



### Central Place Council Minutes for November 8, 2010

**In attendance:** Cathy Beck-Cross, Shirley McClelland, Elaine Collet, Kelly Sievers, Pam Freeman, Tom Downs, Rachel Buntenbach, Michelle Broshar, Randy Mohning, Phyllis Murphy, Sally Duer, Margaret Ludington, Pam Last, Lisa Schultz, Terri Walker, Vickie Strosahl, Joel Schutte, Judy Hamlin, Jeff Longman, Sheri Vohs, Catherine Jarmozsky, Dreama Preston

- Cathy Beck-Cross welcomed the council along with two guests. Sheri Vohs, a consultant with Learn Associates LLC, was on the evening agenda and Catherine Jarmozsky, a coordinator with the Drake Head Start program was attending with one of our members.
- Cathy introduced Sheri Vohs, who will work with Central Place to assess its relevance to the district in light of continuing budgetary concerns. Sheri has a background with non-profit organizations and healthcare. She said the reality of funding issues often results in an organization reinventing itself, with stakeholders, supporters (and critics) acting as an important key to the reinvention. She will interview 15 people considered opinion leaders in the district. She will ask them to talk about what is important, why it is important, how relevant it could be to the district's mission statement, the relevance seen presently, and what if funding for Central Place is cut. She will visit with Superintendent Downs later this week. Later, she may hold a retreat meeting which will feature scenario building.
- Sheri asked the council if Central Place lost full or partial funding, what options the agency should pursue. Phyllis Murphy suggested Sheri have a copy of the public statements presented to the board during the 4.22.10 board meeting. Terri Walker added grants could cover the loss of funding however you need to pay someone to write the grants. She said area churches would then be asked to contribute, but that is not an option because they lack extra money. Terri suggested piggybacking on another entity that has the same purpose, mission, and goals and may already be serving the community in some capacity. Sheri indicated she sees Central Place as having four potential scenarios. *Reinvent* by re-establishing as a free-standing non-profit, partnering with another entity, or finding alternate sources for funding. *Realign* by looking carefully at programs and funding only those with goals related to student achievement. *Rely* on others by establishing a partnership for existing programs. *Rally* by better educating the public, securing existing funding, and showing relevance in the district.
- Sheri asked the council what would be important to keep if the organization had to change. Terri said relationships: Central Place sustains relationships through quality work and those relationships continue because of trust. Vickie Strosahl added using community resources by partnering with a health agency such as Mercy East would allow for extra services such as counseling and the Southeast Polk Children's Clinic. Phyllis said transportation was an issue for many, and urged Sheri to not lose the concept that everything needs to be easily accessible. She stated Central Place's current location makes it difficult to access for high school students. Lisa Schultz asked if families have more accessibility where Central Place is currently located or if they followed students in when located at the high school. Brett Handy asked if Central Place would prioritize programs before any cuts were suggested, and Cathy said suggestions would involve the council. Margaret Ludington said because of the district's vastness and different availability of resources for each community, services for families would be fragmented at best without Central Place. Sheri invited council members to share their perspectives ([svohs@netins.net](mailto:svohs@netins.net)).
- Elaine reminded the council that last month, Superintendent Downs suggested a new way to thank donors. Tom shared how he telephones district donors each Thanksgiving morning to tell them he is thinking of them. He added donors appreciate it and even look forward to his call. Elaine asked the council to help her make the same call to our (436) donors on Thanksgiving morning or within a day or two. Council members were invited to assist with calls, and she passed out lists of donors. Some council members offered to write notes instead.
- EPIA has openings for its 11.10.10 meeting. Speaker Mike McGuire is an expert on the impact of technology and media on teens.
- Jeff gave an update on Community Education. The new fall programs of tumbling, beginning crochet, and cartooning went well. Community Education partnered with Sylvan Learning in Urbandale to provide an ACT practice test. Winter program registration starts 12.1.10. Mad Science will be offered as an afterschool class. He is also offering a class on child care and babysitting for middle school age youth. He and Rachel are receiving a variety of facility reservations.
- Elaine updated the council on Season of Sharing. Shopping will be 12.18.10. She needs volunteers to help with sorting, shopping, and distribution, especially teenagers for shopping since they know what teens like. Last year, 666 children from 287 families were served. Because an increase of families registering for Season of Sharing is expected, Central Place is serving only children this year.
- Cathy urged everyone to check out the monthly e-newsletter Rachel develops and to send in an e-mail address if they had not received it.

Submitted by Judy Hamlin,  
Administrative Assistant

Upcoming meetings will be:  
January 24, 2011 ♦ March 21, 2011 ♦ May 9, 2011