

Otsego Refugee Resettlement Coalition

www.refugeotsego.org

February 8, 2023

4 PM

Meeting Notes

20 attendees

1. Welcome – Debra Marcus
2. Nest Steps: WelcomeCorps.org – Debra Marcus
 - a. Suggested reviewing the WelcomeCorps website, including the FAQs which show that the Coalition is prepared to receive refugees.
 - b. We have a sponsor group of five people: Carli Ficano, Debra Marcus, Margaret Parish, Jeannine Webster, and Mark Wolff. Brett Heindl is interested in joining the group. If others wish to join contact debra.marcus@fpscopy.org.
 - c. Members of the Steering Committee have already done the training and others are encouraged to do so at www.welcomecorps.org
 - d. Much of the work for the required welcome plan has already been completed through the Coalition's committees.
 - e. We will be creating a welcome plan that, once accepted, will put us in a position to receive vetted refugees, most likely from sub-Saharan Africa.
3. Housing Inventory – Carli Ficano
 - a. Current housing stock expires in August.
 - b. Requirements for housing
 - i. At least six month lease
 - ii. Within walking distance to public transit
 - iii. Stand alone unit with kitchen and bathroom.
 - c. Appeal to Coalition members to reach out to at least two people who might have housing to rent to refugees. Send leads to ficano@hartwick.edu (Carli Ficano) or use the housing application form (<https://forms.gle/tXdeUnc3MgSsSm5b7>)
4. Ensuring Communication and Regular Updates – Carli Ficano
 - a. There is a need to provide periodic communications to Coalition members and donors to keep momentum.
 - b. We need to develop a structure for sharing updates and press releases.
 - c. Mark Wolff will chair the communication committee and will channel content onto our web page. All committees should send content to Mark Wolff Wolffm0@hartwick.edu

5. Volunteer Opportunities at the Center – Mark Wolff
 - a. Mark is managing a project to take volunteers to Utica weekly on Tuesdays to volunteer at The Center, tentatively starting on 2/14. They want to start with 3-4 people. Mark will provide transportation. Leaving at 8 am and staying full day, back at 6 pm.
 - b. This may involve tutoring English, at the moment, but other projects as well.
 - c. They are also collecting warm winter clothing and umbrellas.
 - d. Wolffm0@hartwick.edu – reach out to Mark Wolff if you are interested.

6. How to Donate, How to Volunteer – Debra Marcus

Donations accepted through the Community Foundation of Otsego County.
<https://cfotsego.org/donate-pledge/> (put refugee resettlement in the memo) or check to Community Foundation of Otsego County, P.O. Box 55, Springfield Center, N.Y. 13468

7. Other concerns, ideas and announcements
 - a. Yvonne McKinnon noted that the U.S. Citizenship and Immigration website can help to find approved doctors for required health exams.