



**Center for Rural Social Work Research and
Development**

School of Social Work
Stephen F. Austin State University
420 E. Starr Avenue
Nacogdoches, Texas 75962
(936) 468-2228

Better Together Board Meeting Minutes

Friday, May 27, 2023, 12:00-1:00 PM

SFA School of Social Work, Room 203 and Zoom

Board members in attendance: in person Erin Windham, Anna Donihoo, Mario Torres, Dr. Freddie Avant, Cinessa Garner Tipps, on Zoom Tracie Eastepp, Dr. Andrew Dies, and Hart Hinze. Erin kept minutes for this meeting.

Others in attendance: Alana Culpepper through zoom

The board approved minutes from the last board meeting.

Alana Culpepper, from Oceans, presented about Nac Safe Place. She informed the board that this would be a safe space with a “therapeutic” environment where community members can go to feel safe. The purpose is suicide prevention. Alana stated that she is a life coach and can talk to the patron to assess if a higher level of care is needed and make referrals to counselors. There is a one-mile walk on September 23 to raise funds and awareness for Nac Safe Space. The website is www.nacsafeplace.life.

Dr. Avant reported from the sustainability committee that he spoke with SFA human resources and the salary posted for our job position is currently set at I \$49,000 as the mid and \$62,000 as the maximum. He will send interview questions to Anna to be emailed to the board. There was discussion about regrading the JAQ to an 8. Hart moved to regrade and Erin seconded the motion. Dr. Avant noted that Dr. Nep will need to approve the change.

Anna reported that the website is now updated and she shared the newsletter she created for network partners. She also informed the board there is a little over \$120,000 in the account and a disbursement is due to come in in July sometime for around \$145,000. There are some outstanding payments related to the previous coordinator leaving the position. Anna had conferred with Jennifer Hanlon Patterson about how the grant funds are handled and she explained that the 10% overhead is added to payments as the grant money is spent. She is available to answer questions as they arise.

The board agreed to hold meetings in June and July. Anna and Dr. Avant reminded the group of the upcoming WRC at the end of August or beginning of September in Falfurrias, TX. A date has not been set for this event.



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Erin reported on a new program proposed to begin locally called Give 5, a program that matches retirees with volunteer opportunities within the community and builds relationships between retired community members and relieves senior isolation while providing nonprofits with much-needed help.