

Development Committee Minutes

Tuesday, April 19, 2022

4 pm, via Zoom and in-person

Present: Kitty, Gary R., Mac M, Cheryl H, Jackie K., Peter W, Kerrie G, Jeff R., Scott D.

Update on Development Director Search and current staffing

In recognition of the work she has been doing in the Development office since September, Kerrie was promoted to Development Manager in the last month. She will take over more of the day-to-day management of Development such as analytics, data collection and implementation of the appeal.

The first person we hired for the Development Director turned down our offer a week after accepting it and did not start working. The second person parted ways after a month. She did not have some of the specific skills or a good cultural fit with High Hopes. Diversified search did our first search on a pro bono basis and this was a passive search. We have talked to a couple of search firms about conducting an active search and that would cost 21-32k. While we consider that option, we have continued to do a passive search on our own.

This search has resulted in three or four strong candidates. Two have already interviewed with Kitty and two more scheduled over the next week. Kitty met with one candidate on Friday whose resume wasn't the strongest but had a really good conversation with Kitty and she met with another candidate who is trying to switch from a creative role to fundraising. One of the candidates she is meeting with this week is over-qualified in major gifts, might not be fully committed to work for us full time and was referred to us by Alison.

Review of Annual Giving YTD and Brainstorm 2023 Campaign

Unrestricted and restricted have both exceeded their goals this year. We had some pretty amazing things happen this year, 2nd round of PPP, and we were the beneficiary of the IRA belonging to the mother of a volunteer. The funds from the IRA will be used for volunteer development. We also received a \$100,000 grant that we thought was going to be \$25,000. In addition, the amount of gifts received as memorials was more than expected. Unfortunately, we are behind on the appeal. The fall appeal was less than it was last year. We are hopeful that we can make up some of the deficit before the end of the year. There are some funds that can be moved from unrestricted to the appeal. It was acknowledged that the bigger question "is there a trend in giving to the appeal" that we need to be aware of. Kitty and Kerrie will work together to put together some more comparison numbers to see if a trend can be identified.

The appeal process is an annual process. One thought was to come up with an annual theme and identify it now, instead of one theme for the fall portion of the appeal and another for the Spring. In addition, we'd like to be able to tie this theme into the annual report as well. Some ideas, bonds, vibrant community,

resiliency. Two years from now we'll have the 50th anniversary theme, so will need to be mindful of that when determining this year's theme.

Update on Big Barn Bash – Hues of Hope & scholarship drive

The Hues of Hope at the Big Barn Bash is scheduled for June 11. Sara helped a lot with the corporate sponsorship and we couldn't have done it without her. We are at 81,600 for cash donations from corporate sponsors.

No reserved seating unless a premium table is purchased. There will be 30 tables with chairs, a large number of high top tables where folks can stand and then lounge areas where people can also sit. There may also be some seating on the grounds outside the arena. We know there is a risk, but we can't continue to have a seated dinner for 600 people due to the expense both monetarily and in labor.

The auction is on a new platform. The committee has pared down the items and there are some incredible items including a few new trips. We have pared down the dinners to be easier to manage. We are looking at a professional auctioneer for the four live items.

Annual Community Partnership Program

We have been talking about implementing an Annual Community Partnership program for a while. The basic idea of this program is to move our corporate partners from an event specific partnership to a year-round partnership. Partners can still selectively give to events, but will also be able to give to specific program needs instead. Goal it to make it easier for the corporate partner committee as they would only have to reach out annually instead of twice a year and bring in new corporations to High Hopes. This idea received a positive response from some of the bigger companies.

2022-23 Development Budget Presentation

The document that was sent out with the agenda has been adjusted somewhat because each department puts their budgets together separately. One of the big changes in this year's budget is an increase in wages and benefits that we need to figure out how to support. It does mean we will be pushing our development revenue from slightly over 900,000 to slightly over 1 million. Expenses are increasing across the board, equine care, salaries, benefits, and inflation. To continue to offer the services we need to expand our team, pay more equitable salaries and increase the number of volunteers. In addition, there is a 15% increase in tuition, which will mean an increase in the amount of financial aid needed.

The appeal goal is proposed to increase from 285,000 to 300,000 this year. This was a year of a lot of moving pieces. It is felt that is we can come close to the current goal being short staffed, once we hire a director, we should be able to increase fundraising. The breakdown of the goal is \$275,000 for annual appeal other, \$25,000 for adopt-a-horse.

Unrestricted operating goal is proposed to be set at \$165,000, and donated operating goods and services is going to stay at 35,000 as that is so variable.

Restricted giving will increase to \$250,000, from \$220,000 currently. The increased goal for restricted giving is based off of the tracking we do of grants and the opportunities for next year are larger. Numbers will change slightly as we go through the budgeting process, but we'll keep everyone posted.

Outreach and Cultivation event

We are starting to do more outreach and cultivation events. Our first cultivation event is a Legacy Garden Party on May 26 from 2-4pm. In addition, we have done four outreach events in the last two weeks, a virtual career day, summer camp fair at LYSB, health fair at Lyme-Old Lyme school, and the Eggstravaganza at Lyme Academy of Art.

For future cultivation events, we should look at a list of who we want to target and plan around the folks on that list. We also need to do some directed outreach to new residents in the area. Consider having one event on site each year, and one or more events further afield. Discussed how to reach out to new people including referrals from the board and reaching out to local brokers.

Peter thanked the staff for their hard work while we are searching for a new Development Director.

We will be working on creating and reporting quarterly on specific fundraising metrics and welcome input from the committee on suggestions for these KPI's.

Next meeting Development Committee meeting is scheduled for June 14th.