funds will not benefit the more traditional homeless clients served. A family whose primary financial provider recently lost their job and now has a 3-day Pay-or-Vacate notice would potentially qualify for the assistance. Where former assistance was often in a 1-time grant of rental assistance – this grant allows for longer-term assistance and provides for case management services. This allows LASA and PHN to work with the clients to pursue goal development and stability planning. There may be additional training made available in budgeting and finance and/or employment education.

Questions were raised regarding the total population to be served under these funds. LASA will have the capacity to serve approximately 30 families per year under this grant and an additional 14 families will be served by PHN. Alan Brown clarified that LASA and PHN are not the only two agencies who received a grant and that other agencies will be offering similar relief services throughout Pierce County. He explained that the services should begin in October, but could begin as soon as next week.

A question was asked about how much money was received and how much of the funds can be dedicated to administrative costs. Janne Hutchins stated that LASA received \$200,000 to be used over the course of 3 years, and that 2% can be allocated for administrative overhead. As such, she identified this program is not a way for agencies to gain wealth – but instead, the funds empower agencies to better help those they seek to serve.

When asked what the qualifications are for clients seeking relief, Alan Brown explained that the clients must meet the 50% AMI (Area Median Income) threshold, be recently impacted by the economic downturn (such as having incurred a layoff) and must have a 3-day Pay-or-Vacate notice. He explained that this short-term relief has to be proved to have potential of leading the clients served to self-sufficiency, meaning those that receive the funds have to be mostly capable of self-sufficiency but simply in need of assistance to get them over a financial “hump.” Janne Hutchins clarified that the program does not provide mortgage assistance – only rental assistance.

Diane Formoso asked if there are other ways that agencies could support these two programs. Alan Brown explained that he accepts donations of business clothes for their Dress for Success program and that donations of men’s and women’s business clothes could be received at 7050 South “G” Street in Tacoma. Janne Hutchins offered that those in attendance might be able to partner in providing clients that may fit the profile. When asked how many agencies present had clients they felt could be referred – most raised their hands.

Alan Brown supplemented the information presented by identifying the other agencies providing Prevention and Rapid Re-housing services to Pierce County residents (outside Tacoma or Lakewood):

Agency	Project	Type	Awarded
Step by Step Family Support Center	HFF Sure Foundation	Prevention	\$92,100
Catholic Community Services	Phoenix Housing Network/LASA	Prevention	\$232,233
Pierce County Veterans Bureau	Veteran Homeless Prevention Project	Prevention	\$34,330
Salvation Army	HPRP	Prevention	\$256,250
		TOTAL	\$614,913

Agency	Project	Type	Awarded
Helping Hand House	Rapid Re-Housing Program	Rapid Re-Housing	\$279,300
Step by Step Family Support Center	Quick Jumpstart Housing	Rapid Re-Housing	\$92,100
Pierce County Veterans Bureau	Veteran Homeless Re-Housing Project	Rapid Re-Housing	\$23,060
Salvation Army	HPRO	Rapid Re-Housing	\$174,653
		TOTAL	\$569,113

Introductions / Announcements – Andie Gernon had all partners introduce themselves and their organizations, as well as highlight any upcoming events.

Lakewood’s Promise Update

Debbi Saint of the Healthy Start Task Force (HSTF) for Lakewood’s promise explained that the HSTF is a sub-committee of Lakewood’s Promise. This committee reports to the Executive Board and has been meeting for a year. A year ago they formed and sent out invitations to healthcare providers throughout Lakewood and Pierce County to discuss the healthcare needs of youth in Lakewood and Pierce County in response to the third promise to provide a Healthy Start for a Healthy Future. They wanted to look at barriers to youth succeeding in school, and work collaboratively to combat barriers. Participating on this team are Clover Park School District nurses. They offer critical insight into the needs of youth directly in the schools.

The HSTF looks at ways that they can share resources. As such, their first undertaking was to create a more useful resource system by using the current resource guide published by the City of Lakewood and enhancing it to make it more user-friendly and accessible to the community at large. They solicited the assistance of Kurt Sample with the Lakewood Computer Clubhouse to create a website that included an interactive resource guide, community calendar, and informational forum. His team developed a resource guide that is “searchable.” She explained that the guide is only as useful as those who are present in it – and as such she beseeched the agencies present to go in and update their information.

Ms. Saint indicated that another focus of the HSTF is work to combat childhood obesity. While they have access to WIC data that identifies BMI scores for younger children, they are looking to have an additional impact in the schools. They hope to do pilot testing in two schools in Lakewood to identify the percentages of youth struggling with obesity. Additionally, they are interested in understanding how many children in Lakewood do not have access to medical insurance. While children are automatically covered in Washington State (by law), there is an awareness that many children are still not treated and they are hoping to get better insight into why and how to combat this.

Debbi gave an example of how the Collaboration creates successful change in our community. Four years ago Diane Formoso approached Debbi and Franciscan and alerted them to the high percentage of children that were denied admission to school due to the fact that their immunizations were not up-to-date. She explained that today (Sept. 9th) is the 4th anniversary of the Children's Immunization actually being in the school opening day to work with children immediately (day 1) to get their shots updated. There are 3 nurses there today. Additionally, they are there the day before school begins and this year gave 140 shots the day before school and estimate giving an additional 200 today.

June 2009 Survey Overview

Claudia Thomas highlighted the results of the June 2008 Collaboration survey and sought clarification on specific questions. For instance, 57% said that they wanted to meet at City Hall. She asked if it was okay to meet at the church from time-to-time as well. While several agreed it would be okay, the consensus was to have the meeting located in one place for consistency.

Claudia then asked if the meetings should be shorter or every-other-month. There was overwhelming consensus against both items with the majority agreeing to keep the meetings monthly and a duration of 2 hours. Comments were that this allows agencies to participate most of the time but not feel bad if they miss an occasional meeting. Ellie Wilson stated that meeting once a month is necessary to allow for continuity and true collaboration. Diane Formoso said that one of the most important things is communication and that meeting monthly facilitates this.

Ms. Thomas asked if those present like the change in format having the large group breakout into two groups. There was an overwhelming majority that indicated that they liked meeting separately. Some commented that the church offered round tables which were nice for discussion, but that things were also confusing in that environment.

Several participants indicated that they liked the Agency Spotlight and felt that there would be a great advantage to increasing the time spent on agency spotlights and maybe increasing it to 2 or 3 agencies a month. Networking time was also highlighted as being an important element of the Collaboration. In addition, the following items were mentioned:

1. Hearing success stories from organizations of effective efforts birthed through Collaboration or in general.
2. Strategies on engaging parents and activities agencies are doing to increase these efforts. Strategies on more effective parenting.
3. Having representatives of AmeriCorps coming to speak about volunteer opportunities and working to encourage the City of Lakewood to have their own AmeriCorps volunteer.
4. Discuss minor transitional housing. A need for teenagers (after 18) to have a place to go.
5. How to develop true collaboration in grant application processes. Many grants are seeking true collaborative efforts. Andie Gernon and Claudia Thomas felt that they could offer a presentation on the steps they took to build this Collaboration.
6. Use announcements to expand efforts of agencies. Increase networking outside of Collaboration.
7. Expand awareness of Veterans services that are available.
8. Increase awareness of youth services outreach (including after-school programming).

Adjournment – Claudia Thomas thanked everyone for their active participation and adjourned the meeting for networking at 11:24 a.m.

Next Meeting – The next meeting is scheduled for October 14, 2009, at 9:30 a.m. at Lakewood City Hall.