

Social Justice Council Meeting

August 27, 2022

The meeting was called to order at 10:07 AM. Attending in person: Linda Stoller (chair), Barbara Czech, Natasha Cruz-Knopf, Davonne Irion and Anne Burnham (secretary); on Zoom were Barb Foley, Eloise Hardman, Marlene Calderone (treasurer), Harriet Ha-Sidi (board liaison) and Christina Bellamy.

Minutes (July 23rd): Accepted.

Treasurer's Report: Marlene received the numbers for June and July, so now we are up to date with treasurer's reports; Harriet mentioned that a new bookkeeper will be coming soon. Marlene expressed disappointment in the low amount members contributed to the June/July Community Outreach for Feeding Tampa Bay (\$272.12); she will add enough from the SJ budget to make it \$300. The final total collected for Equality Florida (May) came to \$832.50. Marlene reported that the Better World Emergency Fund is getting very low; members will be asked to donate to that in September. We chose the following organizations for future Community Outreach:

Oct: Florida Rights Restoration Coalition

Nov: Tampa Bay Abortion Fund

Dec: Christmas Eve service contribs (TBA)

Jan: Project Dynamo?

New and Continuing Issues

- 1) Film project: Christina recommended NAMI (National Alliance on Mental Illness), considering how mental illness affects so many in our area, as well as at UUC. A video from NAMI, which has a series of films @ 10-20 minutes, would fit into our time frame, with a NAMI facilitator and other local professionals, such as school counselors, speaking after the film. The primary audience for this would be UUC members and those in the community who are supporting someone in the mental health system. This would be best for in-person but the group felt it needs to be livestreamed on Facebook or Zoomed as well. We agreed to this plan and suggested a Sat. AM date in Nov., perhaps with a brunch; Christina will check scheduling with Anne Gilbert.
- 2) Postcard writing: Davonne will order 400 more addresses that target the High Point area in Clearwater. We anticipate having 2 more get-togethers: early Sept. for the NAACP assignments and later in the month to finish up with our cards/stamps, etc. and to celebrate our success. Linda mentioned that she submitted a grant for 2,000 more postcards/stamps for the NAACP. This Sunday (8/28) at 4 PM the NAACP will have another training for voter registration/education.
- 3) SJC Planning Day/Visioning Retreat: Natasha and DaVonne volunteered to help Linda with planning the Oct. 22nd event.

Committee Reports

- 1) Migrant Farmworkers: Harriet reported that, following our individual votes via email earlier in the week, our UUC board signed the FLIC (Florida Immigrant Coalition) letter requesting a meeting with Secretary Mayorkas to call for an end to 287g anti-immigrant agreements. Harriet needs a leader for the rice & beans and blanket distributions that UUC has done for many years in the fall to help Plant City farmworkers before strawberries are ready for harvesting. Marlene suggested that Harriet draw up a list with bullet points of what each project entails and the number of volunteers needed. Restricted funds are already available (\$789.51 for rice & beans, \$210 for blankets).

- 2) Racial Justice: In Trude's absence, Linda said that Aryna Ryan is taking table reservations from UUC members for the Pinellas Remembers event on Sept. 17th; more info is in the current e-Octagram.
- 3) FAST: Linda and Lore Eargle are in the process of setting up new house meetings. Davonne reported that storm water runoff will be the water topic this year. In order to return to the pre-pandemic momentum of large in-person meetings, future FAST meetings will be in-person with masks, not on Zoom.
- 4) Compassion & Choices: Anne announced that she is discontinuing monthly meetings but will still be the Action Team Leader for Clearwater. She has been responding to questions and comments from some of the 200+ on the email list. She is excited about preliminary plans for a community event, stay tuned.
- 5) Refugee Task Force: Barb reported that Gulf Coast Jewish Family Services requested a meeting at UUC but there were problems with children coming to it unsupervised; GCJFS will be required to provide supervision in the future and pay for cleanup afterwards, if needed. So far there has been only one meeting for the refugees with attorneys; rooms at UUC were reserved for 4 Thursdays per week, no word from GCJFS on that, need more clarity. Re: ESL classes, there are 12-14 Afghan families living in the Belcher/Nursery Rds. area, not sure how many are interested, may be best to have classes for adults when children are in school. Need more info about the best way to help those families, "up in the air" at this point.
- 6) LULAC: no report at this time

Marlene had two announcements:

- SPC Day on Sept. 12th, to celebrate St. Petersburg College's 95th anniversary.
- Hope Village's Faces of Domestic Violence luncheon in Largo on Oct. 4th (see e-Octagram)

Social Justice Report (8/28): Linda will report on FAST, FLIC letter, need for someone to head the rice & beans distribution.

The meeting adjourned at 11:45 AM. The next meeting will be on Sat., Sept. 24th at 10 AM on Zoom and in person in the Patio Room.

Respectfully submitted,
Anne Burnham