**Village Connections**

**Board Meeting**

**February 24, 2022**

**6 PM**

**German Village Society Meeting Haus Scheurer Room**

President Kim Cowie called the meeting to order at 5:59 PM.

**Members Present:** Jim Plunkett, Kim Cowie, Fran Schneider, William Curlis, Pam Albrecht, Ken Hunger, Ed Elberfeld, Carolyn Workman, & Betty Garrett. A quorum was present.

**Attending:** Donald Wiggins, Executive Director, Jillian Davis, Service & Communications Manager, Baaba Ampah, AmeriCorps VISTA Partner, Barb Elberfeld, & Scott Blake.

***Nominating Committee***

The Nominating Committee proposed the nomination of Scott Blake to the Board of Trustees with a term expiring June 2023.

Nominating Chair Bill Curlis noted the importance of continuing to expand our reach and diversify our board.

Scott Blake is employed with AEP and worked with Jillian and Donald last year through a program for young professionals called NxGen.

President Kim Cowie thanked Scott for his work in recruiting members last year.

**MOTION:** To appoint Scott Blake as a new member of the Board of Trustees for a term ending June 30, 2024.

[Jim Plunkett, Pam Albrecht]

Motion approved.

***Approval of December 2021 Minutes***

Kim Cowie, President, presented the minutes of December 2021.

**MOTION:** Toapprove the minutes of the December Board of Trustees meeting.

[Bill Curlis, Ken Hunger]

Motion approved.

***Year-End Financial Report***

Treasurer Jim Plunkett presented data for 2021. Comparing 2020 and 2021, expenses were up slightly and donations were down. Jim noted that donations were down due to delayed grant reimbursements of approximately $9,000, which we did not receive until after the New Year. Executive Director Donald Wiggins noted that we have now received all past-due reimbursements and our check was on time for the month of February.

Jim highlighted the significant reserve funds Village Connections has and noted that 75% of Village Connections’ expenses are salary, which is typical.

President Kim Cowie drew attention to our reserve funds being in our portfolio and money market. We would have a year’s reserve if needed, should grants fall through. This is best practice.

**MOTION**: To accept the Treasurer’s report for year-end 2021 for audit.

[Bill Curlis, Betty Garrett]

Motion approved.

***February 2022 Financial Report***

Jim Plunkett announced that we have had a request for financial information from a member in response to our 2021 Impact Report. We will submit the chart detailing our funds, expenses, and assets for 2020 and 2021 in response to this request. Jim also noted that our 990 filings are publicly available information.

**MOTION:** To accept the Treasurer’s financial report for February 2022 for audit.

[Bill Curlis, Ken Hunger]

Motion approved.

**Committee Reports:**

President Kim Cowie noted that we have some documents that will need to be signed during the meeting. In the interest of time, all committee reports were sent to the Board of Trustees ahead of time.

***Marketing Committee Report***

Donald Wiggins, Executive Director, reported on behalf of Marketing Chair Edna Menke. Donald noted that all Board of Trustees members should now have received a print copy of the 2021 Impact Report. Donald has been receiving lots of positive feedback and Edna is very pleased with the results. Donald stated that he believes the 2021 Impact Report is the best report yet, saying that it only gets better each year.

Nominating Chair Bill Curlis inquired about the distribution of the 2021 Impact Report. Donald reported that it had gone out to 400+ people with 50 extra copies in the office to distribute as needed.

Bill Curlis proposed sending a copy of the report to each member of the city council and Mayor Ginther with a letter from President Kim Cowie. Membership Chair Ed Elberfeld proposed sending a copy to all county commissioners.

Treasurer Jim Plunkett reported a total of $86 spent in total for clipart and stock photos for the report.

***Membership Committee Report***

Membership Chair Ed Elberfeld stated that at the end of 2021, the Membership Committee decided to focus on service receiving members after the successful growth of social membership, which stands at a total of 258 members. Ed reported that we currently have 60 service-receiving members, with 6 having joined since January 1st.

Ed thanked the board for their continued support of Village Connections, noting that many have recently become service-receiving members.

***Services Committee Report***

Services Chair Barb Elberfeld noted that every month we try to do a lunch, brunch, and social hour, and every year aim for about 4 member parties. Barb reported that at the most recent meeting; a full event schedule has been planned through July. We will be taking a field trip to the Whistle factory in Worthington in March.

Barb also reported on a Services subcommittee called Hospitality. Once a month, for any service-receiving member who signs up, Hospitality volunteers provide and deliver a home-cooked meal. Barb noted that the Hospitality Committee was grown out of feedback from Scott Blake’s NxGen group. Barb also reported that on Valentine’s Day the Hospitality Committed delivered succulents and has begun delivering individual birthday cakes for service-receiving members on their birthdays.

***Events Committee Report***

Events Committee Chair Ken Hunger reported that two major events have been planned for 2022. One is a holiday party, and the other is a paint and sip event. The painting instructor that has worked with Village Connections in the past is no longer in business. Fran Schneider suggested asking Teresa Morbitzer. Ken noted that a picnic for members at Frank Fetch Park and a party for volunteers in August are also being planned. The next event will be a St. Patrick’s Day brunch. Ken noted that we just had a very successful potluck, expressing an interest in periodically hosting events that are at no cost to members. We try and blend price ranges and incorporate potlucks or picnics where Village Connections covers the cost to ensure everyone can be included.

***President’s Report***

President Kim Cowie invited all Board of Trustees members to a Cinco de Mayo gathering in her backyard. Invitations will be sent to all board members and volunteers who sit on committees.

Kim noted that Village Connections is updating our standard operating procedures and that board members will be asked to sign a statement of confidentiality and a conflict-of-interest policy. Kim Cowie then turned the report over to Nominating Chair Bill Curlis.

Bill noted that these procedures are simply to remind everyone about these issues so as we grow and get more members, we are constantly aware of issues of confidentiality and conflict of interest. Bill reported that early on in Village Connections’ history a policy of operating procedures was created by Amy Borman but was never voted on. We will now address issues as they come up.

In regard to issues of conflict of interest, Bill noted that all Board of Trustees members must be aware that they may have associations that conflict or have an impact on VC services and funding. Board members, staff, and volunteers must all consider these associations and disclose them so that everyone is aware of the conflict. It is important to disclose all of these associations so that the Board and the staff are aware of the conflict and make decisions based on that knowledge.

In regard to confidentiality, Bill noted that confidentiality becomes more of an issue as we continue to grow. He stated as volunteers, we have access to private information (e.g. a member visiting an oncologist) that cannot be shared with anyone outside of staff. Bill asked that all board members, staff, and volunteers must be thoughtful about sharing members’ private information with anyone outside VC and even within VC.

With the adoption of these two policies, Bill stated that the goal is simply to make everyone aware and remind them of our obligations to protect information. The Executive Director will hold all signed policies. By signing these policies, you are simply acknowledging that you are aware of them.

**MOTION:** To adopt new operating procedure policies to be signed by the Board of Trustees, staff, and volunteers. [A copy of both policies are made a part hereof these minutes and are attached hereto.]

[Jim Plunkett, Ken Hunger]

Motion approved.

**The Executive Director is requested to place copies of these policies in the VC policy manual.**

***Executive Director’s Report***

Executive Director Donald Wiggins reported on him and Baaba’s first meeting with the new NxGen group (housed under Leadership Columbus) that will be working with Village Connections this year. He noted that the group we worked with last year did such a good job of recruiting members, that we are now working with this new group on recruiting volunteers, dubbing 2022 the “Year of the Volunteer.” Donald noted that this first meeting was simply a meet-and-greet with the next meeting being in early March. More to come as this project unfolds.

***Service & Communications Manager Report***

Service & Communications Manager Jillian Davis reported on her recent work updating records. She noted that she has been going through member and volunteer files and collecting missing information as well as updating emergency contacts. Jillian also noted that she has been working on creating an updated emergency procedure policy based on feedback from members and the Services Committee.

Jillian announced that she handed in her resignation on Monday, February 28th with her last day being on Friday, February 4th. Jillian thanked the Board of Trustees for their support and learning opportunities provided over the past two years. Jillian noted that she will be working closely with Donald and Baaba to make the transition as seamless as possible. Jillian reported that she will be joining the Visitor Experience Department at the Franklin Park Conservatory and asked that everyone stay in touch.

***VISTA Report***

AmeriCorps VISTA partner Baaba Ampah reported on research she has been doing on demographics. Through U.S. census data, she found that between the three zip codes we serve the population is 65% white, 27% black, 0.5% Native American, and 4% other races. She compared this to our services members, suggesting that to best represent the area we serve, we should have 39 white members, 16 black members, 1 Asian member, and 2 members of other races. This information will help inform growth as we work to diversify Village Connections and better reflect our constituents.

Baaba also reported that we have been looking for ways to cover the costs of social and educational events. As a result, she has applied for two grants: one through Whole Foods and the other through Heartland Bank.

President Kim Cowie reported that Baaba and Jillian also worked together on our request for proposal (RFP) for Leadership Columbus. She noted that grant work is encouraged by AmeriCorps to enhance the VISTA experience.

***Old Business —*** None

***New Business*** — None

**Adjournment**

The business of the February 24th, 2022, meeting of Village Connections having been concluded the meeting was adjourned at 6:57 PM.

**MOTION:** To adjourn.

[Bill Curlis, Kim Cowie]

Respectfully submitted,

William Curlis, Secretary

Attest: Kim Cowie, President

Jillian Davis, Recording Secretary

**Next Meeting:** April 28th

VILLAGE CONNECTIONS

CONFLICT OF INTEREST

Conflict of Interest means a conflict, *or the appearance of conflict*, between the private interests of an individual serving in any capacity with Village Connections and the official responsibilities of a person who holds a position of trust in Village Connections. The person in a position of trust may be a member of the Board, a volunteer, or a member of the staff of Village Connections.

The purpose of the Conflict of Interest Policy for Village Connections is to prevent the personal interests of members of the Board, volunteers, and staff from interfering with the performance of their duties to Village Connections, or result in the personal financial, professional, or political gain on the part of the individual at the expense of Village Connections and its Board, volunteers, and staff.

It shall be the Policy of Village Connections to require an annual “conflict of interest” full disclosure statement from every member of the Board, volunteers, and staff by signing a Statement regarding any conflict and/or non-conflict in January of each year.

Conflicts of Interest disclosed to the Board shall be in the sole prevue of the Board to determine if a conflict does exist. If it is determined that a conflict exists, the Board shall vote to authorize or reject any such transactions upon which the conflict reflected and determine the best actions to take to address the conflict and to protect the best interests of Village Connections.

CONFLICT OF INTEREST DISCLOSURE

\_\_\_\_\_ I HAVE NO CONFLICT OF INTEREST TO REPORT.

\_\_\_\_\_ I HAVE THE FOLLOWING CONFLICT(S) OF INTEREST TO REPORT (please specify)

By affixing my signature, I note my understanding of the Conflict of Interest Policy of Village Connections.

Signature:

Printed Name: Date:

VILLAGE CONNECTIONS

CONFIDENTIALITY

Confidentiality is the preservation of privileged information. By necessity personal and private information is disclosed in a professional working relationship. Part of what we learn is necessary to provide services to our members. Some information gained about our members, through our work with our members, is confidential in terms of the law, and disclosure could make Trustees, volunteers, staff, and Village Connections, itself, legally liable. Disclosure of confidential information can also damage our organization’s relationships with our members and make it difficult to provide the help we seek to provide.

It is the policy of Village Connections that members of the Board, volunteers, and staff shall not disclose confidential information belonging to, or obtained through our affiliation and work with Village Connections. This policy is not intended to prevent disclosure that is required by law.

Board members, volunteers, and staff are cautioned to demonstrate professionalism, good judgement, and care to avoid unauthorized or inadvertent disclosure of confidential information.

Upon separation from a term on the Board or employment as a member of the staff or as a volunteer, the individual shall return all documents, papers, and other materials that may contain confidential information.

Failure to adhere to the policy shall result in discipline including separation from employment, volunteering, and Board service.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENT OF CONFIDENTIALITY POLICY

I agree to treat as confidential all information about Village Connection members and their families that I learn during my service to Village Connections and I understand that it is a violation of Village Connections’ Policy to disclose such information to anyone outside the organization.

Signature:

Printed Name: Date: