

Hope Coalition Meeting
January 8, 2024- 6PM
Seventh Day Adventist Church
297 Vine Street
Berlin VT

Meeting Called to order at 6pm

Signed in at attending- Dan Moline, Jon Kilian, Pat Archambeault, Mary Magness-Sheaffer, Timothy Sheaffer, Pastor David Arruda URMCC, Jacqueline Blowe-FEMA, Liz McDevitt-UMCOR, Ty Roland, Daniel Schmidt- Legal Aid, Cathay Chartier, Rich Curtis, Renee Gregory,- FEMA, Yvette Alvarado- FEMA, Tom Ferguson, Beth Mueller, Julie Marshall-Legal Aid, Josh Fortier

OLD BUSINESS - Number of Cases- 28239 , 184 completed, 22 homes currently under rebuild, 89 currently completed, 5 under assessment, 54 transferred to other LTRGs
\$760,000 worth of goods and equipments donated
\$400,000 distributed to flood victims at this time

FEMA map has changed we now cover 21 Towns

Emails were sent out to HomeOwners on January 5,2024- with contact information and links to "Help request: , Legal Aid Request" "Rebuild Request" and "Remove me from List" request.

SANTA SAYS SORRY- Dec 16th - Successful event. In conjunction with Connecting Hope gifts were chosen by flood impacted families that attended and wrapped while the families feasted on a holiday dinner. Prior to the gift event there was a public event with games , bouncy house, crafts, live Nativity, Hope Coalition Information table, Santa photo opt with gift stockings for the kids.Many volunteers contributed to the success of this event.

CAPSTONE update- Still working on filling all the potential openings. Hope Coalition will be assigned one Case Manager who will be on-site. The goal is to have 5 additional Case Managers hired and trained. Also 1 Construction Supervisor, 1 Data Manager, 1 Program Manager. The projected date to have a Case Manager on-site is early February.

MONEY MATTERS- We now have an account with Community National Bank.
We received a grant of \$100,000 from VT Community Foundation for operational expenses.
We received a grant of \$10,000 from Catholic Charities for flood victim relief
We received other gifts of \$5,300 miscellaneous gifts to be used as needed for materials and relief

Jon Kilian will be setting up an UNMET NEEDS TABLE and lining up donors.

This is after all other avenues of funding have been exhausted. It is an anonymous submission for essential needs of flood victims to move towards recovery.

Last Option is Vermont Disaster Recovery Fund- This has a \$25,000 limit and is used after UNMET NEEDS option has been utilized.

Liz McDevitt asked what has been the average cost to date for repair of homes. Dan said that we have been dealing with the most pressing needs, but also the easiest to fix and get people back in their homes. The average cost without major damage has been \$3-5,000 .

We are aware of 14 homes that still have no heat. Efficiency VT offers up to \$10,000 per home for heating units.

Contractors from out of state are being given 12 week provisional licenses to help complete work. Ty Roland said the normal 90 days to qualify for paperwork procession with EFFICIENCY VERMONT has been streamlined for out-of-state volunteer contractors for about 2 weeks.

100 homes in BARRE alone have received letters of Substantial Damage. Only 20 of these homes are on the Buyout list. Raising homes may be up to \$50,000 and raising utilities another \$20,000- this is with monies from FEMA and the state. 140 homes where there will not be enough funding available are already projected. Buyouts- if and when they happen will probably take 2-3 years minimum.

Small business loans could cover up to \$200,000 or up to \$50,000 for contents. These loan requests would have to have been initiated already.

Thermometers- No progress made on this. Anyone with skills to take this on please contact us through the web site.

Web Site Development- Upgrades are coming

Volunteer Teams Coming

Team Rubicon- Jan 13- 2-3 Homes

Centerpoint Church 26-27Jan- 1-2 homes

Dan introduced Tim and Mary Sheaffer- Mission Rebuilt Team-plans to join us in the spring United Methodist plan to coordinate relief teams per Pastor Arruda

NEW BUSINESS

Julie Marshall of Vermont Legal Services spoke and Daniel Schmidt introduced himself. They are available to flood victims for assistance with FEMA, Insurance claims, Unemployment, renter issues, auto, accommodations and other legal advice. Contact Information: Vermont Legal Aid Flood Damage Hotline-800-889-2047 press option 4 for flood-related hotline.

Tom Ferguston asked about heat. Was there anything that we could do to help people who don't have heat right now? Dan said that we do have electric heaters to provide as back up, and we are checking homes that have kerosene and other types of heaters that need CO2 monitors to make sure people have them and are using them.

Ty said getting people full heating systems can run anywhere from \$10-40,000 depending on the systems, the home and the individual's situation. Their ability to fund some of the cost may depend on their credit score, their age, their employment status and other factors. Down the road these may be families that will need to be addressed at the UNMET Needs table. At this time between programs, FEMA fundings and client funding the needs have been met.

We do still have 5-6 homes still out for assessment and will probably have more as the email responses come back from last week. The plan is to purchase heating equipment on a rolling fund where the client signs over the payment to the contractor and it goes back to "pay it forward" for new equipment for people who might be unable to pay. Keep in mind this only works with our volunteer mission teams- not the general public contractors.

UMCOM gave a concise report. They work with conferences around 5 states in the regions. They see where people are in the recovery process and try to assist with the next steps- since they have walked through them with groups in other geographical areas and other disasters. The United Methodist can step in- without duplication of effort with volunteers, construction knowledge and training, and sometimes funding. Keep in mind the equitable distribution of funds does not always mean equal distribution of funds.

Pastor Arruda said he is learning all the time-trying to figure out how to have the greatest impact with the limited resources that are available. He and Liz McDevitt will meet with the Bishop Jan 10th to make recommendations based on their site visit.

The minutes will now be made available on the website only.

The next meeting -and those going forward is the first Monday of the month- February 5th, 2024 at the Seventh Day Adventist Church at 6pm.