



# HOPE 4 Youth Board of Directors Board Retreat Minutes

Date: October 3<sup>rd</sup>, 2022

Time: 5 PM – 8 PM

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Board Members Present: Linda Barnum, Pat Chen, Julie Cole, Brad Konik, Paul Lenzmeier, Steve Nash, Don Phillips, JJ Slag, Anna VonRueden

Board Members Absent: Stephan Spears, Sue Woodard

Staff and Guests Present: LaChelle Williams, Tanya Bacigalupo

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## Minutes:

### Call to Order

The meeting was called to order at 5:23pm by Steve Nash.

### Mission Moment (Anna VonRueden)

Momo's journey which led him to the doors of HOPE 4 Youth and recently joining the residents at HOPE Place.

### Executive Director Led Retreat (LaChelle Williams)

#### What's your WHY

- Post your WHY on the wall!

#### Dinner with a walk through history

- **Where did we start**

- In 2012 information was circulating regarding the reality of youth homelessness in Anoka County. Brian Swanson gathered with other community minded people to understand what could be done to end this issue.
- Karrie Schaffer - AHSD homelessness liaison joined.
- They did what other passionate people have done: filed for our 5013C - assembled a board - build a volunteer base to take action.
- They did something different than other agencies working to help homelessness - they conducted a study regarding what causes youth homelessness.
  - Through their research they found three key indicators that pointed to how to end youth homelessness.
    - ✓ Youth knew they were valuable - they were loved or lovable.
    - ✓ Youth understood they were capable and could take charge of their future.
    - ✓ Youth had a meaningful adult as a caring role model in their life.
- The vision had a focus on PREVENTION, BASIC NEEDS, and LAUNCHING Youth.
- The PREVENTION vision was to have a volunteer move with a class of youth from Elem to HS.
- BASIC NEEDS were supported through the DIC.
- LAUNCHING would happen with the endurance the three key indicators were met.
- In 2013 the doors of H4Y were opened.
  - They created the place where they could meet those immediate needs and pour into the youth hope and inspiration.
- In 2016 the doors of HOPE Place were opened. This was seen as a long-term solution for housing.
- In 2018 HOPE Homes was launched. This is a program where case managers at H4Y work with young people on the verge or actually homeless to identify a caring adult in their lives. We work on agreement promises and even provide assistance to the HOPE host.
- Through the years - we have had 4 Exec Directors, and significant staff turnover as the organization moved from a volunteer based organization with an operational board to a staff run organization and a governing board. Previous

leadership had visions that took the organization in different directions, i.e. Excell Academy, Hope's Closet, disconnected partnerships.

- **Where are we today?**

- We have used the best practices of the last 9.5 years to focus on who we are and how we provide pathways to end youth homelessness.
- In Wilder Foundations most recent youth homelessness report they found over 13,300 youth will experience homelessness in a given year. They also share an estimated 6000 youth will be homeless on any given night.
- The federal government spends 19 billion dollars on homelessness prevention.
- The state of MN spends millions with 100s of agencies attempting to make a difference.
- Many elements are feeding into a growing issue of youth homelessness.
  - Crisis in families/parents
  - Addition issues with parents
  - Oppression of youth in transition
  - Transient families
  - Mental Health
- How we can help.
  - Coordination of systems
    - ✓ Juvenile Justice
    - ✓ Mental Health
    - ✓ Foster Care
  - Flexible \$ for youth at risk
  - Investment in outreach
  - Mental Health Resources
  - Awareness - community/schools
  - Mentorship - care adult role model
  - Support with young parents
  - Invest in agency staff support - the issues of today's youth are complex, staff needs elevated training
- Help manage youth homelessness to mitigate adult homelessness - 36% were homeless as youth.
- REVIEW WHAT WE DID THIS YEAR.
- REVIEW PILLARS.
  - Volunteer engagement - BBB average is 65%, H4Y 80%
  - BBB Program Expenses S/B 65% - we are striving to be 75-80% (preference of funders)
  - Measurable outcomes
    - ✓ Noted in the Operations Plan as well as monthly scorecards in your board packets. As we move forward, there will be greater clarity on targets and what success looks like through our Traction philosophy

- **Move to breakout groups**

- **Where are we going? (Our strategic planning discussion)**
  - **REVIEW Vision**
    - ✓ Strengthen operation by clear focus
    - ✓ Own prevention partnerships - new question is how do we "see" youth before they become homeless?
    - ✓ Must do with excellence – DIC
    - ✓ North Star - Empower to Launch
  - **Vet Four Strategic Goals.** Breakout groups.
    - ✓ Discuss Goal (not draft objectives), does it meet our vision, mission, and core values
    - ✓ Discuss branding perspective from board
      - Political and social issues

### **Breakout Session Notes**

- LaChelle was asked to speak on where the team is at with traction and how it's going. LaChelle explained implementing Traction was a game changer.
- While reviewing HOPE 4 Youth's Vision 2024-2026, JJ pointed out a target number of youth served wasn't included in the 3-Year Picture.

- Julie brought up the importance of gaging educational background of the youth, specifically youth aged 17-24 who haven't graduated from High School are led down a pathway to obtaining a GED.
- JJ would like to see the Target Market start first with the Youth, then Donors and Volunteers.
- Don mentioned the importance of follow-up with the youth who utilize the Drop-In Center. HOPE 4 Youth should be with the youth once they find a pathway.
- Ask and track where the youth are coming from when utilizing the program.
- Steve spoke to the implementation of Mark creating a measurable usage of the youth served to determine the success or sometimes a failure of the program. Failure was defined as a youth utilizing the Drop-In center over a period of 8 years.

Q1: The mission, vision and core values have been recognized they all align by all three groups.

Group Notes:

1. Yes, this has crystalized, what our vision and values are, and it must be a primary.
2. Mission – Yes, Vision – Yes, Core Values – Yes “Totally Why” “Too Easy”
3. Yes

Q2: Yes, as we were building out our plan we have are more focused on the connection. Community leaders - how do we align with our mission? Yes, critical we have partners to fill in the gaps, knowing when and how to lean into people that are smarter than us.

Group Notes:

1. Mission – Yes, Vision – Yes, Core Values – Yes
2. Yes
3. Must partner or impossible to create an environment to reach many individual's needs.

Opportunity for development e.g. trade unions.

Can't operate in a vacuum, not an expert in trades or education, mental health.

Organization is small enough, not bogged down in bureaucracy and can stay focused.

Could use more partnerships, most strategic and most important.

Funding is important, solid partners can become financial contributors – partners can see an advantage to them.

Organization is funded with many donors and when the economy tightens, want other options for financial support who are stable.

Q3: Yes, Laser focus on empowering the youth-youth center approach, the emphasis on the words Youth centered rather than Premier = building a team that is brilliantly focused on operational improvement.

Issues the organization has had with staff retention, emphasis should be on leadership retention to create a culture to motivate and empower staff.

There is a uniqueness to this organization for volunteers and there should be a more unique wording (discussion happened during question 3 – comment related more to question 2).

Do the employees of this organization feel valued, loved, and be loved?

There are two types of volunteers, one that work with the youth verses ones that work events. Those youth that work with the youth should be educated differently or more than the others.

Group Notes:

1. “Laser focus?” on outreach, operational costs, 1.7 for 300, recruitment
2. Staff and operations are critical to achieving the mission.

Focus on leadership that can align people around a common vision which creates a strong culture which leads to stability.

3. Feels a little off??

As an example of HOPE 4 Youth, what is in it for me?

Employee growth

What organization doesn't?

Not aspirational goal but a necessity to do the other programs

Organization needs to look at what is the need

Best people to do mission, more effective to do mission

Could also focus on volunteers

Provide quality experience for volunteers

Make sure volunteers feel connected

Increase the experience

People who will create alignment with youth

Q4: All parties are for a new Drop-In Center

Group Notes:

1. Location, location, location
2. Yes, current location hindering our ability to serve the mission
3. Have taken a big step to focus on this, do you need collaborators can come to; a place to keep people connected?  
What is the size and scope?  
Need to be focused on dollars.  
Yes, do agree with statement.

Branding and Marketing Commitment Discussion

- Anna believes HOPE 4 Youth should not take a stance
- Don mentioned he wants H4Y to remain neutral
- By being inclusive or setting a stance, we lose.... we are inclusive by supporting youth up to the age of 24
- If we support Black Lives Matter, we will hear from All Lives Matter
- If H4Y were asked to support a party for a month, our response would be, H4Y supports "this party" all year long. i.e. Black Lives Matter, our stance is we serve and honor this party all year
- Brad indicated the importance of training the staff on how and what to respond to in certain situations
- H4Y cannot post anything unless it is approved by LaChelle
- Anna - Focus on topics that relate to what we do, set a calendar. What are the fundamental issues which align to our work?

Group Notes on Branding and Marketing → Political/Social Issues:

- Inclusive
- Welcoming
- Celebrate diversity

**Adjourn**

- LaChelle shared the meeting was at time. **Motion** to adjourn was made, seconded by Steve Nash, and approved unanimously.

The meeting ended at 7:59pm.

Meeting minutes were taken by Tanya Bacigalupo

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**Action Items:**

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- LaChelle will update 2024-26 plan to incorporate amendments

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**Upcoming Events:**

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- Clay's 4 HOPE – October 13th
- Board meeting – October 24th