

Suggested Action Items For Neighbors in Need Taskforce

On Thursday September 22, 2016, members from Jackson Neighbors in Need (JNIN) presented a brief history and basic needs list to the Jackson County Commissioners at a work session. It was stated at the meeting that JNIN has enough funding for programming through the upcoming winter season. JNIN specifically identified five areas of assistance needed to maintain their operations in the future. These needs are as follows:

1. A full-time director / case management position
2. A permanent office
3. An active taskforce that would help recruit more volunteers and to explore creative ways to provide the mission of JNIN.
4. The ability to expand and provide services year round.
5. Expanded help from churches and community members.

It was decided that a Neighbors in Need taskforce should be appointed to specifically create a plan of action on how to accomplish the five tasks listed above. This was to be done with the understanding that additional resources may be needed from Jackson County government.

I was asked to put together some suggested action items for the Neighbors in Need taskforce for them to be in a position to request additional funds from Jackson County. These recommendations are based upon the premise that the initial major need to be accomplished is to establish full-time case management / administrative support to JNIN. Here are my recommendations:

1. Re-establish and/or re-appoint an active Neighbors in Need Taskforce (Board of Directors). It is my understanding that some key volunteers that have provided valuable leadership are no longer available (due to retirements, illnesses and position transfers). It is imperative that new volunteer leadership be identified.
2. Immediately hire case management / administrative support. Southwestern Child Development has agreed to house and supervise the case manager for the JNIN programs. A grant has been received from the Ever Green Foundation that will fund this part-time position for 5-months.
3. Once the Board / Taskforce have been re-established and the case manager / administrative support has been hired, the taskforce should be in a position to discuss and make organizational recommendations.
4. It is requested that the taskforce make recommendations on where the full-time director / case manager would be permanently employed. This position could be assumed by an existing organization or JNIN will need to become a new legal non-profit entity.
5. It is requested that the taskforce make recommendation on where the full-time position would exist physically.
6. It is requested that the taskforce determine the overall administrative needs of this full-time position. (i.e. office furniture, technology needs, transportation needs).
7. Once items 4 through 6 have been accomplished, then a comprehensive budget request can be submitted to Jackson County for consideration. This requested budget would include all costs associated with personnel, office costs and programming (sheltering, fuel and weatherization). The budget should include expenses along with any grant and fund raised revenues.

There have been discussions in regards to which shelter model should be used : 1. Hotel Model 2. Room at the Inn Model 3. Stand Alone Shelter Model. At this point it is recommended to continue using the Hotel Model for budgeting purposes. A more established / stable management structure should allow for the other models to be appropriately explored. It is recommended that priority be placed on solidifying the case management / administration structure first.