



Center for Rural Social Work Research and Development
School of Social Work
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Better Together Board Meeting: Agenda

Friday, February 24th, 2023 - 12 pm - 1 pm
School of Social Work, Room 203 / Zoom

Purpose: Discuss data collected during the Better Together Board Retreat as well as our next steps as a Network Advisory Board.

Attendance: Dr Avant, Anna Donihoo, Tracie Estepp, Michelle Key, Carlos Palomo, Terrence Reeves, Mario Torres, Erin Windham, Jacob Grayson, Anna Hartman. Zoom: Jordan Bridges, Andrew Dies, Amelia Fischer

1. Update on formation of Standing Committees and officer positions
 - a. Secretary: Welcome and thank you, Michelle Key
 - i. Posting on website make sure it is available to the public
 - b. Sustainability Committee: Anna Donihoo, Stacy Dicks what we are doing as a group to keep going, others are welcomed to join, unanimous consensus to stay where we are until a better plan is in place (with SFA), all decisions must be approved by the board, Stacy has a new position, possibly reassigning her position,
 - i. This group will continue discussions related to operational structure of Better Together and possible paid Director position
 - ii. Data from the retreat will be utilized
 - iii. Updates will be given to the Network Advisory Board and actions will be approved by the board
 - iv. Other board members, partners, and community members are encouraged to join
 - c. Common Agenda Committee:
 - i. This group will oversee the and evaluate the implementation of the Common Agenda
 - ii. Updates will be given to the Network Advisory Board and actions will be approved by the board
 - iii. This committee needs board members, partners, and community members
 - d. Nominating Committee: (tabled)
 - i. We can hold off filling this until later in the year when we will need to look at adding board members in May of 2024
 - e. Broadband Committee:
 - i. Update from Erin: Contera is in talk with the city to the Douglass community and at the lake area since using the water plant as a hub, not a residential provider but the other ISP that are residential can take it out to the homes even if it less than 20/mile, Met with DECOG, Connected Nations survey, we have requested information to challenge the federal map, survey is out from DECOG please complete open until 5pm on 02/24/23
2. Ad-hoc Committees: based on responses to questions 1 and 4 at the retreat we propose to open up two ad-hoc committees: one board member, community member and a partner.
 - a. Economic Development: based on our board's interest in addressing Goal 5 and 7 of the common agenda - need economic vitality to have community wellness, Wellbeing hub:

(professor at UT, Dr Pogue) to help locate and pooling resources, utilizing libraires to house the information and people to help, students as digital navigators to help community members find the information that they are looking for, Peer support also encompasses mental health, destigmatizing mental illness, HOPE's resource Center opens next week, possibly pull these multiple organizations can get it all be done together in connection with out Findhelp.org VOTE: all in favor, Center for Applied Research and Rural Innovation (CARRI) motion- Carlos, Erin- seconded

- i. Erin Windham
 - ii. Other board members, partners, and community members are encouraged to join
 - iii. This could encompass the board's interest in Food Security, Master Planning, etc.
 - b. Blue Zone: based on our board's interest in addressing Goal 8- [what is a Blue Zone, not changing mindsets, changing behavior, social connection, youth happy hour, helps communities live healthier longer, saving on healthcare cost, provide a framework for 3-10 years to help with sustainability. Move: Erin, Second: Tracie- favorable vote](#)
 - i. Mario Torres (chair)
 - ii. Tracie Estepp
 - iii. Other board members, partners, and community members are encouraged to join
 - c. Other goals and interests [Grant opportunity: Youth in the criminal justice system \(Community Art Center for East Texas\) possibly due by April, add to next agenda, Erin and Dr Avant](#)
 - i. Start with Economic Development and Blue Zones (pending today's vote)
 - ii. Any board members wishing to propose another ad-hoc committee may do so by the next board meeting
 - iii. As Better Together we are looking at what is already happening in the community and finding ways to strengthen and promote existing programs with the ultimate goal of achieving the action statements in the Common Agenda
3. Web-site
 - a. Dr Avant is working with Dr Cooper and Jason Johnstone regarding updates [meeting on Monday 2/27/23 at noon to discuss how to better operate the website and our social media platforms, will need to be compensated since it outside of his regular job duties.](#)
4. Anna Hartman: Email from Rick (from the Hogg Foundation) with the City Help Dashboard, get your city on the map for accurate health data, economic data, application ends on March 1st, benefits: city information on the dashboard, support to help understand the health data, she has drafted answers to the application. Amelia is on city council; Erin on Downtown Committee Mario feels that he may have access to the city members. Anna D will review and see if we need anything soon: Motion: Carlos Second Terrance, favorable vote.
5. Can we form a Google Drive? Mario, yes we have one already Anna Hartman
6. Compile our connections without organizations.
7. Adjourn @12:43: Move Ana, second Carlos