



Where Life is Sweet

Faith-Based Advisory Committee

Meeting Minutes of June 3, 2025

Present were committee members Dan Mahon, Rafael Vargas, Terry Cummings, James Lafolette, and Joe Sharon. Planning Assistant Heather La Beau was also present. Council Representative Allen Hayward was excused. Council Representative Jackie Linton was not in attendance. Terry opened the meeting in prayer at 4:03pm.

Introductions were made welcoming new committee member, Joe Sharon. Joe is a local dentist and serves as stake president in the LDS church.

Public Comment

Stepping Stones Alliance (SSA) Updates: SSA Executive Director Jessalyn Cole shared the results of some recent grant writings. They did not receive the grants for continuing education of staff, electrical work, and a shower trailer. They will continue to look for other grant opportunities as the existing shower trailer has only 2 stations and is near the end of its service. She would like to increase shower capacity and secure a 6 head trailer or possibly build a modular unit for the showers. They are excited for grants received that allowed them to build a greenhouse, add watering capabilities, and increase parking spaces.

Jessalyn shared the sad news that one of their regular guests, Tony Warnock, passed away. This brings the total to 5 guests lost in the past two and half years. A memorial garden is being planned for those who've passed. She would like to see accountability from various organizations, so the people are receiving the care and services they need. The committee discussed the need in the community for the lacking resources and the importance of sharing of information within the organizations and amongst other organizations.

The facility continues to see new people; there are currently 23 live-in guests and 19 overnight stays. The fundraising banquet is scheduled for October 11.

FBAC Presentation to City Council

Dan updated the city council at their May 27 meeting about the FBAC. It was well received, and he was encouraged by the councilors desire to engage more.

Food Insecurity Gathering & Upcoming Activities

The third quarterly lunch was held with representation from the hospital, churches, and Made to Thrive. Solid Rock Community Church, located at 140 SW 2nd St, will host a free barbeque on July 1. Euvalcree and other organizations have emergency food available. A list of resources can be found on the feedhermiston.org website.

I Love My City and Blessing of First Responders

The city streets and parks look better thanks to the large number of volunteers who turned out for various service projects on May 17. Dan reported there were 74 free haircuts given, 55 families served through the diaper/wipe drive-thru, and over 100 free car washes completed. Other projects included



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senior center visits and Laundry Love. Rafael heard a new congregant say how awesome it was to see such a large number of volunteers serving the community.

Hundreds of volunteers, both children and adults came by for the lunch portion of the event, which included praying over the first responders who were in attendance. There was much positive interaction between Umatilla County Sherriff and Hermiston Police Department personnel and the attendees.

High School Baccalaureate Service

Dan reported the service was held May 21 at the high school and had the largest attendance post covid. A total of 23 seniors were honored with multiple churches and over 100 people in attendance. There was a spirit of unified engagement.

Unscheduled Communication

Terry informed the committee the police department and community is mourning the loss of Hermiston Police Sergeant Bryan Maess. HPD provided an escort for Sergeant Maess as he was transported back to Hermiston.

The June edition of the city's monthly newsletter, Inside Hermiston, is available on the city's website. It's a helpful tool to receive information on events, council reports, and city news. An email subscription is available on the city's website.

Minutes

James moved and Rafael seconded to approve the minutes of the April 1 meeting. Motion passed.

Next Meeting

Tuesday, August 12th at 4:00pm at New Hope Community Church, located at 1350 S Hwy 395 in Hermiston. The Committee agreed not to meet in July due to summer schedules and to meet the 2nd week in August to not conflict with the county fair. In an effort to increase awareness and engagement, the committee agreed to hold meetings at various churches and organizations.

Adjournment

There was no other business, and Joe adjourned the meeting in prayer at 5:02pm.