

**Foodnet Meals on Wheels
Board of Directors Meeting
Monday, April 13, 2009**

Present: *Board Members:* Joy Blumkin, Loren Gardner, Bob Herdt, Sonya Islam, Lorraine Johnson, Eileen McCoy Whang, Jim Pratt, Elizabeth Schneider, Bill Tomek, Hector Velez

Staff: Joe Fort, Steve Griffin

Excused: Chris Decker, Melissa Gatch, Jim Henery, Margaret Washington

Guest: Dongjun Zhao

The meeting was called to order at 6:15 PM by Bob Herdt.

Guest Dongjun Zhao was welcomed. She attended the recent Jump on Board event, sponsored by Ithaca Forward, and was invited to sit in on tonight's meeting.

Minutes of the February 9, 2009 Board Meeting: Motion to approve by Eileen McCoy Whang, seconded by Hector Velez, and carried.

Minutes of the March 9, 2009 Board Meeting: Motion to approve by Eileen McCoy Whang, seconded by Sonya Islam, and carried.

Finance: Steve Griffin reported that we are off to a good start in this fiscal year. We are on target with our budget. We are a little ahead on our income compared to last year at this time, with a significant increase in participant donations and general donations. The increase in participant donations is likely due to our providing information to meal recipients on costs and the need for donations from those who can afford it. Our overall expenses are up only about 2% over last year.

Jim Pratt reported that the audit process is underway. Two auditors spent three days going over Foodnet books and records. Their report will be presented at our May Board Meeting. As is required, their initial meeting was with Board representatives.

Lorraine Johnson and Jim Pratt presented ideas on planning for sustaining service capacity during challenging economic times, should expected funding be late or made unavailable. The purpose of such planning is to protect meal recipients from a break in service. The three ideas presented were:

- 1) Establish a line of credit with the bank.
- 2) Add a line to the budget for a "strategic reserve."
- 3) Establish a special fund, not part of the budget.

Discussion on these options took place with the auditors and at this Board meeting. The first idea allows us to work with the bank on creating a line of credit that would be reasonable. We currently have a low credit limit. The second idea is more difficult because some funds from the "strategic reserve" would have to be spent; the funds could not just remain untouched. And the third would require that we go to another organization, possibly the Community Foundation of Tompkins County, which could set up a special fund. We would have to identify and clarify what would trigger the necessity to act on whatever option might be approved. Further information and input is needed from COFA, the bank, the audit firm; and then further discussion.

Development: In past years the Wheelathon has been the annual public fundraising event held in September. The Committee is considering whether to continue with the Wheelathon or to change the event to a walkathon, a web auction, or something else. This will be decided soon, so that work can begin on getting sponsors and planning the event.

Former Board member, Loren Colbert, has been doing research on having advertising on the Foodnet vans.

The Mayors for Meals delivery day went very well. Ithaca Mayor Peterson, two County legislators, a COFA Advisory Board member, a representative from the Teamsters Union, and four Board members delivered meals that day. *The Ithaca Journal* highlighted one of the deliveries with a picture on page one.

As noted in the Finance report, donations are coming in very well. Lorraine Johnson has provided advice on how to use the donor database effectively.

In coming months we will again work with Jim Henery to apply for a Wiggins Fund Challenge Grant. Last year local congregations were asked to make donations which the Wiggins Fund would match. Since that appeal, \$5,000 has been received from congregations and \$1,000 from the Wiggins Fund.

And the Ithaca SufferJets, a women's roller derby team, has contacted Foodnet with a desire to do a fundraiser.

Executive Committee: The proposed Whistleblower policy was provided to the Board at last month's meeting. Bill Tomek moved for its approval, Loren Gardner seconded the motion.

Staff Reports: *Joe Fort*, Operations Manager, described his role at Foodnet. He is in charge of daily operations, including recipe and menu development, food purchasing, and personnel management. Recipe and menu development includes making sure that one-third of certain nutrients are present in each meal, thus assuring a well balanced meal. Menus are organized in six week cycles, taking into account the season of the year. The meals must be varied and interesting, so when possible, new foods / recipes are tried. Purchasing involves finding the best food while staying within budget. Because menus are planned in advance, it is not possible to use the food pantries on a regular basis. Packing of the meals has become very efficient over the years, and knowledge of individual needs is also well organized and not dependent on the knowledge of particular staff. Board members are welcome to arrange a tour of the kitchen and watch the preparation and packaging of meals.

Steve Griffin reported that Carolyn Arnold was not at tonight's meeting because she was in California meeting her first grandchild, Grace Burns, born to her daughter. Steve plans to invite Carol Ackley, the Nutrition Outreach Worker, to our June meeting to update us on her work. And, Foodnet now has a color printer donated by the County Planning Department.

The meeting was adjourned at 7:17 PM.

Respectfully submitted by Elizabeth Schneider