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*Minutes*

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## Volunteer Wisconsin Steering Committee

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**Date:** Friday, January 22, 2016

**Time:** 10 AM – 2 PM (lunch at noon, provided)

**Location:** Marshfield Clinic-Stevens Point Center, 4100 State Highway 66, Stevens Point, WI 54482

**In Attendance:** Ronda Kopelke, Shelly Kaiser, Rachel Jensen, Richard Engel, Tom Devine, Jessica Kessler, Greg Engle, Sarah Jensen, Gavin Luter, Brian Blahnik, Michael Schwartz-Oscar, Bonnie Andrews

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### 1. Commitments and Decisions

- a. Shelly will create a needs analysis survey to send out to nonprofits attending the Eau Claire, Baraboo and other regional trainings who are in counties of the state not served by a volunteer center.
- b. Tom and Jessica will contact Get Connected to try and negotiate price as the see was based on the Serve Wisconsin budget.
- c. Tom and Jessica will share with Shelly the list of contacts of local chambers of commerce to use for later follow up of unserved areas.
- d. Rachel will continue to look at state offices on volunteerism to identify how they are promoting volunteering.
- e. Greg will contact DPH to learn more about future VRC trainings, if any are planned.

### 2. Volunteer Wisconsin Year End Report

- a. Briefly reviewed Volunteer Wisconsin's history
- b. Looked at growth trends of the Volunteer Wisconsin website
  - i. Fifteen volunteer centers are using Get Connected and therefore are no longer sharing any data with Volunteer Wisconsin and Truist, affecting overall website content.
  - ii. Discussion about how referrals are initiated and recorded on the Volunteer Wisconsin website, brought up by fact that the number of referrals have been significantly declining over the past two years. No substantiated reason, especially as # of unique users continues to grow. Possibly reasons: website is difficult or clumsy to navigate; # of posted opportunities declined in 2013 & 2014; volunteers reach out to agencies directly rather than send a referral; relates to a significantly lower # of registered volunteers (volunteers who register on the site are viewed as more "serious" about volunteering).
- c. Volunteer Management Trainings & Webinars



- i. Recording Webinars
    1. Of the four webinars in spring, only the last two were recorded. They were shared with limited nonprofits that requested them due to an inability to attend at the posted time. Slides shared on the website for about three weeks and then taken down. Due to concerns about the quality and interactive parts of the webinar, they have not been made available ongoing. It was strongly recommended that future webinars be recorded and made available later so we could maximize reach and impact, along with use for marketing and promotion of Volunteer Wisconsin.
    2. It would be possible to track data and examine additional reach by requiring a log-in for later viewings of webinars. Data of all training attendees could be made available to volunteer centers if there is interest.
    3. **Decision:** For the next four webinars, record and archive them on Volunteer Wisconsin once technical editing is complete.
  - ii. Follow-up after trainings is highly recommended to keep the volunteer coordinators engaged with Volunteer Wisconsin and to use them as contacts as we reach out to underserved communities.
  - iii. Jessica recommended to keep the trainings and webinars in our grant proposals, as they fit with the Volunteer Wisconsin goals to serve underserved areas and were seen to be a success throughout the state
- d. Volunteer Wisconsin AmeriCorps
    - i. Reviewed data from current and previous year, shared testimonials, and discussed possible projections for next year
    - ii. Jessica suggested that we include testimonials in grant applications to show impact that can't be quantified
- e. Implications for Future Work
    - i. Expand the purpose of the Volunteer Wisconsin website to be a statewide hub that drives volunteers to their local volunteer center and serves underserved areas and makes volunteering EASY.
    - ii. A needs analysis will be completed in two underserved areas (Sauk and Eau Claire Counties) where we already have contacts from the volunteer management trainings.
      1. If successful, possible target areas later on include: counties nominating Rock Stars, counties with volunteer



centers that do not have websites or that are struggling to keep their volunteer centers running

2. Questions for needs analysis and a list of possible networks were created on flipchart during meeting.
3. **Action:** Shelly will create a needs analysis survey to send out to targeted counties.

### 3. Get Connected

- a. Discussed other volunteer centers and counties that are moving to the Get Connected platform for volunteer matching
  - i. Brown County—Live on Feb. 8
  - ii. Milwaukee—Live on Feb. 1
  - iii. Only Door County's volunteer center is still using Truist
- b. Data tracking would provide Volunteer Wisconsin with a statewide view of volunteering. Since the majority of volunteer centers have moved to Get Connected, there would be more communication and data sharing available between them and Volunteer Wisconsin.
  - i. There was a question about tracking impact, which will be investigated further.
- c. Costs
  - i. Annual fee for Get Connected is more than the annual fee for Truist. There is also a start-up fee to consider. However, there is a precedence of Get Connected negotiating with volunteer centers and a possibility of a discount if Volunteer Wisconsin brings others to Get Connected.
  - ii. **Action:** Tom and Jessica will contact Get Connected to try and negotiate price as the quote was based on Serve Wisconsin's budget
- d. **Decision:** Volunteer Wisconsin will move from Truist to Get Connected, as determined by a vote. Overall agreement was yes, though two abstained from voting.

### 4. Volunteer Wisconsin website

- a. Volunteer Wisconsin wants to create a more user friendly website utilizing customizable dropdowns and menu bars rather than having to fit everything on the homepage as we are forced to do currently. The website will offer more functionality beyond volunteer matching. To help accomplish this goal, Richard has created some templates and designs for consideration.
- b. BIRC is working with Marshfield Clinic CCO to develop websites for all CCO programs, including Volunteer Wisconsin. According to Ronda, it would still be possible for Volunteer Wisconsin to have autonomy over



the content and users will be able to get to the website independently (not required to access through Marshfield Clinic). But, being part of the Marshfield Clinic sites provides us with additional exposure and may drive new visitors to the site. Michael was in favor of utilizing the resources of Marshfield Clinic to host and refresh our website. However, there were some concerns about housing the website with Marshfield Clinic and using BIRC templates.

- i. **Decision:** Topic tabled until next meeting when there would be clear visuals on how CCO websites would look under the BIRC templates.
- c. Interactive map on website should be on the homepage, not on a different page like it currently is. Having it on the homepage would be more effective in directing visitors to their local volunteer centers.
- d. The steering committee came up with concrete goals that we would like for the website. These goals include:
  - i. To serve underserved areas by expanding to three counties that are not currently being served by a volunteer center
  - ii. Increase volunteerism in the state, especially effective volunteerism
  - iii. To make it easy to volunteer in Wisconsin, specifically by placing an interactive map on the homepage to direct visitors to their regional volunteer centers
  - iv. Maximize reach to the public by getting the Volunteer Wisconsin link on other websites
  - v. Have 20,000 unique website visits in 2016
  - vi. Each agency on the website should post at least one opportunity, even if it is just a generic position description
  - vii. Identify volunteer ambassadors in underserved counties
  - viii. Communicate and inspire people in the state through testimonials posted on the website

## 5. Promotion

- a. To get to the general public, it would be preferable to use social media and connect with nonprofits to promote Volunteer Wisconsin. AmeriCorps members are also instrumental in reaching the general public and promoting Volunteer Wisconsin.
- b. Volunteer Wisconsin should make a toolkit and share it with our connections already in the communities. The toolkit could include: position description templates, website trainings, and annual surveys (regarding the education, technical assistance, and information needs of the targeted areas).



- c. **Action:** Tom and Jessica will find the list of contacts with local chambers of commerce. Rachel will continue to look at state offices on volunteerism to identify common themes for promoting volunteering
6. Volunteer Reception Center Trainings
  - a. Six trainings are presented through DPH, primarily for county employees. Dates of the next few trainings were given to steering committee members
  - b. A lack of coordination with volunteer centers that may already offer VRC training or would be likely to pick up where DPH left off
  - c. **Action:** Greg will contact DPH to learn more about any additional plans to keep the momentum going after DPH's current grant year expires which funded this movement.
7. Grant Possibilities Explored
  - a. Currently, the idea is to create a work plan that will help when writing grant proposals, focusing on building infrastructure to help Volunteer Wisconsin accomplish its goals
  - b. **Goal:** diversify funding for Volunteer Wisconsin so that it doesn't rely on funding solely through the AmeriCorps grant, which is currently the only source that funds Volunteer Wisconsin.
8. *Next meeting: **May 20, 2016, location TBD***