

**Weed & Seed A.I.D. Team  
3/16/09 Meeting  
Minutes**

**Attending:** Mayor John Thompson, Trooper Brian Arrington and Trooper Robin Mungo (PA State Police), Elaine Burns (PA Weed and Seed Site Liaison), Stephen Chatman (Erie AID Coordinator), Ophelia Coleman (Chief-Wilkesburg Police Department), Melanie Hall (Operations Manager, DPW and Code Enforcement), Gregg Bowers (Western PA School for the Deaf), Bernadette Turner and Fran Carter (Addison Behavioral Care), Anita McKeithen and Ann Grieder (Wilkesburg Community Ministry), Marla Marcinko (Borough Manager), Bea Webb (Boys and Girls Club), Reverend Linda Law (Board Member WCDC), Reverend Richard Payne (Wilkesburg Ministerial Association), Jason Cohn (Council member), George Spencer (GPA Mad Dads), Marty Seltman (Metro Family Practice), Loretta Rose (NNSI), Representative Joseph Preston (PA House of Representatives), Nancy Chalfant-Walker (St. Stephen's Church), Superintendent Archie Perrin (Wilkesburg School District), Eugenia Moore (Borough Council President), Marcy Morse (PHDA, Inc.), Reverend David Keller (So. Avenue United Methodist Church), Eric Johnson (Wilkesburg Resident), Vanessa McCarthy-Johnson (Council member), Greg Whitted (PDHA, Inc.), Tracey Evans (Council member and Rep. Preston's office), Barbara Witherspoon (Grandparents Raising Grandchildren), Josie Bryant (St. James School, Gail Mitchell Hall, (Interim Weed & Seed Administrator), Winford Craig (Urban League of Pittsburgh and AID Team Chair).

**Call to Order**

Mayor Thompson called the meeting to order at approximately 1:00 PM. Rev. Payne provided prayer.

**Discussion:**

Mr. Stephen Chatman, Erie, PA Weed & Seed AID Coordinator, provided a list of requirements for applying for W/S Grant funds for program year 2009-2010 year and that applications will now be evaluated on a competitive basis for the first time. It is no longer an entitlement program.

He further indicated that the first thing to be done is completion of the revitalization plan which should address all four key federal components and include outcomes. Mr. Chatman stressed and clarified the definition of A.I.D. as Agencies In Delegation meaning that agencies work together with the residents to get things done. The Community Profile needs to be completed and submitted with the grant application no later than April 10, 2009.

State Rep. Preston inquired as to when Erie started putting their application together. Mr. Chatman responded that it was in 2006. He further indicated that the State is looking for each site to leverage additional dollars toward programs in order to ensure that the program may be sustained after 2014 at which time the Weed & Seed program funding is scheduled to expire. He then noted the lack of neighborhood restoration that has taken place in Wilkesburg and cited the

dilapidated building right across the street from the Hosanna House. Mr. Chatman reiterated next steps which must occur immediately: Memorandums of Understanding, Letters of Support, preparation/completion of the Revitalization Plan and preparation/completion of the Site Profile.

Mayor Thompson commented that he would like to see new agencies involved in the W/S process. Mr. Chatman commented that the development of sustainable collaborations and affiliations is imperative to the success of any program. Mr. Chatman stated that the voting committee members in Erie are selected by election. Anyone is welcome to attend and participate in the meetings but only certain members have voting rights. Mr. Chatman commented that this structure was employed as there had previously been a lack of communication between the AID Team and the City.

Barbara Witherspoon inquired about the hiring of the interim administrator. Mayor Thompson commented that he had the ability to put together a core group of people with an understanding of program requirements and solicited the assistance of those people in participating on the Committee in order to be in a position to ensure the timely submission of the grant application.

Mayor Thompson identified the interim voting members of the AID Team as follows: Mayor John Thompson, Chief of Police, Ophelia Coleman, State Trooper , Brian Arrington, Rev. Richard Payne (Faith-Based), Josie Bryant (Community-Based), and residents Linda Law, George Spencer and Owen McAfee.

On motion by George Spencer, second by Josie Bryant, Winford Craig was nominated to chair the AID Team Committee. All members voted in favor of the motion. Motion carried.

Gail Mitchell Hall distributed literature to the voting members of the Committee, which a summary of first and second quarter grant expenditures.

Mayor Thompson turned the meeting over to the Chairperson, Winford Craig.

Mr. Craig thanked the Committee for the opportunity to serve as Chairperson.

The next item on the agenda was the Program Modification Request to reallocate monies from programs no longer financially supported by the State to costs for interim administration.

Mayor Thompson advised that the State provided specific direction that it would no longer fund NNSI and WPAL which necessitated a reallocation of those funds.

A motion was made by Rev. Payne, second by Ms. Law, approving the reallocation of program funds from NNSI and WPAL to interim administration.

George Spencer questioned the salary for the Interim Administrator and Ms. Marcinko responded that it is \$30.00 per hour. Ms. Witherspoon questioned the role of the Interim Administrator and Ms. Marcinko responded that the administrator is to perform all administrative duties to ensure compliance with program requirements and guidelines as well as

to facilitate the development of the 2009-2010 grant application which includes the Revitalization Plan and Community Profile.

Loretta Rose inquired about an additional \$10,000 to be reallocated. The Mayor responded that the only thing the Committee is voting on is the reallocation of funds from NNSI and WPAL to interim administration.

A vote was taken and all voting members voted in favor of the motion. Motion carried.

Mr. Craig inquired if an Interim Administrator had been selected. Ms. Marcinko introduced Ms. Gail Mitchell Hall. Ms. Hall shared her background with the Committee.

Mr. Craig asked Ms. Marcinko to address the issue relating to remaining funds under the Quality of Life Grant. Ms. Marcinko advised that the State has requested the remaining program funds be reviewed to determine if additional reallocation needs to be made. Certain costs will now be avoided through the end of the year, specifically, salary and benefits costs for the AID Team Coordinator. Ms. Marcinko advised that if it is the intention of the Committee to move forward with the 2009-2010 application, that the Committee should consider an expansion of programs already being funded.

Ms. Mitchell-Hall distributed the Memorandums of Understanding to all of the voting members which outlined their roles and responsibilities on the Committee. It was requested that all voting members sign the MOU and return to Ms. Mitchell Hall no later than Monday, March 30, 2009.

Ms. Bryant requested to receive a copy of the original grant application. Ms. Marcinko advised that all background information would be provided to all voting members prior to the next meeting.

Mr. Craig advised that there will be a number of emergency meetings scheduled over the next several weeks in order to take the required action for submission of a grant application.

Elaine Burns (Site Liaison) stressed the fact that this program must take a new direction. The purpose in the State making funding competitive is to discontinue funding unproductive sites and to bring new sites on. She further stated that the State is now contracting with municipalities as opposed to non-profits and that everything must go through the municipality. Ms. Burns also stated that sites may take a moratorium for program funding and still receive funding for a site coordinator and law enforcement coordinator. Ms. Burns congratulated the Committee on their new approach to this process.

Mr. Chatman commented that the Erie site had more challenges when he stepped in there and that there is hope for the Wilksburg site. Mr. Chatman commented that the site liaisons will no longer be participating in the application review process.

Mayor Thompson commented that everyone is welcome and encouraged to continue to participate.

Marty Seltman inquired if letters of support were needed now. The Mayor responded affirmatively and Ms. Mitchell Hall provided her contact information.

State Representative Preston then stated his appreciation to Ms. Mitchell Hall for taking a leadership role. He then explained his involvement in Weed and Seed and encouraged everyone to work together to retain this important funding source. He commented that the Committee will need to hire a full-time Coordinator and that individual would work for the State and the Borough.

Ms. Mitchell Hall advised that she would email dates and times of the upcoming meetings.

Being no further business, the Mayor adjourned the meeting at approximately 1:15 PM.

Pastor Nancy offered a prayer to close the meeting.

Respectfully submitted,

  
Gail Mitchell Hall, Interim Administrator