

Personal Essentials Pantry Minutes: December 20, 2011

Members:	Present	Absent
Christine Thompson, Coordinator (Incorporator)	✓	
Carol Cass	✓	
John Egleston	✓	
Faith Markel (Incorporator)		✓
Sue Marks (Incorporator)	✓	
Mike Rolfsmeyer (Incorporator) (<i>prior conflict</i>)		✓
Nathan Schmidt		✓
Muhammad Abdullah (Incorporator)	✓	
Meeting Time: Meeting began 7:12 pm		
1. Appoint secretary for meeting (1 minute) Appoint timekeeper for meeting (1 minute)	sec'y: John Egleston timekeeper: Muhammad Abdullah	
2. Approve Agenda (2 minutes) Additional agenda items: PEP Plan of Operation (Revised)	Moved: ✓	Second : ✓ Appr'd ✓
3. Approve Minutes of Last Meeting (2 minutes) <i>Minutes: October 19, 2011: attached.</i>	Moved: ✓	Second : ✓ Appr'd ✓
4. Info item: Financial reports (4 minutes) <i>Current Spending vs. Budget: Designated Funds & Grants - October, November 2011</i> <i>Current Spending vs. Budget: In-Kind Donations - October, November 2011</i> Discussion: Donations doing fairly well; October and November normal to slightly below normal, but December (though not included in the reports presented) is, as is typical for holiday/end-of-tax-year donations, looking very good. <i>Christmas Carol</i> proceeds were also helpful in bringing up our accounts.		
5. Info Item: Demographic Reports (5 minutes) Fulfillment Studies, Chronological Summative Report Per reports: PEP Fulfillment Study: <i>October, November 2011</i> PEP Summative Household & Registration Data (ongoing summation of data) Discussion: Fulfillment reports as expected; Thompson pointed out an additional column on the Summative Household & Registration Data report, which shows the percentage of total registered guests who are defined as active. Unsurprisingly, given the state of the economy, there has been a slight increase in this percentage since May. In addition, Thompson noted that the informal analysis that she's done of requests of PEP's most popular/ essential products are still showing an 85-90% rate of requested compared to approved, indicating that we're probably pretty accurate with our defined lifespan for those products. Fulfillment reports are incomplete, however, since Salvation Army is not using the PEPbase system to its full capacity. Thompson will try to set up a meeting with the SA Coordinator as well as top leadership to look into the situation further, since (a) non-optimal use of the PEPbase software affects all pantries within the PEP Partnership Alliance, and (b) the Memorandum of Agreement between SA and PEP does call for use of the software. Egleston pointed out that the PEP Partnership web site does not show up in a search for "Personal Essentials Pantry." Problem is believed to lie in pre-existing sites that link to the old Pantry web page on Zion's site. Board members are asked to keep an eye for agencies that they may encounter that direct them to the old site, and either contact the managers of such sites themselves to give the correct information, or send a note to Thompson so that she can send such a note. Thompson will also look at what might be added to the		

PEPartnership home page coding to increase the changes of search engines and web indexing engines to link our home page with the search term “personal essentials pantry.”

Thompson also asked that Board members take the time to thoroughly explore the PEPartnership site (<http://pepartnership.net>), so that they are familiar with the resources of the site and can use them in responding to questions from friends, colleagues, etc.

6. **Incorporation of PEPartnership, Inc. (40 minutes)**

- **Review of Current Status:**

Articles of Incorporation have received approval from our attorney, signed by all five incorporators and submitted to the State of Wisconsin Department of Financial Institutions. As of December 21, the check for the application fee had been processed, which should be a good indicator that the application is moving well through the system.

- **Application for Employer Identification Number**

Thompson filed for an EIN number via the IRS website on Wednesday, December 21, and received confirmation and the number assigned to PEPartnership, Inc.; that is being communicated to Pastor Pat and Jill Siegler, who handles Zion’s financial operations.

- **ByLaws**

The draft ByLaws prepared by Thompson were discussed by the Board, and no serious issues were identified. There was discussion on whether eight Board members might be too high a number; however, once Cass and Egleston agreed to accept seats on the Board, this brought the current number of Board members to six (Thompson, as Executive Manager, will have voice but no vote on the Board, and does not count as a member of the Board), so adding two more did not seem particularly onerous.

Minor edits, mostly for consistency across articles or of terminology, were made; Thompson sent the revised ByLaws out to the current members of the Board of Directors (Abdullah, Cass, Egleston, Markle, Marks, and Rolfsmeyer) for their information and any further comments that seem indicated, and has sent the ByLaws in their revised form to Sam Wayne for his legal review.

- **Financial Procedures**

Thompson pointed out, in the review of the ByLaws, that the ByLaws do not, as is common practice, specify details of financial management, but merely indicate that the procedures need to be in accordance with legal requirements and need to be approved by the Board of Directors. Thompson will work with Rob Marks to formalize the proposed procedures, and plans to have a draft for review by the Board of Directors via e-mail by the end of the first week of January. With the assignment of PEPartnership’s EIN, she will also begin the process of setting up a checking account; Sue Marks and Carol Cass have agreed to be signatories, but the account will be set up so as to require the signature of only one, not both.

- **Application for Approval as a NonProfit**

The beginning requirements for formal application to the IRS have been completed (filing the Articles of Incorporation, acquisition of an EIN, and preparation of ByLaws). Thompson will look at the application process in more detail now that these steps have been completed, to determine what if anything on the application can be completed while we wait for legal review of the ByLaws to be completed.

- **Plan(s) of Operation**

This item was added to the agenda at Thompson’s request. Thompson reviewed the history of the current Plan of Operation for the Personal Essentials Pantry (now the Zion Personal Essentials Pantry, a program of PEPartnership, Inc.), and distributed a draft revision to that document to reflect the Pantry’s operation as a program of PEPartnership, Inc., rather than as a program of Zion Church. She also suggested an addition to the ByLaws, which was approved, specifying that the Executive Director shall prepare a Plan of Operation for all named programs (in contrast to activities) of PEPartnership, Inc., and shall submit such Plans to the Board for the Board’s approval.

7. Info Item: Notable events since last meeting (10 minutes)

- **Thompson presentation to Associated Bank, November**

The presentation was an outcome from the presentation Thompson made at the 5-1-GO! event celebrated last June; the manager of the Stoughton branch of Associated Bank was sufficiently inspired by that event to set up an ongoing donation program from her branch for the Stoughton PEP, and hoped that managers of other Associated Banks might be similarly inspired. No further developments.

- **A Christmas Carol**

Although attendance was lower than had been hoped, it was far greater than feared; a total of about 75 people attended over the three performances. There was surprisingly high appreciation of the readers' theater form of presentation. Thompson will be compiling and distributing comments and suggestions from cast and crew, as well as comments they have passed on from their friends. Next year's production should go more smoothly, since we now know where to go for various "behind the scenes" products. Thompson is considering preparing our own interpretation of Dickens' book, which would help us customize the presentation to our space and time constraints, as well as drastically lower the cost for scripts and royalties. Since we are now also aware that the Atwood/Winnebago Winter Festival is scheduled for the first weekend of December, we will again schedule our production for the first weekend, and seek to tie in with the Winter Festival publicity.

- **2010 National Anti-Hunger Policy Conference, Washington, DC, February 25-28**

This conference is being organized by Feeding America and the Food Research and Action Center. Thompson has expressed interest in attending; we have benefited from information on anti-hunger work and strategies, as well as been able to contribute to the discussion from our own experience. Thompson has applied to the conference directly for scholarship help, and will also make an application to Zion Foundation.

- **Response to article on Food Stamp fraud**

Thompson noticed an article on the problem of food stamp fraud (which, nationally, is at about 1% of total food stamp use); of particular interest to her and to our evangelism efforts about the need for this ministry was the case cited by the reporter as the prime exemplar of the problems with food stamp fraud. The case cited was a New Jersey store which had allowed its food stamp customers to redeem their foodstamp dollars at below par value (which is of course not only illegal but reduces the benefits that the users are receiving), and that the customers were then spending their money on toilet paper, body soap, laundry soap, and OTC medications. The illegality is not in question, but Thompson does see this as an example that can just as easily illustrate the problem that people in poverty and financial need have in obtaining personal and household hygiene products.

8. Review of Proposals in Process (10 minutes)

- Credit Union Foundation proposal submitted; still waiting for decision
- Will be following up with United Way on the outcome of their proposal to fund a diaper pipeline

9. Update on D.Min. program by Thompson (5 minutes)

As mentioned in the minutes from our October meeting, the required final project for my second core course, *Church in the World Today*, which is due 3/1/2012, will focus on our process of incorporation and how it relates to "church" as seen and understood by today's cultures.

I'm beginning preparation (lots of reading) for my second elective class (there are only three electives required; my final elective will be next June) and my third core course. They're somewhat related; the elective is *Needful Things: Pastoral Care as Contemplative Practice*, and the required readings include a lot on views from other cultures as well as discussions of conflict. The core course is *Culturally Attentive Pastoral Leadership*, and (obviously) includes a lot of readings on multiculturalism and conflict - although, interestingly to me, the readings focus largely on the "-ism" of White versus People of Color, and not much at all on issues of class, income, and disability, which are in many ways equally important for the ministry of

the Pantry.	
10. Review of Capacity-Building (deferred for now) ♦ <i>Improving financial resources</i> ♦ <i>Increasing community awareness</i> ♦ <i>Increasing community involvement</i>	
11. Confirm Next Meeting Time Thompson will poll the members of the Board of Directors to identify the best potential times for meetings.	To be determined
Meeting Concluded: 8:45 pm	
Action Items	Who Timeline
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Review draft revision to Zion Personal Essentials Pantry <i>Plan of Operation</i>; send comments or suggestions to Thompson 	All Board members; by January 15 if possible
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Prepare chart of current and currently planned PEPartnership, Inc. programs; prepare Plan of Operation for all such identified and send to Board for comment and approval in time for next meeting 	Thompson; by January 10
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Follow up with Attorney Sam Wayne regarding his review of the ByLaws 	Thompson; no follow-up until after New Year's Day, but then weekly
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Prepare draft of proposed financial management system 	Thompson, with input from Rob Marks; completed in time for review and comment by Board at next meeting
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Identify agencies who need to be informed of our identity change, and make necessary arrangements 	Thompson; by January 15
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Poll Board members for best meeting times 	Thompson; by January 6 for initial polling; report back of results by January 15
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Set up checking account, including getting signature cards to Sue Marks and Carol Cass and returned to bank 	Thompson; by January 1 if at all possible
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Check on possible changes to coding of PEPartnership home page to make it more "visible" to search engines, indexing engines. 	Thompson, by January 15
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Explore PEPartnership website to become familiar with the resources and information it offers 	All Board members; initial exploration in time for next Board meeting (time TBD), and ongoing visits to the site to remain current with the site as content changes.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Begin preparation of 501(c)(3) application process as possible pending approval of ByLaws, receipt of registered Articles of Incorporation from State of Wisconsin 	Thompson; ongoing. Hope is that we can submit the application for Board review at the January meeting, and submit to the IRS by the end of the week of that meeting