

# **Minutes**

## **Franklin Volunteer Network**

**Friday, June 11, 2010**

**Mt. Blue Regional School District Administrative Offices, Mt. Blue Middle School**

**Present:** Isaac Frith, AmeriCorps\*VISTA with the United Way of the Tri-Valley Area; Dennis O'Neil, Community Member and Volunteer; Edie Davis, AmeriCorps\*VISTA with the University of Maine-Farmington; Jo Rambley, Franklin County Animal Shelter; Meloney Richmond, LEAP, Inc.; Pauline Rodrigue, Mt. Blue Regional School District; Lisa Laflin, United Way of the Tri-Valley Area; Nancy Teel, Volunteer Coordinator of the Community Energy Challenge; and Benjamin Godsoe, AmeriCorps\*State with the Sandy River Land Trust & High Peaks Alliance.

### **Check-ins:**

Members Nancy Teel, Isaac Frith, Lisa Laflin, Pauline Rodrigue, and Dennis O'Neil introduced themselves to those new to the network.

Meloney Richmond of LEAP, Inc. discussed her work as the intake coordinator and the efforts being made by LEAP when working with volunteers.

Ben Godsoe of the Sandy River Land Trust & High Peaks Alliance, described his work as an AmeriCorps\*State member and with the Cornelia "Fly Rod" Crosby project which is a trail in northern Franklin County that, when completed, will be 35 miles long.

Jo Rambley of the Franklin County Animal Shelter, described her role as the new Executive Director and how the Animal Shelter is looking at how it works with volunteers. She is anxious to improve her systems and recruitment efforts.

### **Recognition Event Farmington Grange, May 20, 2010**

- Lisa reported on the volunteer hours, number of volunteers and the volunteer rate of 2009 in Greater Franklin County. She noted that these statistics were from the network members and that for 2010 other agencies that are not a part of the network should be contacted to gather their volunteer information. The goal is 250,000 hours.
- Lisa shared responses of a survey taken from the event. These responses will be sent with the next minutes. A news article from the Franklin Journal and a thank you card from Roger and Karyl Condit was passed around.
- Members gave feedback of the event, an agreement was reached stating the following: that people were engaged, two hours was good amount of time for the event as it was not too short or too long, and that an individual speaker did not

take an unreasonable amount of time. Members agreed to have another Volunteer Celebration next year.

- Nancy encouraged members to take photos of their volunteers. This way members could document their volunteer work and could present displays/exhibits or videos at the next celebration.
- Lisa mentioned that the event captured interest beyond Greater Franklin County. Pam Zeutenhorst, Commission staff, from the Maine Commission for Community Service attended the event and reported to a Commission meeting.

### **Continuing with the Training using Betty Stallings' Training Guide**

- As Trudy Hamilton was not in attendance, the next training session of Betty Stallings' Training Guide has been postponed until the July 9 meeting.

### **Western Maine Volunteer Conference**

- Lisa has been in contact with the Maine Association of Nonprofits about hosting skillbuilding workshops in Greater Franklin County.
- Androscoggin Volunteer Association is looking at hosting a conference as well. There was a discussion about combining the two. Among the benefits of collaboration are shared resources and experience as well as strengthening relations with neighboring Androscoggin and Oxford counties. This would be so that the three counties, Androscoggin, Franklin, and Oxford, agencies would not be competing with each other, but rather working with each other.
- Concerns were raised about a Western Maine Volunteer Conference competing with Blaine House Conference on Volunteerism. Members decided that the Western Maine Conference would be at a different time of year and the focus would be on volunteerism in rural communities. Isaac was assigned the task to send out two questions for network members to think about for the next meeting.
- Another concern raised was about the separation of northern and southern Franklin County. Members discussed possible locations for the conference and potential solutions.
- Lisa mentioned that the Western Maine Conference could not be solely coordinated by the United Way. It would have to be a collaborative effort among all FVN members to be a success. Planning for the conference will occur at the July 9 meeting of the network.

## **Volunteer Generation Fund Application Update**

- Nancy and Lisa gave some background information about the Volunteer Generation Fund for new members. On June 2, there was a meeting with representatives of the University of Maine-Farmington, along with Lisa, Nancy and Isaac to discuss ways that the University could participate on energy conversation efforts and volunteer activities. A number of issues were discussed to incorporate the University into fund.
- UMF representatives and present network members discussed expanding UMF conservation efforts, members of the community visiting Aramark to learn of their recycling efforts, 101 South Street, the Education Center, and a portable exhibit.
- The level of student involvement was also discussed. An increase of service learning, internships, practicum, and volunteer opportunities were all discussed as ways to get the students more involved in energy initiatives. Some short-term goals would be getting students to assist in energy audits, and students recruiting students and community members for conservation efforts. A long-term goal was students becoming certified energy auditors upon graduation.
- Members also discussed Project PLACE, the work being done by Edie Davis and Bruce Hazard, and Western Maine Community Action weatherization efforts with 82 High Street and students staying after graduation. Efforts on how to reach out to high schools was discussed. Lisa mentioned that the United Way would be the fiscal agent for the funding.

## **UMF Internship Discussion**

- Earlier this month there was a meeting of representatives from SeniorsPlus, Bangor Savings Bank, Healthy Community Coalition, University of Maine-Farmington, United Way of the Tri-Valley Area, and Western Mountains Alliance. This meeting was about internships at UMF and improving community-campus relations.
- Topics of discussion included getting students more engaged in the local community, creating a meaningful experience for students, helping UMF create civically minded individuals and the need to have an orientation process for getting students the needed training before starting an internship.
- Individuals who are interested on serving in this small group, which will continue to meet because of UMF's support of this issue were encouraged to let Lisa know. Pauline Rodrigue and Lana Whittemore expressed interest.

**Next meeting**

July 9<sup>th</sup>, 8:00 a.m. Mt. Blue Regional School District Offices  
Mt. Blue Middle School, Farmington

Respectfully submitted by

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AmeriCorps\*VISTA member  
Maine-HEARTH Project  
United Way of the Tri-Valley Area