**Village Connections**

**Board Meeting**

**October 20, 2022**

**6:00 pm**

**German Village Society Meeting Haus Scheurer Room**

President Kim Cowie called the meeting to order at 6:01 pm.

**Members Present: Carolyn Workman, Fran Schneider, Bill Curlis, Ed Elberfeld, Jim Plunkett, Kim Cowie. A quorum is present.**

**Attending:** Donald Wiggins, Executive Director, Nikki McFadden, Service & Communications Manager, Baaba Ampah, AmeriCorps VISTA Partner, and Barb Elberfeld.

***Approval of August 2022 Minutes***

Kim Cowie, President, presented the minutes of August 2022.

**MOTION:** Toapprove the minutes of the August 2022 Board of Trustees meeting.

[ Bill, Ed]

Motion approved.

***October 2022 Financial Report***

Jim Plunkett reported that our total liquid assets in August were $172,000. This month it is $155,000, down $17,000. We had a very good Give65 in July. Bill Curlis interjected, saying that we have $93,000 in the bank.

Bill noted that under restricted funds in the financial report, the operations reserve line is empty. Kim said that our operations reserve is now our stock. Bill asked if it should be reflected in the operations reserved line on the restricted page because it is board restricted. Jim will consider it for the next meeting. Bill said that the board will vote on the 2023 budget at the next meeting. Donald also noted that we moved $30,000 to CDs. Some CDs were paying 4%.

Bill asked if anyone asks about our reserve funds when applying for grants. Kim stated that most mature nonprofits have 5-10 years in reserves. She thinks that we will not be questioned by anyone about it. Donald said that the only grant we are writing anything for is Franklin County. They request our financials. Kim said that we don’t have more than 5 years in reserves.

A new computer was bought for the staff’s use. They were told that the battery was swelling in the Mac. They bought another Dell for $549. Donald has the new laptop and Nikki has his old one. The office staff will spend another $150 to have the data transferred from the Mac to an external hard drive.

Jim wants a list of members who are on subsidy. Ed explained that only one person has been on subsidy in our system and that person hasn’t paid or participated in 4 or 5 years. The payment was made by another person, so that person is not on that list. Ed said that subsidy members are expected to participate in Village Connections. We don’t pull the plug the moment their renewal occurs. Jim asked if members get notified of their renewal. Donald said that he notifies the service-receiving members. Ed explained that when it comes time for a social member’s renewal, they first receive an email, followed by a letter. Those are carried over to the next month. We then have a record of us attempting to contact them. If the renewal date passes, even by a day, the software system drops them. Most of the time, they are cleared up by the next meeting the following month. Donald will look at the subsidy list Jim has to make sure it is accurate. Donald explained that Ed gives the membership committee a list of members who are due to renew that month, both social members and service-receiving members. Only Donald, Ed, and Kim know who is on subsidy. A social member came up to Donald and said that they do not have the money to renew. He said that it is not a problem. We’re not turning anyone away.

**MOTION**: To approve the financial report for October 2022 for audit.

[Bill, Carolyn]

Motion approved.

Jim shared that he will be out of the country from October 29th to November 18th. He will give Kim the checkbook and card.

**Committee Reports:**

***Marketing Committee Report***

Donald is reporting on behalf of the committee. The committee created a new brochure. It will be glossy, like the old brochures. Donald thinks that it tells our story much better. Kim stated that the mission is incorrect. Our mission statement on the website is, “Village Connections’ mission is to create a supportive community for seniors to age in place by helping them stay connected, active, and independent. To accomplish this, we must promote the well-being of an ever-growing membership through a network of local volunteers and activities.” The mission statement in the brochure was word smithed. Bill suggested changing the picture to one without masks. Kim says that we can change it to say it’s our goal instead of our mission. Carolyn likes having our mission in the brochure. Kim wants the office to talk to marketing to determine which way to go with; either using the word goal or stating the mission.

Donald presented the annual appeal letter. Bill asked what the timeline is for the annual appeal. Donald said that the goal is to have the letter mailed out by November 15th, so it will be in the recipients’ hands about a week before Thanksgiving. Giving Tuesday will be the 29th. There will be plenty of emails. We will be doing Giving Tuesday with Home Instead charities again because we can earn matching dollars. The board members like the letter.

Marketing is working on the impact report. They will keep the same format as last year. They will keep the silhouettes the same as it reflects whom we serve. There were a few minor changes. It will have new verbiage and new stats.

***Membership Committee Report***

Ed Elberfeld stated that we have 194 members. He clarified that we only have 2 types of members: regular members, who receive services, and social members, who contribute less and take part in our social events. We have members on subsidies, but that does not impact the type of membership. We have met our goal of increasing our regular members for the year and have kept stable on our social memberships.

Ed continued, saying that when we think about the demographics of our community, there are a lot of older adults living in our area. He thinks that it is appropriate and natural for us to grow at a managed rate. He continues to ask Nikki if we can fulfill the requests for services, to which she says we could use a few more volunteers. Ed said that we could also use a few more members. There are going to be some members that will be leaving our community in the next year. We have lost some founding members this past year. As we are looking toward the budget for next year, he proposed that we do a marketing campaign to gain regular members. Kim said that we have the money. She recommended meeting with the marketing chair, Sarah, to put it on her to-do list. Ed said that there are people in the community that need our services but don’t know about us.

Bill asked if we have ever established a number for the maximum number of members. Kim replied, saying that we have set a goal for new members, but not a maximum number. Carolyn said that we made a ratio of volunteers to members to make it work. Kim said that our goal has always been that we are able to meet our member’s requests. We have not had to do that. The Service Committee is working to make sure that it does not happen.

Bill asked if we have been contacting outside groups, such as service groups, to help Village Connections. Donald said that he is putting the group out there in front of other organizations with the focus of growing the volunteer base. We are trying to get new volunteers, so we don’t burn out the current ones. Nikki said that two of our volunteers have committed to serving on certain days of the week. The volunteers have their days cleared for us. We will send them service requests and ask them to help with office work on those days. Donald interjected, saying that it is great for the office and for the volunteer. It makes Nikki’s job easier because she knows whom to send service requests to on those days. Donald said that we are also considering having a member lead walking club because it will help Village Connections grow as a member-driven organization.

***Services Committee Report***

Barb stated that we have been looking to increase and initiate more volunteers. Volunteer Jenny Brehm wants to talk to our other volunteers and send out emails on a bimonthly basis to improve communication. The volunteer guidelines have been rewritten. Barb is taking on the responsibility of meeting with and orienting new volunteers, taking a more individualist approach. There will also be an online presentation for volunteers to view.

Barb continued by explaining the improved volunteer onboarding process. When the office receives a volunteer application, Barb will communicate with the applicant and send them information on the background check. Once their background check is done, Barb will send them the guidelines and have them look at our online presentation, which Jenny is presently working on. The presentation will be about 10 minutes. Barb will then meet with the new volunteer. We want to make sure we communicate with our volunteers regularly and that everything is transparent. Kim says that we want to ensure that our volunteers own the gift of their time. It has improved communication and transparency. We’re trying to make sure volunteers know they have more of a voice.

The social activities for November are the social hour with Baaba on November 2nd. Our monthly brunch will be at Lois Mann’s on South High Street. One of our members suggested this new place. The last porch party will be at the Elberfelds. We will have Thanksgiving again at Valter’s this year. In December, there will also be a Holiday party and cookie decorating at the coffee meet-up.

Bill asked about staffing with Baaba leaving. Kim said that she asked Nikki and Donald to find ways that we can ask for volunteers to help with office work. We are not getting another AmeriCorps Vista, and we are not looking at hiring a new staff member. It can be an opportunity for some of our volunteers who work at home to pick up office work and take it home. We must be thoughtful and specific in what we are asking for from the volunteers. The office staff will take over Baaba’s responsibilities. We don’t want volunteers to have access to private information or phone calls with members to keep privacy at the forefront.

We are piloting a friendly caller program where volunteers call members weekly to better keep up to date on their status. The volunteers in the pilot program have been carefully selected for this program and are aware of confidentially.

***Nominating Committee***

Bill had no updates. Kim will meet with Bill to discuss some ideas she has.

***Events Committee Report***

Donald said that we have the holiday party coming up. We do not have a date, but we have a concept. Ken came up with some good ideas. It will be smaller, about 2 hours. We didn’t do a holiday party last year, so we need to do one this year.

***President’s Report***

Kim did not have anything.

***Executive Director’s Report***

Donald said that we finished up our year with the NxGen group. They gave us our new volunteer recruitment slogan. It is, “can you give us just two hours a month?” Donald recently spoke at a Rotary group. The NxGen group made us a poster that has a QR code that is linked to a landing page with information about Village Connections. Bill suggested that the QR code should be in the brochure. Shannon has said that she would like us to be involved in another project for 2023. Kim said that the staff should decide. Donald thinks that we can ask them how to attract volunteers. Kim suggests narrowing it down and asking them to create a campaign to attract volunteers. NxGen is a training program for individuals who have growth potential in their respective companies.

Donald was pleased with the attendance at the birthday party. Most of the party’s expenses were donated. The party cost the organization $1,170. Jim said that there were $2,200 in donations that day and $10,000 in selling the candles. Village Connections made $11,975 on the birthday party. For the whole year, Village Connections has had $7600 donated as gift in kind.

Donald asked what the goal should be for the annual appeal. Last year, Village Connections did $33,000 on the annual appeal. The goal was $25,000. Kim recommends sticking with $25,000 because we have big givers who have given already.

***Service & Communications Manager Report***

Nikki said that the Friendly Caller program is starting. The following Monday is the kick-off meeting with the volunteers. The first phone calls will be going out next week. She will report about the program at the next meeting. She updated the member directory, and it has been approved by the Services Committee. Nikki is waiting on quotes for printing from companies. Kim explains that it is an updated directory with photos and contact information of the members and a list of the board members.

Nikki is keeping track of the volunteer hours, including ones that cannot be reported through club express, like board and committee meetings. For September, Village Connections had 218 service hours. For the month of October thus far, we have 116 service hours. Year to date, we’re at 1,542 service hours.

***VISTA Report***

Baaba said that we had the presentation from the Ohio Attorney General’s Office at our coffee meet-up. We had our sister village from Village Central attend. In November, we’re partnering up with Columbus State to help members with their technology problems.

Baaba’s last day is tomorrow. She thanked the board and explained that it was a great experience and she learned so much from everyone. She wishes the organization nothing but success. The board complimented her heartfelt letter. Kim thanked her and said that our members enjoyed working with her.

***Old Business —***

None

***New Business*** —

None

**Adjournment**

**MOTION:** To adjourn.

[Kim, Bill]

The business of the October 2022 meeting of Village Connections having been concluded the meeting was adjourned at 7:18 pm.

Respectfully submitted,

William Curlis, Secretary

Attest: Kim Cowie, President

Nikki McFadden, Recording Secretary

**Next Meeting:** December 15, 2022