



Community Relations Committee

Meeting:

Thursday, September 22nd, 2022 @ 1:00 pm In-person

Committee Members:

Co-Chairpersons: Rob Coleman-SRE and Jill Stueve-KWI

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Shannon Zandanel; KST Darcie Harvey; EXP Mitchel Masten; EXP Diane Fry; Fairway Jessica Wollesen; First State Bank & Trust Jennifer Bewley; KWI Greta Carter-Wilson; KWI Scott Boling; Coldwell Banker Secily Rees; Envista CU Kelsey McClasky; Fairway Jenna Logan; Abe & Jakes Mark Hernandez; Fairway 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Andrew Drinkard; Lawyers Title Mary Jones; MCG Taylor LaRue; MCG Deborah McMullen; MCG Kent Fisher; Meritrust CU Jasmine Collins; Platinum Bev Hill; Platinum Susan Parker; Platinum Ryan Desch; R & K Wilna Strydom; Lawyers Title Laura Polite; SRE Kate White; CEK Insurance 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Erin Maigaard; HRE Sean Williams; HRE Debi Waggoner; Sec 1st Randy Barnes; SRE Lee Beth Dever; SRE Amy Wilson; SRE Amy Newell; Truicity CU Cindy Glynn; Coldwell Banker Renee Barrett; Crystal Clear Realty Janella Williams, 3 Clever Broads Abigail Hummel; SRE
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I. Review and Approve Meeting Minutes from 08.25.22

- II. **Lawrence REALTORS® Community Foundation Update:** Kate White, 2022 Chairperson
- Open application for grant funding to share with charitable organizations-invite non-profits to apply!

III. Keys to Good Tenancy: Update from Ryan Desch

- Get dates on the calendar
- Volunteer list; 2 needed per session

IV. Upcoming Events/Activities

JUST FOOD IS IN DIRE NEED OF FOOD

-Who will a spokesperson from each office to collect food?

- Just Food Virtual Food Drive/Food 4 Every Home program.
- Red Cross Blood Drives This Year
 - October 24/25
- Affiliate Mixer RECAP

Steering Committee Reports

- Brew Fest –RECAP from Abe & Jakes Saturday, August 20th from 4-7pm
- Charity Classic Golf Tournament – UPDATE
 - Monday, October 3rd
 - Last push for Hole Sponsors-only 4 needed for our goal of 33! Who do you know that wants to be a sponsor?
- Lawrence Lights – Making Spirits Bright -UPDATE
 - Volunteers are needed for the various Committees
 - Sponsorships-MAJOR NEED
 - Advertising and Marketing-MAJOR NEED
 - Ticketing (2 people needed)

4. Volunteer Coordinating
 - ii. Volunteers will be needed for setup two weeks up to opening night.
OPENING NIGHT: November 25th, 2022
- V. **River City Recognition Award**
 - a. Call for nominations, see attachment in packet for descriptions. Deadline for nominations extended to **October 7th**. Awards presented at LRCF Luncheon on November 15th
 - i. Humanitarian Contribution to the Community Award
 - ii. Architectural Enhancement in the Community Award
 - iii. Nominate online at <https://www.lawrencerealtor.com/lbor-awards/>
- VI. **Next Meeting:** Thursday, October 27th at 1pm (every 4th Thursday of the month)
 - a. In-Person/Zoom unless otherwise instructed
 - b. Address need for special meeting to review RCR Award Nominations
 - c. Address Meeting Conflict in November

2022 - Remaining Calendar Reminders

Standing Dates:

- October 3rd – LRCF Charity Classic Golf Fundraiser, Lawrence Country Club
(Rain date on 10/17)
- October 7th – River City Recognition (RCR) Awards Nomination Deadline
Humanitarian Contribution to the Community
Architectural Enhancement in the Community
(Do we need a special meeting to determine Award Winners, or should we do this during the October 27th meeting?)
- October 12th – Lawrence REALTORS® Community Foundation Meeting, 11:00 am
- October 14th – Housing Market Forecast Breakfast, Arterra Event Gallery, 8:30 am
- October 24th & 25th - LBOR Blood Drive, LBOR Office
- October 27th – Community Relations Committee Meeting, 1:00 pm
- November 9th – Lawrence REALTORS® Community Foundation Meeting, 11:00 am
- (Subject to change - NAR Annual Conference is November 9-14)
- November 15th - Lawrence REALTORS® Community Foundation Luncheon, 11:45 am
(Maceli's/Arterra TBA - Annual Funding Awards and RCR Awards Presented)
- **November 24th – Community Relations Committee Meeting, 1:00 pm**
(Need to Change due to Thanksgiving Holiday)
- December 22nd – Community Relations Committee Meeting, 1:00 pm

Subscribe to the Calendar using the following iCal information:

<https://lawrenceboardofrealtors.growthzoneapp.com/ap/CalendarFeed/3261>

Community Relations Committee Meeting Minutes

Thursday August 25, 2022 @ 1:00 pm via Zoom/In-person

Co-Chairpersons: Rob Coleman – Stephens Real Estate and Jill Stueve – KW Integrity

The meeting was called to order by Chairpersons Jill Stueve and Rob Coleman. The Committee welcomed new members and did introductions.

Next, the Committee received an update on the Lawrence REALTORS® Community Foundation from Kate White, 2022 Chairperson. Applications for funding are officially open and will close on October 10th. Applications are available online at LawrenceRealtor.com/foundation.

Next, the Committee talked about the Virtual Food Drive/Food 4 Every Home. Any proceeds collected should be directed to Just Food. Committee members agreed that all need to make a concerted effort to promote this program.

Next, the LBOR Blood Drive is scheduled for October 24th and 25th.

Discussions of a project with USD 497 Schools have not yet happened, and nothing is planned at this time. We will reach out again in May of 2023. Nothing is planned for 2022.

Next, the Committee received reports from our event Steering Committees:

- a. Brew Fest –Abe & Jakes
 - i. Feedback included:
 - 1. Next Year we need to be in June – Booked for June 16, 2023
 - 2. Need Brew Descriptions at different beer stations
 - 3. Include Pretzels Inc – Pretzel Necklaces
 - 4. Corn Dogs?
 - 5. Do Rating/Score Cards for participants....have prizes for 1,2,3 finishers.
 - 6. Do a Silent Auction to raise money – very mixed reaction to this...so opposed.
 - 7. Go with Live Music instead of a DJ next year. (or consider Tyler Gregory)
 - 8. Brew Fest 2023 Committee to include: Ryan Desch, Debi Wagoner, Kate White, Jill Stueve, Kelsey McClasky, Greta Carter-Wilson, Secily Rees, and Scott Boling. Include Janella Williams and Jenna Logan as Committee Members from the Community.
- b. Charity Classic Golf Tournament Update –
 - i. Monday, October 3rd
 - ii. Early Bird Registration is underway.
 - iii. Hole Sponsors are needed.
- c. Lawrence Lights – Making Spirits Bright
 - i. Sponsorship Forms are included with today's handouts.
 - ii. Volunteers are needed for the various Committees

Next, the Committee was informed that Nominations for RCR Awards will be coming up soon.

The next meeting is scheduled on Thursday, September 22nd at 1pm and will be held in person/Zoom unless otherwise instructed.

Meeting adjourned.

Just Food staff: Inflation, expiring government aid contributing to record number of patrons visiting food bank



photo by: Ashley Golledge

Just Food, 1000 E. 11th St., is pictured on Wednesday, March 3, 2021.

Early last week, Just Food set a record for patrons served in one day — for the third time this year.

Marston Hearing Center is now part of Associated Audiologists, the region's leader in providing quality care for hearing loss, tinnitus and dizziness/balance.

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On Aug. 16, the food bank served 478 households — or 1,186 individuals — in a single day. Ryan Bowersox, Just Food's outreach director, told the Journal-World Friday that up until just prior to the coronavirus pandemic, one record-breaking day, let alone three, was rare.

"I remember we broke the record right when I first started at Just Food (in August of 2019), and it hadn't been broken in years," Bowersox said. "It was a big deal."

The issue isn't unique to Lawrence. Just Food is part of the Feeding America network of food banks, and Bowersox said 80% of network food banks across the country have been reporting a similar increased or sustained demand for food assistance during the past few months.

Locally, Just Food's retention rate for patrons who use its services more than three times per year has spiked by 40% since the beginning of the pandemic. Bowersox said that means many patrons may now be visiting Just Food as part of a weekly routine, rather than just because of a more temporary need like an unexpected expense or job loss.

Bowersox said there's no simple answer as to why the need for food assistance has grown so much in the past few years, in large part because there's no one reason why patrons might be struggling with food insecurity in the first place.

But there are many factors that are likely contributors: the rising cost of food, gas and housing, for a start.

“Currently we’re trying to prepare for the holidays,” Bowersox said. “Traditionally, we’ve always been able to feed every person that signs up for both Thanksgiving and a winter holiday; we’re able to provide them with a turkey, as well as sides, things like that. We ran the numbers to just get the turkeys, and it’s \$43,000 to purchase those turkeys at the wholesale price that we are able to get.”

That’s a result of an outbreak of avian influenza, which, according to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, as of Aug. 19 has been detected in more than 40 million wild aquatic birds, commercial poultry, and backyard or hobbyist flocks since January.

It’s a common misconception that Just Food’s supply is stocked solely by donations, Bowersox said. The food bank actually has a budget for purchasing a consistent supply of certain perishable foods like poultry, which is why its current cost is an issue. Another food that falls in this category is produce, which Bowersox said is donated far less frequently when the growing season ends.

“If we only did donations, we’d only have applesauce and canned goods on our shelves,” Bowersox said. “It’s very rare that we get perishables like milk and eggs, that type of donation.”

Government assistance that was made available earlier on in the pandemic is expiring, another reason that need is increasing. The child tax credit payments expanded under President Joe Biden as part of the American Rescue Plan Act expired at the end of 2021, for one. Bowersox said the credits not only helped families with a greater financial need but also led to more donations to the agency from more affluent families who didn’t need the extra cash.

The universal free school lunch program introduced in 2020 also expired this summer. When Lawrence students returned for their first day of school last week, it was with the system prior to the pandemic in place — schools take applications and use family income to determine whether kids qualify for free, reduced-price or paid meals.

On top of larger-scale challenges like those, not to mention the looming specter of climate change and its effect on food production, Bowersox said challenges on an individual level only compound the issue. People without a car, for example, have to tackle “time poverty” — they might not be able to take advantage of sales happening at grocery stores across town from each other, for example, because they’re forced to rely on lengthier bus rides for transportation.

Just Food may be able to make more of a dent in terms of another challenge, food waste, thanks to a *new production space for ready-to-eat meals* set to be up and running in downtown Lawrence by the end of the month. It'll be the latest step in a program that, since March, has *helped save thousands of pounds* of nearly expired food while simultaneously feeding more patrons.

"Something I'm really proud of with the production space is we're going to be giving time back to families to be able to spend together," Bowersox added. "I think that's amazing, and I think introducing folks to new foods that they may not have tried before is something incredible."

There are a number of ways community members can help make an impact. For one, Bowersox said any food or monetary donations go a long way. She also encouraged volunteering, whether it be simply one's time or a skill that could benefit the food bank's operations or one of its programs. The food bank also encourages workplace groups to volunteer together. Even small actions like sharing Just Food's social media posts can help, she said.

The issue of food insecurity extends beyond Just Food, Bowersox noted, so she also recommends supporting other local agencies like the Sunrise Project in an effort to further bridge the gaps.

Bowersox said she and other leaders with Just Food understand "the power food has," both in positive ways and in negative ways. The challenges of the time mean that many of the positives, like how cooking a meal can bring a family together, are dampened by the stress of where the next meal will come from.

"I don't want food to be a stressful topic for anyone, and it is — I can hear it every day in the pantry," Bowersox said.

Those interested in learning more about volunteering or donating can email Bowersox at outreach@justfoodks.org.



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