

REPORT OF THE PORTER-BROWARD TASKFORCE

Approved by Session, June 1, 2022

Background:

The Taskforce, as approved by Session, consists of David Allebach, Gwen Allen, Peg Calvario, Bill Dupree, Andy Lane, Fred Remelius, Sharon Sgriccia, Sharon Trevoy, and Tom Zeigler. Carter, Kerry, and Jaylee serve ex-officio and the co-pastors moderate the meetings. The Taskforce was charged with researching options for use of the Porter-Broward grant according to criteria previously adopted by Session. The Taskforce consisted of members of the Session, Spiritual Formation, Mission, and Administrative Committees, as well as “at-large” members to provide a broad perspective on our work.

The Taskforce met two times. At the first meeting, the Taskforce reviewed the criteria adopted by Session, reviewed the ideas for use of the money submitted by members of the congregation following announcements appearing in the weekly pastoral newsletter and brainstormed other potential uses for the money. Assignments were then made to research the various options, either by contacting various agencies in the community, or by speaking with appropriate members of the church with knowledge of the pertinent issues regarding need and costs.

At the second meeting, on May 23, the Taskforce reviewed the various proposals which totaled more than \$188,000. The amount available is \$114,127.01. The Taskforce reached the following consensus regarding the money.

The Taskforce recommendations are made under the three “Guidelines” adopted by the Session for use of the Foundation grant. A spreadsheet summary of the recommendations is attached as an appendix.

Guideline 1: Grants made to start/enhance current ministries of FPC (Total: \$45,460)

1. Childcare (\$2000)

This money is requested to once again provide a consistent welcoming and caring face for parents and children and a steady presence to work alongside our legion of hardworking childcare volunteers on Sunday mornings and supports childcare for the Thursday Bible study. **We hope this can all or at least in part be shifted to the regular budget in 2023.**

2. Parish Nurse (\$23,300)

Projected costs to cover salary, mileage, and other expenses for the parish nurse. This has always been understood to be a position that will be supported by the Porter Broward grants rather than the general budget.

3. Health Ministry Equipment (\$960)

This covers needs outlined by our Parish Nurse, Dawn Skelly: wall mounted boxes for the AEDs to make them more visible and accessible, a new stethoscope and emergency aid bag, first aid supplies, two large-size blood pressure cuffs and two adults pads for the AED as well as service of the AED's.

4. Health Ministry Training (\$600)

This will cover training programs to be set up by Dawn and the Health Ministry team in Fall, 2022.

5. Webpage/Communications Consultant (\$3600)

Where would we be without this support for our ministry? This grant will cover the expenses to date and projected expenses for the rest of the year. **We hope that over time this fee can be shifted to the General Fund.**

6. Bookkeeper (\$15,000)

This will cover “Phase 2” of the contract with Ludwig Consultants who is performing bookkeeping services for the church. Over time, as the books are “cleaned up” and as Ludwig becomes more familiar with the church's operations, we anticipate that the number of weekly hours will decline. **We hope that this fee can over time be shifted to the General Fund.**

Guideline Two: Grants for building improvements (Total: \$36,700)

1. Gaga Pit (\$1700)

To build a permanent “gaga” pit for our children and youth, replacing the temporary one which we have been using which is broken.

2. Major Projects (\$35,000)

Rather than trying to set aside and keep discrete separate allocations in the Capital Improvement fund for several upcoming major maintenance projects, Admin. Committee, is recommending that money be allocated and designated as an inclusive “Major Projects” set aside in the Capital Improvement Fund. Upcoming major maintenance needs are anticipated, for example, in replacing the roof, the air conditioner chiller, and digital components of the organ – all of which are approaching the end of their expected “life.”

Guideline 3: Support of outside organizations and ministries (\$31,950)

1. Steel River Playhouse (\$4000)

This grant will cover bus transportation for 1000 students to see special day-time performances of an age-appropriate play/musical that they would otherwise be unable to see.

2. Foundation for Pottstown Education (\$6750)

This grant will cover the cost of tuition for two students from the Pottstown High School to enroll in the Pottstown Promise Early College Enrollment Program at the Montgomery County Community College for one year with each student earning 15 credits.

3. The Women’s Center of Montgomery County (\$1500)

The Women’s Center’s (WCMC) primary organizational purpose is to eliminate domestic violence so that individuals and families can live safer, more stable lives, and thrive. The grant will provide training and resources for the Women’s Center “Hotel Initiative.” The Initiative will create protocols and procedures for hotel employees addressing domestic violence that occurs on the hotel property.

4. Pottstown Public Library (\$3000)

This grant will be used to purchase laptops that library patrons can use in the library to look for jobs, housing, and social services. These laptops will be especially useful for parents of children and youth so that they can work anywhere in the library where their children are present rather than being limited to the area with desktop computers.

5. Cluster of Religious Communities (\$2000)

The Cluster Outreach Center will use this second-year grant to install a generator so that food stored in the refrigerators and freezers will not be lost during a power failure.

6. Schuylkill River Greenways (\$700)

SRG has the mission to connect residents, visitors, and communities to the Schuylkill River and the River Trail by serving as a catalyst for civic engagement and economic development to foster stewardship of the watershed and its heritage. This grant will renew our two-year trail sponsorship signified by a sign on the trail near Grosstown Road.

7. Ricketts’ Center (Boyertown Multi-service) (\$2000)

The Ricketts Community Center has been a hub of athletic, educational, and wellness programming for over 40 years. The grant will be used to help purchase security cameras to deter negative activities and behaviors inside and outside the Center, especially after hours.

8. Laurel House (\$2000)

Laurel House provides comprehensive supportive services to victims of domestic violence in Montgomery County with emergency shelter, a confidential 24/7 hotline, transitional housing, individual counseling, support groups, and many other services. This grant will be used to support Laurel House’s emergency assistance program so that Laurel House can continue to aid any victim, without hesitation, who comes to Laurel House in danger.

9. Pottstown Farm (\$2000)

The mission of Pottstown FARM, (Farm and Artisan Regional Market) is to provide fresh, locally grown, agricultural products and hand-made artisan goods to the Pottstown region. A farmer's market is held in Smith Plaza every other Saturday during the summer. The grant will be used to give those using a SNAP card additional FARM funds so that they can serve their families fresher food.

10. Salvation Army Booth Lessig Family Residence (\$3600)

The Booth-Lessig Family Residence is the only shelter for homeless families with children in the Pottstown area. The grant will pay for a replacement freezer, a critical need for storing donated foods.

11. Janet's Planet Astronaut Academy Camp Summer Scholarships (\$1500)

This summer camp is a brand-new STEAM (Science, Technology, Engineering, Arts, and Math) camp for elementary-aged students. It is being offered in the new Challenger Center on the Montgomery County Community College campus. The grant will cover five scholarships with a priority for Pottstown students.

12. Boy Scout Trailer (\$2900)

As the Boy Scout Troop (146) housed at the church enters its third year and continues to grow, it needs additional storage room for equipment. The troop would like to purchase a trailer to store equipment and aid in moving that gear to and from Scouting events. The trailer will signify FPC's support. The grant represents approximately half of the cost for such a trailer.

Respectfully submitted,
Porter-Broward Taskforce

