

Minutes October 18, 2023 Hope Coalition
Seventh Day Adventist Church, Vine Street Berlin

Attending, Dan Molind, Pat Archambeault, Ashley Warman, Jody Paige, Pete Baez, Gary Watson, Jon Kilian, Ty Rolland, Cathay Chartier, Dan LeBlanc, Kevin Paige, David Murphy

Meeting Called to order 7pm

Old Business-Review of ongoing projects and updates

- 1- Minutes and by-laws will be available on the web site
- 2- A number of teams have already reported and completed some projects-others in progress.
- 3- Capstone has received a statewide contract for case management. Hope Coalition plans to have an additional case manager to handle specific needs of our clients. Their work will dovetail with the Capstone work to connect people with the greatest number of available services.
4. The state is looking at appointing (3) construction supervisors and (10) case managers for the state. (?numbers and distribution uncertain at this time)
5. Barre Up group met earlier this evening. Main discussion point was insufficient housing available for those who will be unable to stay in their home due to lack of heat/and or electricity or basic insulation during the upcoming winter.
6. Conclusion-not enough physical space for rapid re-housing available. How to prioritize, work vs. rehoming victims. Dan pointed out a 2 prong approach might be best. In the long term low income housing has always been a problem in Central Vermont and will need to be addressed.
7. Examples of problems with permits being issued have been experienced by Mosaic and also stories shared of new ordinances making it difficult and sometimes financially impossible for people to meet the new requirements set out by some of the towns. Ty pointed out that some of the permits seem to be held up because those issuing them do not understand the new construction requirements, or in some cases the physical situation of the flood victims.
8. There was an LTRG statewide meeting on Monday with 10 groups participating. More groups may be added to this list. At this time Hope Coalition is the most advanced in terms of organization and “boots on the ground” action.
9. Dan commended Don LeBlanc and his team for the great job at the Thrift Store as 10 percent of the product has already been distributed to those in need.
10. Cathy Molind was on-site at Hope Coalition Vine Street today and met people who had driven in from Chittenden and Addison for assistance.
11. There is still some confusion on the location. People are getting directed to Vine Street Barre not Vine Street Berlin. Don said a banner and signs have already been ordered to make the sight more visible. They will be put up on the Rte 302 at the entrance to Vine Street and on the campus to direct people to the Thrift Store.
12. Mention the signage at Enough still had an old meeting date posted. Change to November meeting date and correct address for 297 Vine Street. Dan said he would correct this.
13. Ty returned to the permit concern and said maybe selectmen should be contacted for assistance. He was going to look into a couple of the specific permit issues to see if they could be resolved.

14. Tomorrow- 19 Oct a team from MA will arrive for 9 days. On the 23rd an additional team of 20 people will arrive from SC to assist. There is also an Americorp team scheduled to go to the Riverton site to complete work there.

15. A list of 100 severely impacted homes has been made up by the state with information compiled from FEMA and investigations by the state. We have requested a copy of the list for homes in our target area. Most of the homes are in the Barre- Montpelier area. As the days get shorter and the weather colder there will need to be clear discussions on how much can be done to complete homes to the point families can safely inhabit them over the winter. If the homes can not be made habitable before winter can they be made stable for work in the spring of summer of 2024?

16. No movement at this time on additional funding. Dan has been looking for someone to write grants. Generally grant writers are paid a percentage of the grant. This is negotiated prior to hiring so the person is paid only if funds are obtained through their efforts.

This completed a review of Old Business.

New Business

1. Hardwick voted to go with Lamoille LTRG. Dan asked if it was known if Walden, Peacham, Danville, or other towns might also be included. Dawn said they might , but at this time only Hardwick had voted as a town to definitively work with the Lamoille LTRG.
2. Dan has been in discussion with Barre and there may be another LTRG forming with Resource. At this point they are not organized. Dawn suggested we keep moving forward with the Hope Coalition and keep our focus and let other groups develop.
3. . Building/Rebuilding- people have asked about “joining” teams that come in to work, but they don’t always know where and when they will be here. Dan said this is true, however there are reasons for this. One- the process of assigning residences to work on is fluid as the home needs to be at a point where our help is needed and effective and permits are in place. Two- some teams don’t want to work with other teams. They travel and work together and already have a cohesive group that functions well. Dan suggested if there are individuals in the area that wanted to join in on weekends to assist groups they form a “locals group” This could be a rotating group that works one or two weekends a month with people from local church and community groups and individuals who wanted to participate. It would build a stronger community and get to know our own neighbors better.

At this time due to the limited number of volunteers available it is better to serve as hosts to the incoming group and facilitate their stay and work so they can focus on the task. We have already had some groups who said they plan to come back and work again. Groups from the local region tend to just come for the weekend. This can be a prime time since it means they often can meet with, and work with the homeowner to accomplish the needed work. Many of these homeowners have been living in homes that are flood damaged while trying to hold down jobs and work on the residences on the weekends. The boost of a team coming in to help them is tremendous.

4. Cathy Chartier said her nephew wanted to come with some friends and help. It may be that local volunteers are burnt out, however there are people who want to still be involved.
5. 100 in 100 days- Are we doing the work or are the in-coming teams doing all the construction work? Dan- at this time due to the limited number of volunteers this is the best use of our resources. To host and manage the groups that are coming in to work. There is fatigue within the local volunteer community.
6. Dan asked if there was anyone willing to be a Volunteer Coordinator. To gather names, what people want to be doing, tasks, timing- and match up for optimal use. This is a position that would be really useful moving forward.
7. When and where can people donate? Dan- People can donate through the web-site.
8. Promo Video- Is there one available? Dan-a video has already been taken- it is in editing. When available it will be on the web-site and can be used for distribution. Future videos could include the Thrift Store, a construction site. etc. Please coordinate ideas with the Executive Council before putting out any promotional information to the public.
9. Assessment Process 3 months post flood is difficult. Some homes are still waiting for electricians and are not always "ready" for the insulation and closing up the wall process. We may find that we will have a 1-2 step process due to lack of skilled/licensed trades being available. Ty noted the cities, towns, and the state need to recognize that permits need to be expedited and the reality of individual situations should be taken into consideration to get people back into their homes.
10. Barre Up will be referring cases to Hope Coalition. They are not ready to move forward with a rebuild at this time.
11. Can we get the names of those people who filed with FEMA for assistance to check with them to see if they have been helped? Dan- The state is holding the information. Due to privacy issues we have to wait for the state to release the list as it becomes available we will contact those listed who have not already contacted Hope through our web site or other channels.

No other business.

Don Leblanc made a motion to adjoin Jody Paige seconded- All in favor.

Meeting Adjourned 758 pm

Regular meetings 1st Wednesday of the month
November 1st, 2023 7pm
Seventh Day Adventist Church
297 Vine Street
Berlin Vt