

Friends of Rainier Meeting Minutes - 1-16-16

Jeff shared the progress we have made within the Board. We are getting more organized, we have re-done the by-laws and we have active board members, which now include Lynette Stevenson and James & Rhonda Meyers.

Jeff shared about the PR video being made by Friends of Fircrest and that the FOR board voted to approve a \$2,500 donation to help with the cost. He also shared that the board voted to give the maximum amount allowed (\$800-\$1,000) to Action DD and encouraged individuals to also make donations to help ensure that they can continue to employ Rick Jensen (their lobbyist), so that our voices can continue to be heard down in Olympia.

He also shared how Superintendent Perez is working to make it possible for all 3 Pats to coordinate better together in a more uniform manner. Carol Davis, who has been in charge of Pat E, will now be a coordinator for all 3 pats and will report directly to Harvey. Also, Katia Ramirez's job of Staff Development and the Rainier Art Center are for all pats.

James and Rhonda Meyers have been completely overhauling the Friends of Rainier website. It will be a tool for us as FOR members as well as a tool for the general public. It will highlight Rainier's programs, have information such as the FOR newsletters and meeting minutes, have the PR Video, have links for making donations/paying FOR dues on-line, have links to important websites such as ActionDD, VOR and PC2 and more. We hope to be able to later add art center projects as gifts for people's donations. We would also like to add testimonials such as Debi Hawkinson's story regarding the 20 difficult years spent trying to get the proper care for her sister prior to her sister being admitted to Rainier School.

Jim Hardman spoke about the recent WA state legislative happenings and responses to the King 5 news series. Although it is clear that the reports were made from a pro-ARC/DRW perspective, RHCs do not seem to be a high priority at this time - issues such as transportation, mental health and schools are higher on the priority list. It also helps that our current governor is currently OK with RHCs and is not actively pursuing shutting them down.

He mentioned that the PR Video being made by Friends of Fircrest will debut at the Feb. 2 Action DD meeting/Legislative Reception in Olympia and encouraged everyone to attend the meeting. He mentioned that FOF is also putting together accompanying materials to hand out to legislators on why RHCs are needed (WA law - cost - impact). There will be an update from Rick Jensen at the meeting regarding open admissions at Yakima Valley School, the proposal to do away with the age limit for 18-21 year olds who could benefit from residency at an RHC and a scholarship proposal that would be directed towards individuals who would like to the field of developmental disabilities education. He encouraged us to be prepared for reactive activities and reminded us that one big reason Washington State has been more successful than other states at keeping our RHCs open is because of our support of lobbyists (around 15 states no longer have ICF/RHC facilities). We can also invite our legislators to the yearly Legislative Reception, write letters to them annually and share the new PR video with them. We can also join/support the national group VOR (Voice of the Retarded) and the local Pierce County group PC2.

Teresa Dean will be starting an MBA capstone project that may involve interpreting DD cost per capita studies/information to get a more accurate picture of the cost of care for DD adults in the community versus those in RHCs.

We discussed the positive impact Katia Ramirez is having in the area of active treatment for residents at Rainier School. Pierce County has approved another \$2,000 grant for a kiln for the Rainier Arts Center. Sustainability projects such as the worm farms are also providing new, on-going ways for

clients to get involved in their “community”. There will be a fashion show in April and we need a volunteer to attend the next meeting Tuesday at 11 am (Rhonda Meyers agreed to attend). Katia is also looking for funding for the metal frame required for the mandala project. We are looking into asking the Longshoremen’s Union to contribute, with FOR possibly matching funds.

Our FOR meetings for this year will be - March (3rd Sunday) - May (3rd Saturday) - July (picnic on 3rd Sunday) - September (3rd Saturday) - November (3rd Sunday). The raffle of a home-made pie by Kris Brott brought in \$55.00.