

**Metuchen Municipal Alliance
General Meeting**

Thursday, February 12, 2015

Attendance: Beatrice Moskowitz, Jodi Kopac, Jennifer Maier, Mort Simpson, Kris Dubon, Dave Liantonio, Jackie Gibson, Allison Inserro, Kathy Liss, Carol Volkland, Shivangi Mannivann, Emma Boughton, Angela Yao, Alex Tucker, Sergio Gonzalez, Charles Ingram

The meeting began at 7:30 pm.

New Business

1. **Introductions.** Welcome to our guests at this meeting: Jennifer Maier (Borough Administrator), Carol Volkland (Metuchen resident, seeking appointment to the Committee), Sergio Gonzalez (owner of To Be Continued Bookstore on Main Street), Alex Tucker (Metuchen High School student), and Charles Ingram (Edison resident). Kathy was acting chairperson and led the meeting.
2. **Update on filing of the Quarterly Report (Jodi).** The Quarter 1 & 2 reporting of the Alliance Budget for the 2014/2015 Grant Cycle was due on 1/15/15. Jodi completed and submitted the report to the County. A copy of the report was e-mailed to all committee members upon completion.
3. **Updates on the modification of the 2014-2015 Grant (Jodi).** There is a \$2,000 modification that must be made to the current Grant cycle, which is the result of the grant's changing to a fiscal calendar, from 7/1 to 6/30. The MHS agenda book for the 2015-2016 has been budgeted into next cycle grant application because the books are paid for and delivered to MHS after 6/30. Thus we have an extra \$2,000 for this current year. One modification will be purchasing books for St. Francis Cathedral School's Library which they will choose with a topic of substance abuse, good decision-making and healthy living. Supplies will also be purchased and possible program for the Senior Citizen Population will be offered at the Senior Center such as WISE. Modification is due by 3/1/15. Changes will be e-mailed to all members for review prior to submission to the County Coordinator.
4. **Update on filing of the 2015-2016 Grant (Jodi).** Grant application was due on 1/23/15. Application was completed and submitted to the County and is now pending approval. Copies of the final grant application were distributed. Some of the proposed programs and events covered by the grant will be:
 - a. The 2015-2016 Metuchen High School agenda books.
 - b. "Strengthening Families" is being offered at Edgar Middle School as a preventative program for families identified as potentially "at risk." The program will be extended to St. Francis Cathedral School as well. SAC Judi Cheung had this program funded by another source this current year and she likes the program, so we are funding it next year. Up to 20 families will be referred to the program by Judi and the guidance department. The evening program includes dinner for the families each

- week. Alex inquired as to how families were identified, because he would have liked to participate and was not identified by the school. Jackie will check with Superintendent Caputo how the program may be advertised.
- c. Forest Friends, 1st Graders, at St. Francis Cathedral School. The program is designed to increase good decision making and coping skills in young children through stories and activities using puppets.
 - d. National Night out will proceed in 2015, but spending parameters have been modified to base our evening on educating the community, outreach concerning our focus on heroin/prescription drug abuse/positive decision-making. We now have a DJ for FREE and NCADD will assist with an educational "game wheel" activity, etc.
 - e. DARE classes & tee shirts as done in prior years.
5. **Upcoming Fundraiser: Magic Show (Dave).** Our Magic Show will be held on March 13, 2015 at Campbell School. 6:30 pm doors open, 7:00 pm show begins. \$325 for magician (same one as last year). Suggestions from the Youth were made to buy Ring Pops, healthy snacks and more water than last time because many items sold out quickly in the last few years. Alliance members signed up that evening to volunteer at the event. Jodi will send out a reminder to everyone before the event. Kris supplied (200) 8x11 flyers to Jodi. Print (20) 11x17 for storefront windows and deliver to Jodi on 2/16. Kathy and Beatrice will take flyers to the local nursery schools as in the past. Youth Alliance will help bring flyers to stores downtown.

Ongoing/Current Business Items

1. **Update for annual fundraising letter (Kris).** Kris ran analysis of previous MMA Sponsors, from 2009 to date. Most are still with us, but many are "lost". One-on-one personal delivery was stressed in order to properly introduce ourselves to potential sponsors and ensure their support. Kris will issue a schedule of upcoming deadlines in sponsorship process and call for volunteers to work on mailing prior to next meeting. Questions from YSB youth regarding changing content of messages throughout the agenda book. Kris explained that she would check, but believed the calendar portion of the Agenda book is a "master" and set in stone. We place individual ads in book to "personalize" it. Mort will write up two new versions of a fundraising letter asking for sponsors and letting them know how sponsors are recognized throughout the year and what the Alliance does.
2. **Fundraising Committee (Mort, Jason, Kris).** Jake Schulman resigned as Fundraising Committee Chairman, as he is moving and will no longer be a Metuchen resident. Mort and Kris provided a brief listing of ideas brought up at their only Fundraising Meeting, and invited new ideas. They are:
 - a. Chili Contest. Cooks pay registration fee to enter. Prizes awarded. It was mentioned that another group in town holds an annual contest already.
 - b. Honorary Dinner. Proceeds to MMA. The Civile Cucina restaurant in Metuchen was suggested. Bea and Kathy to follow up with Civile.

- c. **Somerset Patriots.** Dave was able to get some information regarding the fundraising games/vouchers they offer. Bea to investigate more details with the Patriots and report back.
- d. **Other.** Previous Fundraisers/Events were mentioned like **Kids Rock (Matt Napolitano @ The Forum)**. Look up previous fundraisers and investigate possible return.

Reports from Liaisons and Committee members

1. **Council (Allison).** Allison attended a presentation of a film made by an MHS student for a **Girl Scout Gold Award**, which was followed by a panel discussion led by Irene Morris-Nann, former Chairperson of the Alliance. Linda Surks from NCADD was one of the panelists. The film was about prescription drugs and opiate addiction. Jackie and Kathy also attended the event. It was suggested that the film be screened at the proposed fundraising dinner.
2. **Police (Dave).** Narcan will be issued to all Metuchen Police officers for emergency use to counteract the effects of heroin overdose. Police Chief Irizarry approved and a grant supplied nasal dosages of the drug.
3. **Schools (Jackie).** Reported analysis of the upcoming 2015-2016 academic year student headcount for Metuchen High School (MHS) students: 156 8th graders (to be Freshman Class), 176 currently in 9th (to be Sophomores), 146 in 10th (to be Juniors) and 174 in 11th grade (to be Senior Class of 2016) for a total of 652 MHS students. These numbers are needed for ordering the agenda books. Jackie also emailed Superintendent Caputo regarding "Strengthening Families" self-ID question. Response pending.
4. **Youth (Angela).** YSB members expressed concern that the only area of focus they can work on is heroin. They requested permission to work on other issues besides Heroin (i.e. marijuana, prescription drugs). Apparently, the Youth Alliance members are split about whether heroin is Metuchen's main problem. Jodi confirmed that the Grant does give permission to focus on "issues related to heroin abuse." These issues include abuse of prescription drugs, encouragement of healthy lifestyles and good decision making.

The meeting adjourned at 9:10 pm.

Submitted by Kris Dubon.