



Mayor, Jeremy Farmer
Vice Mayor, Leslie Soden
City Commissioner, Mike Amyx
City Commissioner, Stuart Boley
City Commissioner, Matthew Herbert

May 28, 2015

Dear Mayor, Vice Mayor, and City Commissioners:

In late December of 2012 the Lawrence Community Shelter moved its location to the facility we now occupy at 3655 E. 25th St. It would have been very difficult to anticipate the budget needs in moving to our new location. The necessity for a new location however was an obvious need, and the location was very much determined by a lack of options. As you know, this option would not be afforded to us had it not been for the support of Douglas County, and their willingness to purchase the land that allowed us the SUP we needed in order to move forward in relocating.

The Lawrence Community Shelter and similar organizations exist because there are homeless that need the services we provide. We did not create or attract the homeless to our community, any more than the thousands of other communities that deal with this as an issue. Our country determined long ago that as a society and culture, it is not only more humane, it is economically a sound practice to provide services to help people in crisis. Our function is to restore the lives of those who struggle because of economic downturns, lack of educational options, mental health issues, and traumatic events that alter and create dysfunctional belief systems that without corrective measures, lead to dysfunctional lives. Events such as childhood sexual and physical abuse, and abandonments, result in adults that suffer from PTSD, which results in dysfunctional lives that breeds impoverishment. These events also lead to parents who raise children in poverty, which leads to more poverty. Without organizations such as ours, our community sees its citizens freezing in the winter, and starving in its streets. We have seen communities that lack in services that have their citizens sleeping in alleys and cardboard boxes; rummaging through dumpsters for food or things to sell on its streets. We also have researched the effects of applying quality services to this socially and economically oppressed population and have seen the results of a positive economic impact, and the stabilization of the community at large (**Cohen & Inaba, 2011**).

We have beautification projects in the city because we know that it attracts business and tourism, which creates positive revenue streams. It is much more desirable to have this population working and paying taxes, rather than panhandling on Mass Street. Organizations like ours give options to that end, and empowering the impoverished to find a more functional life is our life's work. The effects of which are seen all over the country because of organizations doing work like ours (**Faces and Voices of Recovery, 2013**). We have to change the culture of impoverishment in the lives of those who suffer at its hand (**White, 1998**).

It has been 3 years now that we have evaluated our needs to accomplish this task, and at the most basic level of our service we are showing a deficit in our cash flow and an annual budget of approximately \$200,000.00.



Over the next few years, our goal is to explore new revenue streams for our organization that include billable services such as Vocational Rehabilitation, and credentialing supervisors for our case management services. This does not include the development of new programs, only a system that allows us to bill for the services we are currently providing. We as an organization are in need of supplemental funds for the remainder of this year of \$200,000.00, as well as \$200,000.00 in our budget for 2016 while we explore these new revenue possibilities. While we accomplish the task of stabilizing our budget over the next few years, your financial support will be critical in order for us to continue to provide services to the Lawrence Community & Douglas County. It is projected that we will not be in a position to provide payroll to our employees as of July 1st, of this year, resulting in our inability to continue to operate. We are currently operating at a very minimal level of service, with both of our case managers having caseloads of approximately 50 guests each. It becomes a liability issue with our night staff if we reduce our level of supervision while dealing with a guest population of 125. We currently are staffing that number with 2 monitors for the majority of that time. Please note that our 2016 budget request has the supplemental financial request built into it.

Your timely response to this need is greatly appreciated,

Very truly yours,

Brian Blevins
Director

I. Bibliography

Cohen, W. E., & Inaba, D. S. (2011). *Uppers, Downers, All Arounders* (7th ed.). Medford: Paul J. Steinbroner.

Faces and Voices of Recovery. (2013, 01 01). *Many Faces 1 Voice*. Retrieved 04 03, 2015, from Faces and Voices of Recovery: <http://manyfaces1voice.org/>

White, W. L. (1998). *Slaying The Dragon*. Normal: Chestnut Health Systems.