

Development Committee Minutes

Tuesday, January 11, 2022

4 pm, via Zoom and in-person

Present: Liz B, Scott D, Jeff R, Mac, Peter W, John C, Gary R, Cheryl H, Trudy, Jackie K, Greg V, Natalie Y., Kitty S

Meet Liz Burton, Chief Development Officer

Liz started on Monday. Introduced herself. She has been in the professional and non-profit world for 30 years. She and her husband own a small business in Old Saybrook. Liz has lived on the shoreline for the last 25 years and has known about HH for most of that time. Most recently she was with MARC community resources in Middletown. MARC, which works with intellectual and developmentally disabled (I/DD) adults. Liz has also has worked with CT Foodbank/FoodShare, United Way and American Red Cross.

Peter noted that we're really looking forward to slowly but surely building up a major gifts program. Major Gifts is a constituency of individual donors – the target segment which until now has not been touched on as much as we'd like. Once Liz gets settled in Peter, Kitty & Liz can establish a regular call.

Review of Development report: YOY trend for average gift and number of gifts is going up. The average per donor per dollar amount (annually) has held steady. The number of transactions will not be a true reflection of donors due to monthly, quarterly &/or donors who give multiple times each year. For example if a donor gives to spring appeal and also donates at year end, that is 2 transactions yet only 1 donor. We should also look at numbers of donors as well as transactions. (KG to resend report with number of donors, look up first time donors)

Discussion of board giving this year. To date, eleven of the board members have given directly to the appeal. One hundred percent of the board has given in some manner this year, including endowment. Total giving from the BOD of \$138,000 so far this year.

Restricted giving estimated be close to \$300,000 this year. This is largely due to the One Health program grant (\$100k). This grant supports development of curriculum as well as the actual program. It is a restricted grant, but the purpose is very broad.

For the unrestricted funds, the goal of \$135,000 is currently at \$70,000. A large part of being ahead on this goal is the unpredictable gifts in memory. Case in point, this month, one honoree was responsible for \$20,000 of giving.

Holiday Market, information showing revenue versus budget. Part of the decrease in revenue is moving from the car raffle to the cash prize and no tasting tent. Trudy was able to roll with some very big changes in 2021 to make this event successful.

The last big piece of our fundraising for fiscal 21-22 is the Big Barn Bash, Hues of Hope.

Review of Holiday Market Results and Goals

The lower profit is not an indication of a lack of success, we had to pivot and change. Jeff started the discussion by saying that we had a good crowd and the horse chip did well. Jeff stated there are several take aways from the event. A few of the positives from the event; raffle tickets sold out, the great weather and generally positive response from the attendees.

Trudy agrees with Jeff and notes that this year was her favorite market. The vendors did really well, with record profits, additionally the vendors had positive reviews they shared with Trudy. Raffle -- with no cars available we had to change and it was getting a little stale having a car every year. Considerations when looking at the budget, we changed vendor payment format, everyone paid in advance. No chasing vendors after the market. We would have done better as we had vendors who applied their payments from last year to this year's payments (\$1,500).

We had a hard time getting corporate funds for the market. Liz and Trudy talked today about moving to more of an annual corporate giving strategy. This concept is being reviewed by the Development Team and Kitty.

The beer garden was a success and fun. Previously people would come and just go to the Tasting Tent without visiting vendor booths. We would like to find a way to expand the beer garden. No issues with the garden at all.

Review of purpose and goals could be taken into consideration for 2022. If this is to be a friend raiser, how is that achieved and what the goals for bench marking success? This was discussed by Trudy and the committee. The original purpose was to be a friend-raiser. Really to help program to turn visitors into volunteers. We promote the small business and the SSKP, but we're really not selling High Hopes. We do have a lot of people coming but we are not saying hey, this is what we do and this is what we need. This doesn't just apply to HM, but to the Gala as well.

We have reached one of the goals which was to get people on the property and show them the property without them having to buy a \$100 ticket. And we need to keep in mind that we were trying to plan this during COVID. Maybe less focus on a dollar goal but a volunteer networking goal.

Are we going to go back to doing the car or are we going to stick with the horse chip? The committee thinks we could sell more chips for the raffle, without having to expand the field. All the people who buy raffle tickets do we send them anything? Yes, they are added to constant contact or the appeal mailing list depending on if they are a door prize entry or raffle entry.

Can we use these names for something else? Can we have a designated e-blast talking about how important volunteers are and how much they are needed? The committee thought this was a good idea. Another idea was to enter door prizes into a lottery to do something at High Hopes like a family feeding day?

If we get specific of what we are trying to accomplish. We have identified volunteers the goal would be to capture potential volunteers. Maybe ask them if we can invite them back to give them more information about volunteering at High Hopes. This specificity would help the committee chairs to work towards the achievement of that non-monetary goal.

Update on Big Barn Bash – Hues of Hope

Trudy opened the discussion with stating that we are in the preliminary discussion for what Gala is going to look like this year. We would like to change it up this year to make it more of a fluid, less formal event. The name of the event is Big Barn Bash – Hues of Hope. It is very colorful, a little psychedelic, and with a lounge-like feel to the event. We would still have a cocktail hour, but then open up inside with different types of food stations. Seating would be a mix of seats, high tops and regular tables. People would be able to mingle and interact more. This could help us save on some rental and food expenses.

We are trying to change up the event and have it be more casual. We are using a DJ from New York this year. If anyone has any ideas or information you want to share please feel free to email or call Trudy. We will have seating for about 50% of the people and have been researching how weddings and other events like this handle seating.

2022-23 Development Budget Considerations

Skip for this meeting, so we have time to cover the spring appeal.

Review of Annual Giving YTD and Brainstorm Spring Appeal -

Review of the format and income from last year's Spring appeal. KG – to rerun report to compare with prior years. Can we tie this in the full year scholarship? Ultimately the appeal dollars support the subsidy. The subsidy this year is 80% due to the reduced numbers in COVID. We weren't messaging that last year as we thought it was a one year blip. Can we create a single number between the appeal and the gala scholarship - \$200,000?

It was discussed using accessibility as theme as the appeal makes our services accessible to a diverse population socio-economically. Either of those are a good theme. Concerns about getting too numbery, we want to capture people's hearts. We need to tell people how much of their dollar goes directly to help people. It is another marketing/promotion we need to do. How about dovetailing one off of another? Start out by saying here is our needs and quickly pivot to pulling on the emotional heart strings then circling g back at the end to a numbers thing. Make it personal, ie. Sally needed what you donated last year. Maybe the number in the appeal is the number of riders not just a dollar amount. We need to remember this is the second year of COVID, the first year we were saved by the Fed gov't (via PPP loans) and that

won't be here in this year and not in the future. One way to show the scale of it all is to focus on the rider, but then say there are another x number of riders who need your help.

One of our barriers now is volunteers. We have significant demand that we can't meet because we don't have the manpower to meet that need. As I listen it puts a big emphasis on bringing more volunteers into this organization. Is there a different way we can provide our services?

Kitty thanked the committee saying that this discussion has been helpful for giving us some messaging. Format will probably be a mailing and a social media follow up. Simple mailer with hand written notes. We'll see what Overabove suggests. We can consider another e-magazine, but we need to look at the ROI on that as a large amount of investment went into the stories.

In closing it was agreed that another development committee meeting should be held in a month or so.