

The North Iowa Diversity Appreciation Team (NIDAT) met in the basement conference room at City Hall in Mason City on Wednesday June 11, 2008. Those in attendance included Melissa Weiner, Aimee Kern, Jackie Luecht, Deb Clites, Matt Marquardt, Linda Woodcock, Jane Ginapp, Rev. Jack Gannett, Caleb Fritzler and Dixie Lamoreux.

Jane called the meeting to order. In the absence of Joy Drennen, Jane reported that the bank balance is \$1736.11.

Matt came to find out where we were with our web site and wanting to add the resource guide for people relocating to the area to our site. He explained that there is more than one way to handle this. The guide will be in both Spanish and English and will be able to be downloaded. He explained that the most inexpensive way would be to trade links with area newspapers and agencies. He will optimize the site to help us with this. We also need to have a name for the resource guide as well as different key words that will be able to be searched and will come up with our site as an option. Our fee for the site is not due until early fall so by that time, we will need to have things organized so Matt can assist with the entire process and not need to put in too many hours on his part.

Some of the key words that were mentioned are: Retail, Utilities, Employment, Churches, Entertainment, Police, Fire Department, Ambulance, Services (offered thru the city). If anyone has any thoughts on any of this, please contact Jane so we can get things going on it as soon as possible.

Jane gave everyone a flyer for our event in September – Lunch by Central Park. She will be sending a copy via email to all members so that you can print them off and post them/distribute them as you think appropriate.

Jane also had a sheet with all of the information that vendors will need to know. We are having a problem with the tables but are working on getting that straightened out before our July meeting. Southbridge Mall now charges \$10 per table and we would need to have one table and two chairs for each of the vendors and one table and one chair for those participating in the Information Fair. Dixie can arrange to have tables hauled that day if we can locate some to use. By our July meeting we will have more answers regarding this.

Jane will also be printing signs for each of the vendors telling who they are and what they are serving. We presently have seven vendors with food or drinks. We will take more and if anyone has anyone they know who might be interested, they need to contact Jane.

Jackie and Deb will be contacting agencies for the Information Fair through letters that will be sent out. Deb also mentioned that they might try and work up something for people to have stamped by the Information Fair participants and that way we would have a better count of how many people visit each table. Then they would perhaps have a drawing for those who visit all of the tables and have their card stamped by the participants.

Linda will be contacting Ed Wineinger to check on the possibility of his vacant building being used for the Information Fair in case of rain.

We also have an issue with the electrical outlets not being able to accommodate all of the food vendors. We will be speaking with Mark Suby and seeing what can be done to insure we will be able to provide the electrical outlets we need for them. Dixie will be checking with Mark on this.

The next topic of conversation was that of the recent racial issue that happened in Mason City. There was a listening post that was held and Melissa attended. She told us that the city is looking into writing an ordinance against hate crimes and also having a response team that communicates that this sort of behavior will not be tolerated. Some of the NIDAT members are wondering exactly what NIDAT's role would be in this. Most expressed that they feel NIDAT needs to support all diversity in the community. It was mentioned that we could perhaps make ribbons and staple a note to each stating that NIDAT does support all types of diversity and we could possibly distribute these at the event in September. We will discuss that more at the July meeting.

Our final discussion was about goals for NIDAT for the next five years. This needs to be an agenda item and perhaps we need to discuss having a committee to come up with such goals. Dixie stated that with our present membership and most of the work falling to just a few as often happens we cannot take on any more events to sponsor throughout the year. We need to figure out how we can increase membership and then openly discuss having other events that would raise awareness of NIDAT.

With no further business to discuss, the meeting adjourned about 5:15. Our next meeting will be July 9, 2008 at 4 PM.

Respectfully submitted by – Dixie Lamoreux