



## **EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR'S REPORT**

### **BOARD MEETING --JULY 22, 2024**

The past six weeks have been a whirlwind of learning and activity as I meet new (to me) people, visit program partners, and learn the ins and outs of the organization. Everyone has been exceptionally kind, patient, and helpful as I learn.

I am so thankful for this opportunity and truly looking forward to working with the board as we move into the future. Below is a brief summary of my intentions for the next few months. As always, I welcome your input and expertise.

#### **Board & Governance**

- Conduct a strategic review of board membership as it currently stands. Then, identify and cultivate potential new candidates to join in leading the organization's work. The goal is to expand board membership to include expertise in key areas, as well as diverse backgrounds and experiences, in order to create a strong governance body.
- Review and update board and committee job descriptions to reflect current practices.
- With the addition of new, engaged board members, revitalize committee activity in development, program, and finance, as well as any other identified areas.
- Establish standard board chair succession path to ensure consistent leadership from one term to the next.

#### **Strategy**

- Of particular *near term* interest is the review and planning for Tamar's Center continued viability and work in the Lower Price Hill community. The assessment process is well underway and I look forward to your feedback on the presentation to be given at the July 22, 2024 board meeting.
- With clarity around Tamar's work in place, conduct a full strategic plan review and ensure identified strategies, goals and objectives outlined in 2018 remain relevant to current community needs as well as organization resources.
- With the agreed upon new or revised goals, update work plans and develop dashboard to evaluate progress towards identified goals.

#### **Communications & Resource Development**

- With the strategic plan in mind, create relevant communications and development plans.
- Create an annual plan of communications opportunities and focus areas to further organizational outreach to donors, partners and the public.

- Cultivate media relationships to highlight program work and accomplishments.
- Identify and utilize communication assets and channels to inform public and partners about impact of organization on the community.
- Identify, cultivate, and nurture relationships with individual donors and grant making organizations who support Franciscan Ministries' work. Leverage the investment of the Congregation in the organization to drive more funding from grantors and increase program reach.

## **PROGRAM REPORT**

### **The Community Garden**

The community garden is operating smoothly this season. In an effort to manage maintenance costs related to water use, staff met with several plumbing companies, who stated that the water main that the garden connects to has high pressure levels. This, when combined with amount of water used, the size of the area, and the age of the watering system, results in high wear and tear levels on the system, and therefore, more frequent repair needs.

Gardeners have been asked to focus on managing the growth and spread of weeds in their individual plots as well as maintaining pathways, removing trash, and managing hoses. These tasks are normally managed by a garden manager. However, this position was not filled this year. As always, Heartfelt Tidbits has been very helpful in communicating with the non-English speaking gardeners. The goal is to move the gardeners to be a more self-directed and pro-active beyond their own plots.

Staff have requested an updated estimate on the fence replacement, as the prior estimate is almost a year old. The intention remains to repair/replace the fence this Fall. Nearly \$13,000 in donations and grants to fund the project have been raised to date. Additional funds for the work are from the cost increase in rental fees and salary savings from not having a garden manager/Tau assistant.

### **Haircuts from the Heart**

The mobile haircut program continues to experience great success. In fact, Franciscan Ministries' Haircuts from the Heart was recently selected as *Tender Mercies' Neighborhood Partner of the Year*. This award is given to an organization or individual in recognition of a significant contribution to the OTR neighborhood and whose work in OTR and the West End is consistent with the mission and values of Tender Mercies. Margarita and Marci will attend TM's Annual Meeting in August to receive the award.

While the voucher program typically slows down at this time of year, staff have received numerous requests for vouchers for back to school events. Outreach continues with the goal of adding new voucher partner distributors and providers. In April, the program was awarded grant funds to support the voucher program. These funds will cover the program for at least two years and become available in April 2025.

The "shop at the shower house" site is also going well. FM and Mary Magdalen House staff continue to evaluate and adjust the process to ensure efficient site operations. Finally, FM will renew its Ohio barber license in August, which is good for two years.

### **Tau House**

It has been very hot, but successful, summer season so far at Tau House. In June, Tau House hosted 59 individuals from three different returning groups, which provided 1,526 hours of service to the community. Fourteen (14) hours of volunteer time to prepare for the visitors were provided by Marci's very kind sons. Two more groups are scheduled in July, bringing an additional 31 people from two more returning groups. These two

groups are projected to provide 895 more volunteer hours in the community. Finally, the lack of a designated maintenance person at St Clement continues to be a barrier to the electrical work that would support the addition of an AC unit on both the 2<sup>nd</sup> and 3<sup>rd</sup> floors. The summer heat and a lack of air conditioning continues to be the program's biggest external challenge and staffing assistance the biggest internal challenge.

### **Tamar's Center**

Tamar's Center is currently in planning mode. The new Executive Director is working with staff and the board to identify programming needs in Lower Price Hill. A separate report on the results of the Lower Price Hill assessment will be presented at the July 22, 2024, board meeting for discussion.

### **Development**

In addition to the standard activities of FR50 data management, donor communications, and reporting, new activity includes the following:

- In May, the first of two annual appeals was mailed, totaling \$2,355.00 as of June 30, 2024.
- The "Piggest Raffle", a part of the annual Flying Pig Marathon activities, resulted in \$810.00 from 22 donors. Of these 22 donors, 14 were new to FM and staff followed up with these individuals to thank and, hopefully, further encourage them to continue their donor relationship with FM.
- FM applications for grant funds to the Gardner Family Foundation and Victory Noll Sisters were denied. Research on appropriate grant opportunities continues.
- The Church of the Incarnation has approved a grant request for \$4,500 to support the Haircuts from the Heart voucher program. The funding will be received in April of 2025.
- We all wish Grace Marie continued success in her recovery from shoulder surgery and look forward to having her back in the office this August!