

Power of We Consortium

Meeting Minutes

April 15, 2011

Present: Brad Patterson, Randy Bell, Harriett Dean, Alex Bryan, Olga Hernandez-Patino, Peggy Vaughn-Payne, Lori Eva, Lynne Martinez, Marion Owen, Regina Allen, Graham Pierce, Serg Ruiz, Jessica Yorke, Rosanne Renauer, Maureen Hirten, Bill Nelton, Heather Rae McAlvey, Jim Paparella, Roberts Sheehan, Angela Waters Austin, Patricia Hemingway, John Melcher, Phil Knight, Hazel Speckin, Tiffiany Leischner, Dean Sienko, Vincent Delgado, Peggy Roberts

I. Welcome, introductions, announcements: PWC Co-chair Vincent Delgado opened the meeting and invited introductions and announcements.

II. Dialogue for Collective Impact

A. *Teresa Szymanski's recent appointment as Lansing's chief of police affords her the distinction of being the first woman to hold this LPD position. Chief Szymanski's initiatives range from consolidating divisions to improving relations with the gay and lesbian community by assigning the city's first-ever liaison. Chief Szymanski is also co-chair of the Ingham Change Initiative's Juvenile/Criminal Justice Work Group which is focused on improving policies, practices and perceptions that will improve outcomes for all youth, particularly youth of color. We will invite Chief Szymanski to share plans and challenges for the City of Lansing.*

Lansing Police Chief Teresa Szymanski provided an overview of her experience prior to becoming Lansing's first female police chief. She was born in Alpena, Michigan and has had a broad array of experiences in her 24 years with the LPD, including work as a patrol officer, in narcotics, internal affairs, community policing, etc. Chief Szymanski spoke candidly about the challenges of managing a large police force in times of extreme budget cutbacks. The LPD is facing the potential elimination of 78 positions, 49 of which are patrol officers. Others slated for the chopping block may include neighborhood watch positions, school resource officers, motorcycle officers, and personnel to respond to narcotics and drug complaints. The passage of the millage proposal for the City of Lansing, which is set for vote on May 3rd, could bring back 44 of those positions.

The philosophy of the LPD incorporates community, partnerships, and relationships. The PEACE program seeks to utilize partnerships to look at "hot spots" in the community and remove those problems. MSU is one of the partners in this endeavor. LPD's new website www.LansingStopTheSilence.com is being utilized to spread the message and advertise activities for kids. An April 30th community march will be held in the Baker Donora neighborhood in response to recent violence in that area. A 3-on-3 basketball tournament for ages 16-25 is scheduled for May 21st and 22nd. Many volunteers are needed to make this a success and interested citizens are invited to visit the website for more information.

Chief Szymanski took PWC member questions and comments. A comment was made over concern for potential loss of the in-school officers who know the kids and utilize their positions to keep students safe. There was a question regarding how we might measure success, when just looking at a growing number of arrests does not necessarily mean success. One comment urged PWC members to read up on the millage proposal and encourage friends and family to do the same – and vote.

It was noted that Chief Szymanski is a member of the Ingham Change Initiative, which seeks to improve outcomes for all youth, with an emphasis on youth of color. It was suggested that targeted investments are needed to create real change. While the 16-25 age group need many resources, earlier intervention is sorely needed. PWC members were urged by their peers to vote, volunteer with youth (ex. Coaching with Parks and Recs), engage in the Health Department's social justice workshops, support the Peace and Prosperity Movement, etc.

Chief Szymanski was also urged to create and broadly distribute a fact sheet that lists specific positions and personnel who may be cut without additional revenue. She can be reached at 517 483-4800, tszymanski@lansingmi.gov.

B. Who Is – Or Should Be – At the PWC's Table?

Over the years, the PWC's membership has expanded and changed significantly – a sign of a vibrant network. We will consider the PWC's current member structure and share ideas on how to implement continuous improvement in representation of our community. (Attachment A)

Vincent reviewed the handout (attachment A) as to the purpose of the planned discussion. The handout contained several discussion questions. Each table pod was asked to work independently to discuss and answer these questions, then come together again for general discussion.

Membership conversation comments included:

- Hold PWC meetings only quarterly
- ISC makes the decisions but ISC members don't all attend PWC meetings
- Must recognize that people vote with their feet based on their interest
- Bring more decision making to the full PWC meetings
- Current PWC is more collaborative, but less powerful when just white men in charge
- Diversity also creates challenges
- Need to articulate the benefits of membership to keep folks coming
- Need to engage the private sector in issues of equity and sustainability to show them that a better quality of life is not just a human service issue
- Not everyone knows the ISC and its purpose
- It's positive that not just Executive Directors are at the table anymore
- By the # of unused name cards, it's obvious there are many absences
- Have lots of coalitions and committees, but not enough updates from them
- As a way to create synergy, send out all flyers, minutes to everyone
- Utilize the Community Voices model – connect with Morehouse School of Medicine for support
- Not just about show and tell, but how to collaborate on problem-solving
- Use internet and newspapers to get the word out about the PWC
- Need more minority representation
- More K-12 representation
- More faith-based representation
- More youth/young adults
- Want more than just the Executive Director level folks around the table
- Want a brochure on the PWC for marketing

- Want survey of the membership/attendees to see what folks like/don't like
- Consider offering ability to Skype and conference call in to meetings
- Use peer-to-peer approach to reach out to the 20+ organizations who don't attend
- Reach out to the huge # of nonprofit organizations in the County
- Want attendance to go beyond just ED level participants
- Consider using an MOA to proxy sub-ED level folks to speak on behalf of org
- Need action/decision-making at every meeting
- Better alignment of resources with programming
- PWC brochure needed
- Report from coalition/committee at each meeting (ISC, Data, LPC, coalitions)

The Co-chairs will sort through the comments and report back to the membership at a future meeting for input and action.

C. A Better Michigan Future/ Mid-Michigan

As a response to a dialogue with members of the Capital Caucus at the March, 2010 Power of We Consortium meeting, an ad hoc committee was formed to consider appropriate action to influence a sound state revenue system. The purpose of the group, A Better Michigan Future/Mid-Michigan, is to foster decision making, by the state's policy makers, that ensures a stable, modern, and fair tax system – sufficient to support the state's and local communities' public infrastructure. Bob Sheehan will lead a discussion on the group's activities. (Attachments B & C)

Bob Sheehan stated that Chief Szymanski's presentation provided a solid foundation for this discussion, and he suggested that the current budget woes are all about the poor tax system under which the State of Michigan must function, which is old fashioned and unfair. Bob further suggested that many people believe there is far too much conversation about cutting budgets, and not enough about reforming tax systems and increasing revenues. A Better Michigan Future (www.abettermichiganfuture.org) is the group under which many people are working to bring reform to the state. Bob cited statistics that the tax rate in Michigan is 1/3 less than it was in 1990, and that low revenues are because tax activity has not kept pace. Michigan's taxes are based on goods, not services, and the percentage of goods produced in Michigan has decreased substantially. In Michigan, \$7 billion in taxes are collected, while \$35 billion in taxes are lost due to loopholes.

Lynne Martinez noted that, in addition to A Better Michigan Future, The Center for Michigan (www.thecenterformichigan.org) is another group to visit to learn more about this topic. A final comment made was that the beer tax in Michigan is long overdue for a raise.

III. Tri County Suicide Prevention Coalition – Update

At the March PWC meeting, members were informed about a group forming around the issue of establishing a Tri-County Suicide Prevention Coalition with a focus on youth, young adults, middle-aged adults, aging adults, and military populations. The PWC membership asked the coalition to offer up 2-3 scenarios as to where this group might best be "housed" for it to be as effective and sustainable as possible. Harriett Dean will provide a brief update and plan.

Harriett Dean, coordinator of the Ingham Substance Abuse Prevention Coalition (ISAP), works out of Eaton County's Prevention Program Services (PPS), which is the group that holds

contracts to do substance abuse prevention work for all three Capital Area counties. Further, PPS already manages both the Eaton County and Clinton County Suicide Prevention Coalitions. Harriett has been active in the group that has been meeting around the idea of a Tri County Suicide Prevention coalition.

In an effort to find a “home” and support for the Tri County Suicide Prevention Coalition, PPS was approached to determine if that “home” might be there. PPS has offered to take up the role of facilitating an Ingham County Suicide Prevention group, as Eaton and Clinton Counties want to maintain their individual county groups. However, by supporting the Ingham County group under the ISAP, all three groups will essentially be housed under one funding source in one location. This can lead to synergy among the groups and will offer opportunities to work on joint projects for efficiencies.

With approval of the PWC, PPS will write in this activity in their grant proposal to their funding source, Mid-South Substance Abuse Commission. If approved by Mid-South, this transition can occur.

The membership was asked to consider this proposal. Randy Bell commented that it was positive to have a plausible pathway for this group.

Lynne Martinez moved that the PWC pursue housing the suicide prevention group for Ingham County under the auspices of the Ingham Substance Abuse Prevention Coalition. Marion Owen seconded the motion. Motion passed.

Meeting was adjourned.

Next meeting of the *Power of We Consortium*: May 20, 2011