



Central Place Council Minutes for September 13, 2010

In attendance: Cathy Beck-Cross, Shirley McClelland, Elaine Collet, Kelly Sievers, Pam Freeman, Tom Downs, Rachel Buntenbach, Michelle Broshar, Randy Mohning, Phyllis Murphy, Sheila Aukes, Janet Chelsvig-Brommel, Pam Last, Lisa Schultz, Terri Walker, Jennifer Wing, Judy Hamlin, Jeff Longman

- Cathy Beck-Cross welcomed new members to the council. She continued with the story of Lynsey Tully, a former TLC student and graduate of Southeast Polk High School. Lynsey graduated from Buena Vista University with a degree in social work and next completed her Masters in social work from the University of Iowa. She recently married and had told guests her gifts would all be donated to Central Place. Lynsey had stopped in to Central Place today with donations of coats, books, gifts for teenagers and gift cards. She even brought us cupcakes from her wedding which were available for council treats.
- Cathy reviewed with the council the Board of Education's decision to not form a Central Place task force, and instead to hire a consultant, Ted Blaesing, to examine efficiency and finances district-wide, to include Central Place. Tom Downs explained the consultant's report would be made public at the board meeting Thursday, September 16, 2010. He continued to say the consultant spent three days in the district having in-depth conversations with staff and directing the point of his study at district spending choices. Ted reviewed his findings for five days and developed recommendations, taking into consideration funding and enrollment. According to Tom, the report to the board will be very thorough however he qualified this comment with the fact that Ted doesn't necessarily know the territory of Southeast Polk. Tom reiterated the remainder of this school year the board will have conversations, consider state reports, state funding, the district budget and generally have much discussion ahead of them regarding the consultant's results.
- Cathy indicated to the council that after 15 years of operation for Central Place, it was time to stand back and take a look at programming to make sure it fits with the district's mission statement. Cathy is also meeting with Tom Westbrook, Drake University for guidance as to how to help Central Place move ahead with ideas from the council and recommendations from the efficiency report. She reiterated Central Place will move ahead and continue to plan for the future, and asked the council to think about what they wanted in Central Place programming then discuss in small groups the following three questions:
 1. What should we consider as we examine our programming?
 2. What should we be doing differently based on the changing needs of the district?
 3. How can we best support the district's mission statement?
- After 20 minutes of discussion, a spokesperson at each table presented points for each question. These key points have since been arranged by Cathy in an analysis sheet and are attached to the minutes. This sheet will be shared with Tom Westbrook during their meeting next week.
- Elaine led a discussion regarding a new way to thank donors. She asked if the council was willing to help her call and personally thank all of our donors via telephone. Tom heartily agreed and went onto explain he had personally called a district donor and felt this was a very good idea for Central Place to do the same. Pam Last felt it was an excellent opportunity to talk to the community about Central Place.
- Cathy updated the council on staff changes. Jennifer Kise made the decision to stay at home with her children so Kelly is currently the lone school readiness liaison. She is responsible for Ram All-Star families and is teaching preschool in the afternoon at Mitchellville Elementary. It is possible Central Place may receive a cut in Empowerment monies this fall so Cathy is waiting before hiring Jen's replacement.
- Kelly gave a summer program update on Jump Start, held for the fourth summer. Jen and Kelly contacted parents of 40 eligible children. Twenty-seven children signed up, 24 actually attended and 23 completed the program (one left because of a death in the family). Jen taught 16 students with the help of an aide and Kelly taught a class of 11 alone. All 23 students showed growth of 50% or more in each area of assessment. Next year, Jump Start may be held for a half day instead of a full day, with the last week or two being full day. Kelly was pleased with the work they did with parent expectations. Conferences were held at the end of the session with nothing but positive comments.
- Elaine's summer updates started with Kid's Café. Funding had been cut earlier in the year, however she did receive two separate grants from Polk County totaling \$5,280 and later in the summer, Caring Hands Outreach contributed a \$1,000 donation. Mitchellville and King's Broadway were the two sites this year. Mitchellville had over 100 children sign up with approximately 60 children attending each week. At each site, students ate lunch, read a book, worked on crafts related to the book and received a book and snack bag to take home. Elaine relayed the reason they receive a snack bag is to ensure students have food later in the day that included grain, dairy and fruit. She also received a ComServe grant to fund Reach Out Mitchellville, a program for students entering 5th-9th grades to perform a community service project. The grant paid a stipend for a coordinator and some project materials. ISU Extension also provided curriculum materials and coordinators free of cost. Thirty children signed up with an average attendance of 16 each week. The children and the coordinators assessed community needs and decided they would help with the landscape and decorum of the Freedom Youth Center. They also decided to help spruce up the city park by

replacing the old basketball and volleyball nets with new ones and weeding the ball fields. Julie Ann Searcy, the main coordinator for the project, decided to stay on as a volunteer coordinator to continue with the students as they perform more community service with the Freedom Youth Center. This all resulted from a meeting with Cathy and Joe Nelson, principal at Mitchellville Elementary after she asked what he needed for Mitchellville and he suggested something for the older students. After Kid's Café was over, Elaine learned that a Mitchellville church also began offering lunch one day of the week for the children of the community.

- Elaine gave the update on School Supply Giveaway and New Shoes for You! programs. Each program served 50 more students than last year. This year Central Place volunteers prepackaged school supplies so parents were in and out in record time. Elaine said she'd like to simplify even more next year by assigning time slots so distribution could be held from the Central Place annex. Payless Shoe Source again partnered with Central Place to serve approximately 400 students through New Shoes for You!. Elaine reported donations were down for both programs, however Cargill donated \$6,000 for school supplies and Wal-Mart had given over \$2,000 in free supplies.
- Jeff updated the council on community education. He handed out the fall program and encouraged anyone who might want to teach a class or who knows of someone who would teach to contact him. Jeff relayed how programs have grown from a small base to over 20 each session. He continues to work on strategies for program marketing. The Unifier is no longer an option to advertise, however he has compensated through development of the community education e-newsletter. He relayed summer youth programs allowed opportunities for over 500 students, with 270 of them being first time students to community education. Summer swim lessons alone served 235 students. Scholarships are built into the community education budget and are provided to students whose families are free/reduced lunch eligible and who request help paying for a session. The Prairie Meadows grant provides the scholarship money. Facility reservations continue to be called in by staff and the community and are being handled through him and Rachel.
- Cathy reminded the council of the fall EPIA event, November 10, 2010. Mike McGuire, a probation/parole officer for the 2nd Judicial District Department of Correctional Services will present "Generation X, Y & Z: The Toxic Culture of Teens – The Impact if Technology & Media." The presentation contains mature content and is not appropriate for student attendance. There will be no cost for district staff and EPIA board members. Please register ahead with Judy Hamlin.

Submitted by Judy Hamlin,
Administrative Assistant

Upcoming meetings will be:
November 8, 2010 ♦ January 24, 2011 ♦ March 21, 2011 ♦ May 9, 2011