

**Greater Chatham Initiative  
Youth & Support Services Committee Meeting  
Held at the Urban Partnership Bank  
7801 S. State Street, 2<sup>nd</sup> Floor, Chicago, IL 60619  
Friday, November 3, 2016 – 10:00-11:30 a.m.**

The meeting was called to order at 10:15 a.m. by Ashley Casiello. Casiello welcomed and thanked everyone for coming. Individual in attendance introduced themselves:

Tracy Occomy Crowder – COFI  
Octavia Tyson – Chicago Department of Public Health  
Debbie Marshall – Community Resident  
Nedra Sims Fears - GCI

Previous Minutes

Approval of the October 6, 2017 minutes was postponed until the next meeting, December 1, 2017.

COFI Recap

In partnership with GCI, COFI held two parent leadership and restorative justice training events, one targeted towards the area's elementary school principals, and the other targeted at parents of elementary school students. The principal event was held on Monday, October 15<sup>th</sup> from 8:00 am – 12:30 pm. Representatives from COFI, GCI, Tanner Elementary, Neil Elementary, and the Gary Comer Youth Center were in attendance. Tanner expressed that they had implemented school wide restorative justice techniques, but that getting the parents involved, both through buy-in and overall engagement, was more difficult. Without parent support, the schools and parents are at odds with how to deal with matters of discipline.

On Monday, October 23<sup>rd</sup> from 6:00 pm – 8:30 pm, COFI hosted its second training session for the area's parents. Attendance was very low, with only three parents from the area coming out to the event. COFI invited youth at GCYC to enter the event and participate in a peace circle. GCI is currently in discussion with COFI to determine how the partnership will proceed.

ReCAST: Chatham and Austin Restorative Justice Events Recap

GCI partnered with ReCAST to host a restorative justice event for youth in Chatham on Saturday, September 30<sup>th</sup>. 26 participants came out to learn more about RJ practices and the work being done in their community. Although turnout was smaller than they had hoped, the events were deemed successful, with many youth voicing their approval of the event and interest in learning more about how they can participate in restorative justice efforts.

Harvest Fest Recap

On October 27<sup>th</sup> and 28<sup>th</sup>, GCI hosted its first annual Harvest Festival. Turnout was roughly 300 people over the two days, and events included a haunted house, a photo booth, pony rides, a petting zoo, a hay maze, pumpkin painting, and children's activity stations. Although we had hoped for more people to attend, we received wonderful feedback from those who did. Residents were excited for the new Boombox, and for an organization to be putting use to the empty space.

Holiday Events

For December 8<sup>th</sup>, 9<sup>th</sup>, and 10<sup>th</sup>, GCI has rented the Boombox on 79<sup>th</sup> Street with the hopes of putting on a small-scale holiday event for community residents. Ideas for such an event include inviting pop-up seasonal vendors such as Christmas tree vendors, merchants with seasonal food such as hot chocolate and cider, decorating the Boombox and inviting community residents to take pictures, and hosting a photographer so that families can take professional holiday photos.

Relationship Building; Small Scale, High Impact GCI Projects

After encountering low turnout for both the Harvest Festival and COFI principal and parent trainings, GCI has decided to put a greater amount of focus on relationship building with local institutions and organizations. To foster better relationships, GCI will create projects for its committee coordinators. These projects will then go

before the committee for approval. Some proposed projects for the Youth and Support Service Committee include participation in local PAC meetings and the creation of a read aloud program at the local elementary schools. In addition, any input committee members have on strategies for increased community engagement would be appreciated.

Local Internships, job offerings, and apprenticeships

GCI would like to remind its committee members that it is always looking to share information on local job, internship, and apprenticeship opportunities available to local youth. If you have knowledge of any opportunities, please share them with Ashley at [ashley@greaterchathaminitiative.org](mailto:ashley@greaterchathaminitiative.org).

Meeting adjourned 11:45 a.m.

The next meeting will be held Friday, December 1<sup>st</sup>.