**P.T.F – Income Security & Employment (IS&EAG)**

**Action Group Meeting Minutes**

**July 4, 2014**

**United Way of Bruce Grey, Financial Literacy Office, Owen Sound**

**Attendees** – Holly Devlin, Jill Umbach, Edith Lawson, Catherine Munn, David McLaren, Carolyn Willis, Susan Williams, Monica Banz

1. Precarious Employment Guests: Jill Umbach and David McLaren (Peace & Justice)
   * Peace & Justice led a team discussion including Mayor Deb Haswell, Dennis Howlette, Dr. Hazel Lynn, Jill Umbach, Francesca Dobbins plus a number of others
   * Many parallels between Peace & Justice and PTF IS&EAG
   * David – highlights of meeting
     + Biggest drivers of inequality in a society include income disparities, (income disparities chart attachment) contribute to a number of inequities including poor health outcomes and early death. (see supporting resources list attachment)
     + Precarious employment DVD of Owen Sound and Walkerton Precarious Employment community forums available from Holly
     + They determined a need to bring in broad partners e.g. unions, PH, municipalities, services
     + Dennis Howlette comes from a national perspective ED for Canadians fairness see <http://www.taxfairness.ca/>
     + Seattle – passed legislation, bylaws for companies to phase in living wage
       1. Top grossing companies don’t have a lot of time to pay, small businesses have a number of years to phase it in
       2. Mayors in US had meeting last week to tackle precarious employment – will start by paying city workers, then contract workers to pay a decent wage.
       3. Even if we get chambers of commerce involved, there are still large stores who are accountable differently
       4. focus on voluntary measures
       5. Debbie McCaige (SP?)—of local chamber of commerce
       6. Look at positive incentives rather than penalties, how do you reward businesses that are doing well. Discussed what action could be taken at the county or municipal levels.
       7. Contracting and subcontracting are the main issues
       8. The mayors encouraged beginning at county level, then filter to municipalities which is where bylaws would be effective
       9. A lot of the discussion at the precarious employment meeting was around education, awareness raising needed
       10. Staff in planning departments are often already familiar with some of these perspectives.
       11. David McLaren will do presentations, needs someone with knowledge of local financial issues, grass roots
       12. Municipalities have the power to make stronger encouragements related to bylaws
       13. *Peace and justice are all volunteers – not a lot of personal resources, for secretariat role, to organize meetings with counties, municipalities. David requesting assistance with this*
       14. Hoping for results in two years
       15. Targeting for October municipal elections
       16. Jill to prepare materials with David with input from Monica re area stats and indicators

Deidre Pike Day

* Brooke Jaye from Closing the Gap—contact for Event
* Event planned for October before the election
* A number of other events in October
* Developing education messages
* Holly will connect with Deidre to request some dates
* Hoping approx 100 people – maybe at the Harmony Centre?
* Monica will check with HU for potential free space for the day
* Invite Mayors, warden, someone from the Chamber, small businesses,
* Small businesses will be the real challenge –the only way they could manage it is with a wage subsidy
* Peterborough just did lit review for living wage, same with Hamilton
* What successes has Hamilton had, strategies for small businesses
* Small businesses are not who we are targeting—are there guidelines about who qualifies
* Holly will check with Deidre
* Something like “Better Employer Awards” – criteria from the chamber—Deb would be receptive
* Host in conjunction with the Ontario Chamber of Commerce
* United Way hosting the mayor’s breakfast to collaborate to create a common statement. Could we develop something that could be messaged out? E.g. warden’s –--to facilitate putting it on the agenda’s for election
* October 17th Person’s Day breakfast
* Holly will share Deidre’s number from Brooke to share with David
* How can we involve perspectives of precariously employed speakers?
* From community voices people—creates a lot of stress related to obligations for people who are already under-resourced.
* Video clips are less threatening; allow option for repetition for people for whom this information is very new/requiring paradigm shift, or for multiple presentations.

Requesting help co-ordinating meetings with the counties, municipalities

* The persons would need to have an effective relationship with county and municipalities already, an idea of who we should be talking to. To engage and support scheduling for deputations.
* Jill knows who to talk to in Counties and Municipalities
* David can do the overview, big picture and Jill can do the grass roots level.
* One page summary which can be circulated. Include list of symptoms to demonstrate the problem.
* Monica will provide list of indicators used by PH for Grey Bruce.
* The issue needs to be addressed from a Grey Bruce perspective e.g. If one member of family care becomes unwell, this could be the tipping point for a family to fall into poverty.
* Peterborough’s experiences are more relevant than Toronto.
* Include Statement of values ---everyone deserves a living wage, secure lifestyle—philosophy and vision we would like municipalities to adopt –Monica will look for this as sounds familiar from resources by Dennis Raphael, York University.
* E.g. seniors falling into poverty related to health issues, middle class is not resilient anymore, not aware that programs are out there.
* How living wage could positively impact the community- the health and financial wins
* Hidden costs of poverty

ISAG and P&J do not have duplication, different focuses – can work collaboratively.

Multi-level, multi-sector approaches—YouTube videos understandable by different groups and abilities. Let’s circulate links for any good stuff we’ve seen.

Richard Thomas—sorry I’ve lost the issue for which this name was related

**Messaging for elections**: For IS&EAG - We want this to be one of the key messages going forward for this group, precarious employment

**Income Assistance Decision Tree**

* Holly circulated visual template
* Fire chiefs are developing a similar tool for post-emergency to direct people more easily and more effectively access the appropriate resources.
* Monica will forward link for template tool—Let’s Grow pathways—Monica ask Linda for .doc
* Would be great to have ready for elections

**Client Referral Letter/ “Declaration of consent”**

* Letter client caries which speaks to their discretionary income issues (example attached)
* Saves them telling their stories so many times

**Doodle Poll**

* Holly will send out Doodle polls for September and October meetings

**Next Meeting Date will be August 15th** related to availability results in the doodle poll

**Recap of Bruce County “Poor no More”**

* Excerpts will be helpful at a number of presentations including Day with Deidre.
* Grey County will be using the video at their staff development day.

**Preparation of election candidates**

* Where do we get a list of who is running? List of who is continuing
* Send out “Seminar for candidates who are running” awareness raising from PTF, P&J
* Bruce County has hidden poverty of seniors, working poor. Not a lot of representation from Bruce County. Area politician
* August Deputation to Bruce County, by Terry Sanderson, using Poverty Task Force Logic Model and more of a business model approach.

**Collaborative strategy**

Is there a need for a workers action centre or person’s action centre—this is available in large urban centres but not in Grey Bruce

For clients of the YMCA, they could assist with this, or negotiate. Deb from Chamber could address part for their clients. EI could be addressed at MPs office. Legal Clinic would address a different portion.

* Money from labour unions
* Would be effective as store front
* Toronto’s is very helpful

***We need a drop in 211***

Maybe we could revisit this idea in November?