

Development Committee Agenda

Tuesday, April 3, 2021

4 pm, via Zoom and in-person

Attendees: Natalie Y, Jackie K, Kitty, Sara Q, Gary R. Scott D., Eliza S., Jane C., Jeff R., Rachel E., Peter W., Kerrie G., Debbie W.,

Review of 2020/2021 Development Budget to date – please see attached report

Annual giving budgeted was budget for \$275,000 and we are at \$216,000. Based on pledges and donors who have not yet renewed, Sara is confident that we will hit meet this budget expectation.

Restricted giving was budgeted at \$200,000 and we have already exceeded that number, with another 40-50k worth of requests pending. 90% of the time this is for financial aid.

Holiday Market met it's budget goal and unrestricted giving is also on target.

Update on Big Barn Tailgate

The state of CT is currently holding this event to 200 maximum, which considerably lower than where it was during the fall when event planning began. As of now we are at capacity and can only accommodate our corporate partners at the \$1000 and up level. Plans are being formulated with Julia Balfour and Dreamscapes to begin promoting tickets to live stream the event and encourage people (trustees and other supporters) to host viewing parties. The printed invitation has been put on hold to save costs and all marketing will be done via social media. Members of the Development Committee felt that there would not be a conflict, or bad pr by allowing corporate partners to attend the event in person, while individuals can only live stream. It was pointed out that going live stream only was an option if state mandates lowered capacity numbers – which it has. For those live streaming High Hopes will supply the food and beverage. The good news is we are at \$128,000 in corporate sponsorship, which is almost \$40,000 over our projected \$90,000. This indicates that there is a lot of enthusiasm for this event to take place as planned. High Hopes is appealing the DED ruling via our state rep and senator and are waiting to hear back on this. **Please note that since this meeting the Governor's office as announced that all restrictions and capacity limits on outdoor events will be lifted on May 19th. So the Tailgate is back on!!**

Regarding the Scholarship drive at the event - we have \$35,000 committed to the fund to start the drive off. Video production will begin in May and thanks again go to Dreamscapes for donating this generous gift. The video will feature a number of High Hopes participants while conveying the message of High Hopes continuity and breadth of our services to the community.

The event's auction will be completely virtual this year and bidding will open a week prior to the event. This led to a larger discussion concerning the auctions sustainability at its current level. An area of concern is finding volunteer leadership with the ability to take on this complex role. The time and commitment our past Auction Chairs put in might not be something we can expect others to undertake. How do we develop folks for key roles in leadership for the committees like Auction and Corporate Sponsorship?

It was suggested that job descriptions be written that provide a detailed list of the responsibilities and job expectations. Another suggestion was to have a Vice Chair who would be expected to lead the event in the next year, while then training her/his successor. It was noted that the concept of chairing the auction is more daunting than the reality as 75% of our items are repeat donations.

Kitty wonders if we need more specialization of tasks - one person is responsible for the photography, one person to manage the tracking documents, etc. Scott Douglas noted that as the auction was responsible for bringing in a considerable amount of revenue it was not reasonable to scale back, but rather to find ways of supporting it, perhaps with the hiring of a part time staff position.

Finally, it was noted that the future of the June benefit and the Holiday Market and their place within High Hopes is something that should be addressed in the next strategic plan.

2021/2022 Development budget discussion – see attached

Sara noted that she changed two numbers slightly from what was sent to the Committee earlier in the week.. She raised the June Benefit by about \$4,000 in the corporate sponsorship and the In-Kind donation number has been raised to more accurately reflect expected gifts. Other areas of note were”

The raffle number in the Holiday Market is conservative as we don't know if we will see a repeat of social media sales when we have an in-person market..

The Unrestricted and Appeal budget goals are flat, the Restricted budget number increased slightly. For the June benefit, one thing to note is that our expenses are going up on that event. So, even though revenue is up, the expenses are up as well, leaving the net number flat.

Peter then led a discussion on the Committee's perceived strengths and weaknesses of High Hopes development operation. This was done as a precursor to the upcoming April board meeting where the full board will be invited to participate in a SWOT analysis on development. This exercise will help the Board better understand the complexity of issues related to the continued growth of Development revenue. The following is a summary of the Committee's discussion:

Weaknesses

- High Hopes geographic location in attracting philanthropic support.
- Heavy revenue reliance from benefit
- Challenges with volunteer leadership for events
- Geographical limits of HH services
- Committee leadership/bench strength
- Organizational awareness in the community
- Flat appeal levels

Opportunities:

- Expand to other areas
- Expand brand awareness
- Influx of new people into area – should we be thinking about ways to welcome newcomers before soliciting them.
- Donor stewardship component of development committee that has been sidelined due to COVID.
- Donor recognition – showcase all of the support we do get. Either with physical signage or other tangible donor recognition.
- Showcase a donor in our monthly emails/NFTB or in social media (expansion of the volunteer spotlight)
- Expand appeal levels

Threats:

Another surge of COVID-19

Competition for grants, some grants we could rely on have new competition.

Cyber security

Tax law changes

Strengths:

Benefit/Auction

Pre-COVID we had made cultivation events a priority.

Senior management team is strong and flexible and adaptable

Succession plan in place for Development Director

Sound fiscal stewardship of the organization.

Kitty thanked the committee for their thoughtful and lively discussion with this exercise and their thoughts on the proposed 2021/2022 budget.

Peter moved to approve to recommend the budget to the Board. Jackie seconded the motion. The motion passed.

The meeting was adjourned.

Next meeting will be Tuesday, June 15 at 4pm