

**Foodnet Meals on Wheels
Board of Directors Meeting
Monday, March 9, 2009**

Present: Board Members: Jim Henery, Bob Herdt, Sonya Islam, Lorraine Johnson, Eileen McCoy Whang, Jim Pratt, Elizabeth Schneider, Bill Tomek, Hector Velez, Margaret Washington

Staff: Carolyn Arnold, Steve Griffin

Excused: Joy Blumkin, Chris Decker, Loren Gardner, Melissa Gatch

February Board minutes have not yet been submitted and will be available at a future meeting.

Finance Committee

Jim Pratt, as Treasurer of the Board, along with Bill Tomek, Vice President, initiated contact with Dave Iles of Sciarabba Walker to begin the yearly audit process. Steve Griffin and Jon Carlton will provide all financial records needed to complete the audit over March 23, 24 and 25. At the end of this process, the Finance Committee and then the entire Board will meet with Mr. Iles.

An advance of funds from the County Office for the Aging (COFA) has allowed us to be on time with all payables. Our overall income is down 4.6% from last year; however, good signs are that donations from participants and general donations are up from this same time last year, and food costs have been kept down. In general, we are in line with last year's expenditures and with this year's budget.

Organizations receiving funds through the Older Americans Act have been allocated funds from the federal stimulus package. These will work their way down to localities. We hope they will help offset the State monies that Foodnet lost in the last year.

Recently COFA conducted a fiscal monitoring of Foodnet. This monitoring differs from the annual audit. For example, they assess whether salaries and fringe benefits are appropriate; whether cash donations are handled properly; whether documentation is accessible; etc. Foodnet did well in this audit; it was positively noted that our communication with COFA was open and transparent.

P.E.P. Committee

There was no meeting of this committee, nor any report.

Nominating Committee

On the evening of March 26, at Pure Bliss, there will be a social gathering called Jump on Board, sponsored by the Ithaca Forward. Its goal is to bring together local nonprofit organizations and young professionals who are willing to be on the boards of directors of nonprofits. Bob Herdt and Steve Griffin will attend. Sonya Islam will contact Loren Gardner and see if he would like to attend. Bill Tomek is also willing to attend this event.

Building and Grounds

Jim Henery reported that the initial mortgage on the Foodnet building was \$330,000, and it is now down to \$226,000. The building will be fully owned in March 2020. As property owners we need to keep the building in good repair and well-maintained. In recent years work has been done, including repair and insulation of the roof which lead to lower utility bills; and a change in signage which made the building more noticeable to passing vehicles. In the future we need to consider purchase of a generator, an important and expensive item —from \$40,000 to \$50,000.

Executive Committee

A list of current board members was distributed.

Board members were asked to consider which committee to be on. Questions can be directed to the committee chair. It is also possible that committee chairs may approach board members to invite their participation.

Currently Foodnet does not have a policy on protecting whistleblowers — employees, directors, officers, and other stakeholders of the organization -- who might become aware of a policy, practice or activity that is in violation of the law. A proposed policy was distributed, the purpose of which is to help Foodnet continue to function as an organization of integrity and honesty, fulfilling applicable laws and regulations. Comments will be sought at the next meeting.

Staff Reports

Carolyn reported that although we are in difficult economic times, there is no increase in meal requests. Foodnet recipients are more affected by increases in energy and food costs than they are by the current slump.

Steve reported that the March 7, 2009 Ithaca Journal editorial on the United Way made positive mention of Foodnet and the effective use of the grant from the Triad Foundation and the United Way. And, in April, the new Foodnet board officers elected at the annual meeting will be put onto our bank accounts.

Development Committee

Steve reported for Loren Gardner. The Victory Club Charity Ball (Casino Night) was a black tie affair at Alpha Delta Phi Fraternity on March 7. Steve, his wife, Bob Herdt, and previous Board member, Loren Colbert, were at this event. This fundraiser is a tradition of the fraternity since 1919. Each year they pick a new recipient for the funds raised. We do not have final word on the amount raised, but the donation to Foodnet is estimated to be \$5,000. Half was raised that night, the other half is being matched by a donor.

Other ideas and projects of the Committee include the organizing of a board alumni group to keep former board members engaged. The Mayors for Meals Campaign is coming up. The goal is for mayors, town supervisors and other legislators to accompany staff or board in delivering meals one day. Special routes will be designed for that day. A 30 second radio public service announcement is being aired by Cayuga Radio Group when air time is available. And, the next mail appeal is being organized.

It has been learned that the grant for the outreach worker will be renewed by the United Way and the Triad Foundation. And the Women's Fund of the Community Foundation of Tompkins County will be providing a grant for technology support for the outreach worker, including a portable copier, laptop computer with broadband access, and a benefits calculator. And this year donations to United Way designated for Foodnet (\$6,232) are more than double last year's designated Foodnet donations. Other donations have come in from Ithaca College's Food Frenzy and from Wilson Farm Stores.

The meeting was adjourned at 7:25 pm.

Respectfully submitted by Elizabeth Schneider