

**Office of Faith-Based and Community Initiatives
Indiana Government Center South
302 West Washington Street, Room E012
Indianapolis, Indiana 46204**

**Meeting of
Indiana Faith-Based Advisory Council
January 24, 2006
1:00 – 4:00PM**

Meeting Minutes

Present:	Eugene Spicer	Marcia Goldstone
	Orlando Toledo	Curt Smith
	Tom Walker	Dan Haifley
	Rick George	Julianne Andrews
	Tammy Culp	Jeff Glover
	E. Anne Henning-Byfield	Ann Gries
	Jerry Alexander	Mark Teike
	Leah Thompson	Diane McMillan
	Joseph Gibson	Mohammad Al-sanousi
	Laverna Truitt	Jim Capps
	Glen Tebbe	Domingo Castillo
	Dennis Sasso	Michael Latham
	Jerry Pattengale	Terry Wood
	Charles Ware	Benny Simmons

Paula Parker-Sawyers gave an in-depth overview of OFBCI and its initiatives statewide, and opened the floor for discussion of several suggested responsibilities of the Faith-Based Advisory Council.

Key Points of the Discussion:

- 1) **Basic regulations on the participation of Faith-Based Organizations in Publicly-Funded Activities.** Following are some of the basic rules of thumb: 1) there can be no faith barrier for someone to access the service provided; 2) services provided must be separate in time and place from “inherently religious activities;” 3) no proselytizing; 4) must be able to show that time spent for religious activities was not funded by government dollars; and 5) it is usually best to establish a separate 501 (c)(3) nonprofit organization from the congregation, for accounting purposes.
- 2) **Suggested role of Faith-Based Advisory Council (IFBAC).** IFBAC members will help their various faith constituencies understand opportunities available to them for public funding and partnership with government agencies, with such information as is provided to them from OFBCI. IFBAC members will also let OFBCI know of any instances where faith-based organizations are being unfairly excluded from competition for government funding. IFBAC members will also assist OFBCI in identifying local needs of faith-based organizations, and will advise OFBCI when certain government policies are a hindrance to the proper functioning of such organizations. IFBAC members will also aid OFBCI in creating an effective method of communicating with faith-based organizations in time of natural or man-made disaster.

- 3) **Suggested initiatives for IFBAC to act on.** Paula noted several OFBCI initiatives particularly of note to faith-based organizations. IFBAC members may play some role in either promoting or piloting some of these programs statewide: 2006 Governor's Conference on Service and Volunteerism; spreading AmeriCorps funding across the State to achieve higher impact; Body and Soul Initiative for African American Congregations; Healthy Congregations Program; Assets for Independence Program; 2006 Governor's Luncheon for Faith Leaders; statewide initiatives to educate faith-based organizations about requirements for applying for public grant funds.
- 4) **OFBCI Activities.** Because OFBCI is principally funded from the Corporation for National and Community Service, approximately 60-70% of resources and energy are expended in CNCS activities, such as AmeriCorps. The remaining funds and time are used in working with faith-based and community organizations to help them locate resources for their organization, and in working on special projects, such as public health initiatives. Indiana's is one of two agencies nationwide that encompass both the responsibilities for AmeriCorps and outreach to faith-based and community organizations.
- 5) **Governor's Conference on Service and Volunteerism.** This event will be held on April 10-11, 2006 at the Indianapolis Downtown Marriott. The theme of this year's event is "Be the Solution." There will be nine separate educational tracks. The solution tracks include sessions on funding, communication, media & public relations, career enhancement, faith-based initiatives, volunteerism, national service, service learning, and youth. The theme of the faith-based track will be prisoner re-entry.
- 6) **Healthy Congregations Program.** This will be a statewide initiative to promote healthy eating and living in Indiana's congregations. There will be a difficulty for small churches in participating in this program if they are already overworked. It would be helpful for OFBCI to provide materials to disseminate on healthy eating and living, so that individual congregations don't have to do all the work. This program will be most successful if the implementation is as simple as possible. There will undoubtedly be several organizations across the state already working on such initiatives, such as hospital foundations. IFBAC members will help OFBCI in locating these organizations for the possibility of collaboration. OFBCI intervention will be necessary to establish some of these relationships.
- 7) **Assets for Independence Program.** This is a program where individuals may open an Individual Development Account to save towards some end (such as a house, business, education, etc.). These funds are matched by the government. The Department of Health and Human Services has offered to come out and provide technical assistance if we are interested in having them come out. Financial partners will need to be brought to the table for this program to be implemented. When asked if there was some interest, the council indicated that they thought there would be.
- 8) **2006 Governor's Luncheon for Faith Leaders.** The 2006 event will be held in November. OFBCI is working on having a workshop before and after the event, both of which will be on the same topic, so that individuals traveling long distance may leave later and still have the opportunity to attend both the lunch and the workshop. One possible subject area will be prisoner re-entry. Two names were mentioned as possible contacts for speakers: Dr. Ed McGarrell at the University of Michigan and Pastor Everett Freels, who operates an initiative in Southwest Indiana.
- 9) **Logistics for future meetings.** From now on, all meetings will not exceed 2 hours in length. The Council will meet four times annually, and members can participate via teleconference if they cannot attend in person. The best date for council members to attend will be Tuesdays, during the mid-afternoon. The meeting scheduled for April 12

will be rescheduled for April 11, time TBA. It was suggested that, at future meetings, a ½ hour networking session be allowed prior to the actual meeting.

Next Meeting Date: Tuesday, April 11, 2006 (Time TBA)

Respectfully submitted,

John Rentsch, VISTA Faith-Based Program Assistant
Office of Faith-Based and Community Initiatives
January 24, 2006