

Educational Prosperity Initiative

March 5, 2015 10:00 AM

Fairmont Community Center

Call to Order- Jewel Walker-Harps

Present- Hazel Parks, Shelia Hall, John Cruickshank, Bruce Ballard, Dewey Halley, Tracy McLean, Ray Lightner, Lt. Josh Hinson, Morris Leaks, John Whitner, Clyde Forbes, Jimmy Jones, Fannie K. Delaney, Donna Parks, Joyce McClendon, Marie Pylon, Eddie Bogan, Annette Touchstone, Wayne Lamar, Anissa Freeman, Kelly Leger, Jean Reid, Josephine Driver, Glenn Williams, Theo Harris, Jewel Walker-Harps, Regina Abbott, Keith Simmons, Molli Pruitt, Sheila Mathews, Donna Parks, and one illegible signature. (32)

Prayer- Theo Harris / **Pledge-** John Whitner

Minutes- Motion by Hazel Parks to approve October 2, November 6, 2014, and February 5, 2015; second by Theo Harris; unanimous vote.

Healthy Children Conference- Molli Pruitt, Spalding County Health Department, reviewed the topics to be presented at the 2nd annual conference on April 2 at the UGA Griffin Campus. Topics include Stewards of Children child sexual abuse prevention, compassion fatigue, early childhood development, low birthweight, parenting skills, educational and behavioral intervention, immunizations, and WIC. Presenting organizations include Children's Healthcare of Atlanta, March of Dimes, Georgia Center for Child Advocacy, Caring House, Spalding County Health Department, District 4 Health Services, Ferst Foundation of Spalding County. Lunch provided. Registration is free. Donations are accepted. Over 100 of 160 available seats are registered to date. The April EPI meeting will be cancelled to afford EPI members the opportunity to attend the conference.

Race to the Top & Career Academies- Griffin High School (GHS) Principal Keith Simmons presented an update on Race to the Top (RTTT) and the Career Academies (CA). RTTT afforded traditionally low performing schools the opportunity to improve educational outcomes. The G/S system had two such schools. Components included improved outcomes or student achievement, training and retention of highly effective teachers, and teacher evaluation linked to student performance. Focus was placed on what students are learning rather than what teachers are doing. Teacher evaluation was re-vamped to improve outcomes for students. CA options will cover freshman (9th grade focus on promotion), STEM (three times more likely to graduate), Consumer Sciences, fine arts (film industry), culinary arts, nursing, and business academies. Relevance ("real world") makes rigor! Recruiting and hiring teachers who are content savvy and can build relationships with students. Spalding, Lamar and Butts will leverage the Regional College and Career Academy to increase the number of students on track, graduating and admitting into college. GHS will implement block scheduling (same 4 classes per day for a term) at the start of the next school year. The traditional 7 50-minute periods per day is detrimental to students who learn by doing. Disciplinary actions resulting from undesired behavior are cut in half with block scheduling. In 2007, the AJC reported GSCS to have one of the highest suspension rates in Georgia. In-school suspension and out-of-school suspension replaced with afterschool and Saturday detention decreased the number of suspensions in 2008 from 12,000+ to <6,000 in 2014. Expelled students can continue studies via the internet. The upcoming E-SPLOST is designated for classroom cameras, which will provide live feed.

Summer Food Program- Parks & Recreation is partnering with A. D. Smith Community Development to serve their three sites, City Park, Fairmont Park, and AMBUCS Park

Hopeville Boys Center- March Madness with Parks & Recreation and Southern Crescent Technical College, basketball tournament, garden bed for club

Community Garden- First meeting of the planting season with 12 attending, 18 gardeners signed up; only a few beds left

Adult Literacy / GED- Students have gone to take GED or practice GED

No report from the following: Backpack Food for Kids, Resident Council, Youth Committee, Young Scholars, Meriwether Redevelopment Research Project, Kids in Action, Mentoring

Historical Committee- UGA Athens and Griffin campuses have offered a once-in-a-lifetime opportunity to preserve the history of Fairmont and African-Americans through an oral history project. Jewel Walker-Harps will meet with Glen Williams, John Whitner and Hazel Parks in April to develop plans to move forward with the project. The project will be highlighted on the UGA Radio Program on WKEU during March.

Introductions / Closing Comments- Health Fair at Senior Center on March 14


Next Meeting- May 7 at 10am at Fairmont Community Center.

Meeting adjourned

Respectfully submitted:


Regina Abbott, Consultant

Approved:


Jewel Walker-Harps, Chair