

Bridges to Progress Steering Committee Meeting October 31, 2018

Present: Owen Cardwell, Lindsey Cawood, Keith Cook, MaryJane Dolan, Shawne Farmer, Joan Foster, John Hughes, LuAnn Hunt, JoAnn Martin, Joan Phelps, Ruth Talian, and Veronica Washington

Media - JoAnne Martin/Director of Communications & Marketing/City of Lynchburg

The media is very interested in Bridges to Progress. A city rule states if there is more than two council members present at a meeting, media has to be invited. In general practice, any city chartered board has media involvement. B2P is not strictly a City initiative but if B2P has City involvement, general best practice is to include the media. She suggested we decide upon a spokesperson. We also need to develop our purpose and what we want to accomplish and how. JoAnn suggested we conclude each meeting with a discussion about our message (talking points) so that we are all communicating the same thing if approached by the media for a comment. The media's job is to report, and they can be our friend. It is important to be accessible and cordial. Luann will take any photographs, and C&M has a terrific graphic designer that can design a logo. C&M will also maintain the B2P website with input from Steering Committee. When C&M does a press release, it is distributed to about 6,000 people using email, websites, and Lynchburg alerts. JoAnn distributed a handout of do's and don'ts for media communication. Included in the handout points: Don't say 'off the record'; feel free to correct facts (previous experience has shown that the media is very receptive to being corrected); don't feel compelled to fill in empty air (silence) on camera.

After discussion, the group decided we would use the offered City resources. A motion was made by Lindsey Cawood to allow the media access to our meetings. Motioned seconded by Joan Foster and was passed. A regular meeting date of the 4th Wednesday of each month at 2:00 PM at Human Services in 5th floor training room will be communicated with the media through JoAnn.

Communication Plan: Following discussion, Dr. Cardwell made a motion that the Executive Committee will serve as the Communications Committee. Motion seconded and passed.

Procedures are:

- The Executive Committee will be responsible for drafting press releases with approval from the Steering Committee.
- If a press release is drafted outside of a meeting, the draft will be emailed to the committee members who will have 24 hours to respond with edits. No reply equates approval.
- Once approved, the press release will be sent to JoAnn Martin for vetting. JoAnn will contact the Chair (Joan Phelps) if she has questions or issues with the information.
- The Steering Committee Chair will be the B2P spokesperson.
- Requests for a Bridges to Progress sponsored email distribution (using Ruth's email list) must have prior approval by Executive Committee.
- Regular requests (i.e. announcements about drives or requests for help) can go out without Executive Committee approval.

Action item for committee members:

Go to www.lyncburgva.gov website to view Bridges to Progress page and Bridges of Central Virginia page and bring feedback to the next meeting for planning the newly merged website. What is our message?

Executive Steering Committee: Executive Committee membership composition comments prompted Joan Phelps as Chair to revisit the selection of the Executive Committee at the October 15 meeting. A desire was expressed by members to have a representative from the Poverty to Progress initiative serve on the Executive Committee. Dr. Cardwell was nominated to serve as co-vice chair with Lindsey Cawood. Dr. Cardwell accepted the nomination and was approved by the group.

Decision Making: The committee will make decisions by consensus. If we can reach a consensus, the decision will go to a vote. In the event of a tie, the decision will be revisited by the committee until a consensus can be reached. Decision making outside a meeting will be conducted via email with a 48 hour response time for members to agree/disagree.

Terms of Services: The committee decided to delay a decision about terms of service to a later date.

Dr. Cardwell requested we change the word **subcommittee** to **task force** in our organizational chart. The committee agreed to the change.

Role of Assistant City Manager: The Assistant City Manager will provide support to the committee but will not have a vote. He is to be resource for us and report to city manager. He will attend the monthly Steering Committee meetings as he is able.

Next meeting: Wednesday, November 28, 2018, at 2:00 PM at Human Services in the 5th floor training room.

Meeting adjourned.