**Port Chester Carver Center**

**Advancement Committee Minutes**

**March 1, 2021**

In attendance: Jim Howland, Amy Fisch, Claire Steinberg, Anne Bradner, Colleen Kane, Olivia Jimenez, Chris Pye, April Langus, Jason Kowlowitz, Erica Fritsche, Maida Robinson, Yvette Hammel, Andrew Navarette

**Committee Chair Welcome (Jim)**

Jim opened the meeting at 5:30pm and reviewed the agenda items

**Update on Fundraising Totals (Colleen)**

Carver is tracking well and is at 67% to goal for overall funds. We have budgeted 30K for the Student Dance (which is not happening) but we can make it up with unrestricted funds. Carver has been invited to submit a full proposal to Impact 100 in the same category as last year. It’s due on March 8th and a decision will be made by May/June.

**Update on Virtual Benefit (Yvette, Colleen, & Claire)**

Yvette reported that planning for our May 1st event is going well and we have a timeline we’re working against. Carver has found a virtual production company, Veekast, that will help us in structuring the night using a combination of live and taped videos to create our branded online event. Among the resources that Veekast provides is the Fundometer-a fundraising thermometer – which allows us to recognize donations in real time. April has spoken to Lindley Pless (who made the video from our last benefit) to take a look at all of the footage she has and help us create a four minute video for this year’s event. The team is looking at a company, Virtual Tables, that has the technology to get table hosts in separate “rooms’ with their virtual guests and recreate the paddle raise in a more intimate online forum.

The event planning team is in the process of developing a theme for the event that showcases the history of Carver (past, present, future) with a focus on how Carver is here “when we’re needed most”. Colleen mentioned that we will start fundraising two weeks in advance of the event and hope to send out the Save the Date the third week in March. We hope to get 350+ guests at the online benefit.

Yvette said the event team is looking for ways to get other board members involved with the event including being a table host, soliciting sponsorships and journal ads for the online journal and joining the event committee to help think through the event content and run of show during our weekly Tuesday zooms at 3pm. Materials for sponsorships and journal ads are being updated and will be ready in a week or two and all meeting participants were encouraged to help in soliciting these. Jim also encouraged everyone present to be table hosts and Anne, Claire, Yvette, Colleen, Jim, Jason, Chris and Erica agreed to host.

Erica asked why we capped the number of participants at 350 and Claire answered that 350 was our starting number and we hoped to have more guests given the online accessibility. She also asked if we would be able to use Lindley’s video as a marketing tool and we said yes.

Jim was concerned that the history component of the theme was not right and Claire clarified that we were talking more about historical challenges that Carver faced and how Carver rose to the occasion.

Case for Support (Colleen, Andrew)

Board members were asked to review the Case for Support in advance of the meeting. This document is a development plan to help with fundraising and is based on input from the Stakeholder interviews. Amy asked if these would be sent as a card or a card and a call and Andrew clarified that the stakeholder interviews are not solicitation calls but rather interviews with donors at all levels to measure donors’ perception of and knowledge of Carver.

Colleen reported that it is intended to be a document that we can send to potential donors to convey how important the work at Carver is.

Andrew mentioned that LAPA has conducted 35 stakeholder interviews to date and has noted three things: donors are watching, they are smart, and they want to be involved and are looking for ways to be involved. He said our donors are interested in the Portchester community especially with regard to food insecurity and how Carver is helping. Our donors are ready to give and one interviewee asked what a good donation looked like. Andrew responded ten thousand dollars or above. He reported that the case for support can be a powerful tool to reference in a meeting with a donor or as a follow up document. It is designed for people with the potential to donate $2,500 or more.

Board members were then asked for their feedback.

Jim Howland said many fundraising campaigns look at dollars and also participation because both are important. He wondered if Carver planned to look at participation as well. He felt the introduction (Who We Are) needed to be stronger and talk more about Carver’s ongoing mission especially in the pandemic. He felt it needed more of a longer term view. He also felt the bullet points needed to be more specific (with statistics) to highlight Carver’s impact over time. He also questioned the 1.5 million ask in Insert 5 because he felt it was vague and unclear what the money would be used for and worried whether this would impact restricted or annual appeal. Colleen said that $1.5 figure was based on operating costs and programs.

Claire was concerned about the gift chart and how that conversation might look and also when the roll out was scheduled for because it would create a conflict with the benefit.

Collen said in April but mentioned that they might have to spend more time on the document.

No comments were made about inserts 1 through 4.

The meeting was adjourned at 6:30pm.