**Service Committee Minutes**

**11/11/24**

Present: Naomi Miller, Bob Stephenson, Narda Murphy (Due to work and overseas travel, Wanda and Laska were not present)

Also Present: Jim and Wendy Carr, Managers of the Blessing Box;

Sharon LaPointe, President Elect

**Discussion Points from meeting:**

* Wendy gave an overview of the success of the meal packets that were strategically placed in Box. Packets went quickly.
* Cost of packets (about $16) was discussed. Possibilities that were less costly were brainstormed. We think it is doable to lower cost and provide non-perishable
* Theme ideas would be helpful (Valentines Day, Thanksgiving, etc.)
  + Start this with monthly theme and go from there
* Need a marketing strategy
* Need to decide the WHO and the WHEN
* WHO? Wendy introduced the idea of recruiting community partners to shelve meal packets for an assigned period of time.
  + Identify groups
    - * Individuals and or families
      * Non-profits
      * Corporate
      * Church or church groups
      * Recruit
        + Use visuals (we need to do this and print so they can be handed out
        + When introducing to partners, capture any great ideas.
        + Figure out menu/meal possibilities with visuals
        + Communicate with members, participants the needs
        + Use visuals for the steps (we need to create and publish to hand out)
        + Provide ideas on effective methods
      * Best Practice ideas
        + NUTRITION is important
        + Don’t put in box anything you wouldn’t feed your own family.
        + List of meal examples
        + Resource ideas for shelf sustainable foods
      * Assign a time period to cover
* WHO? Committee will need to recruit member(s) to manage. Recruit. Remind. Resource. (It could be committee members but one of our goals is to provide opportunities of ownership and/or leadership to Club members)
* WHEN? Monthly? Weekly? Every other Week? Do we let the recruited group determine the WHEN from a list of possibilities and fill in the calendar that way?
* Consider the partner and adapt process to fit their organization.
* Rotarians could be used as “assemblers”. Set a date and invite to a work session
* Suggestion that we create a “back stock” of “accessories” - salt/pepper packets, etc. that can be added to the meal packets. They can be shared with the groups we recruit. Also share the compostable bags.
* Sharon reported that the Garden Club is contributing to the Blessing Box as a Christmas giving activity. Wendy will get the information to Sharon with the intent of taking those packets and putting them in the Blessing Box during the Holidays. She will provide a list of ideas, put together some examples and take to a meeting. Suggestion - if not assembled, put together meal kit packing party.
* Rotary Christmas party - good idea to collect then.
* Question asked about identifying donors. It was decided to cross that bridge if asked. We agreed that anonymity is critical.
* Narda checked with Adam to find out F/R percentage in schools. 22%
* Question was asked what to do if a person/organization we approach wants to donate money….what would be the process. Need to get clarification from Wanda on this. Do we pay directly to Rotary with a note that it is for the Blessing Box? We need to keep in mind that this is headed toward becoming an annual project with its own support/management team. It is not the Service Committee necessarily. This is yet to be worked out.
* Should we recommend to Executive Board that a subcommittee be recruited to manage this annual project?
* Another idea to keep in mind - Needs over Holiday Breaks.

**ACTION ITEMS**

* Wendy will give a report to the membership at the meeting on the 12th. She will share what a packet looks like and speak of possibilities going forward..
* Wendy will coordinate times and process for December “feeding the box” with Sharon including the when to stock.
* Naomi and Wendy will create a list of the foods that are needed for our spaghetti meal kit.
* Wendy and Jim will order the food. Send the receipts to Wanda for reimbursement.
* Narda will contact Wanda to give her a heads up that these receipts are to be taken from our Service Committee budget.
* Narda will send the Committee budget to committee members along with goals as a reminder of where we are are and where we are headed.
* January will be the responsibility of our Rotary Club.
  + Collecting at the Christmas party will be good timing.
  + Will need a list of what to bring for a meal kit sent to members
  + Assign members a week of “feeding the box”.\- checking and refilling daily over assigned week.. There is a box outside kitchen door that can be kept stocked for those “feeding the box”,

Blessing Box Backstory:

* Idea came as a way to involve Rotaract. Rotaract is a Rotarian opportunity to involve high school students in service to community. Initially, there were three students in Rotaract ended up there were two who worked with our Club president to build and install the Blessing Box. The intent was for the Rotaract group to monitor and manage the Blessing Box. The two did initially but both graduated. No one else joined. Rotaract “folded”. (Note - not because kids don’t care about serving others….there are so many opportunities throughout their course curriculums, sports teams, co-curriculars, etc.)
* Never group ownership.
* Naomi, was working at keeping it stocked and reminding Club of needs. This also meant identifying problems with contents of the box.
* Then a Service Committee was put in place via Bylaws which led to Blessing Box being identified as an annual project review. Naomi had already been monitoring the box and shared the ongoing issues and concerns from the past years. First step was to seek volunteer(s) who could check on the box daily if possible. Naomi spoke with Jim and Wendy who agreed to take this challenge on.
* In an attempt to keep food available to stock, the committee decided to ask members to bring non-perishable food items to every meeting. Initially, it seemed to be working. Aout one third did this but despite the continuing reminders that dwindled to zero at some meetings. The committee came to the conclusion that as a Club we needed a restart - make the commitment or step back and find another non-profit to take it over. Information was gathered from the membership and those responses were used to determine next steps and/or recommendations.
* Membership was overwhelmingly in support of Rotary continuing the commitment.
* Ideas of The WHAT? were generated. Wendy and Jim brought the idea of creating meal packets to the discussion. (See minutes from September)
* HOW? A “beta test” of stocking Box with meal packets was the result. We approved expending some of the committee budget dollars toward purchasing necessary food products to create 20 meal packets to place in the box during the 1st week of November. Wendy and Naomi took on the task of . These would be put in the box to see the response. Wendy took on the task of placing in Box and monitoring the speed and quantity. **Result**: Went quickly. All were taken.

Note: I added the backstory because….” where you were always provides valuable information for where you are going.”

NEXT MEETING TO BE DETERMINED.