

**ITEM B.206
FOR INFORMATION**

**PRESBYTERIAN DISASTER ASSISTANCE ADVISORY COMMITTEE MINUTES
OCTOBER 8-10, 2014**

**Minutes of the
Presbyterian Disaster Assistance (PDA) Advisory Committee Meeting
October 8-10, 2014**

The Advisory Committee and staff of Presbyterian Disaster Assistance (PDA) participated in the annual October meeting on Wednesday evening, Oct. 8, Thursday, Oct. 9 and Friday morning, Oct. 10 in Louisville, KY.

Members attending: Stephanie Fritts, John Buchanan, Sally Campbell-Evans, Jeff Holland, Kathy Fay Lee (via Skype), and Adrian Washington. Zandra Maffett excused. Staff; Laurie Kraus, John Robinson, Rick Turner, Beth Snyder, Pamela Burdine, Luke Asikoye, Suzanne Case, Jenny Oldham, Kathleen Kelly, and Laura Stricklen.

On Wednesday Chair Stephanie Fritts opened the meeting with a charge to “Rally Around the Challenge to Alleviate Fear,” and a poem “Let us be People who Love”. Laurie requested that we add Stephanie’s poem/theme to our website, as words from our Advisory Committee.

Coordinator, Laurie Kraus led our discussion of the efforts to reorganize Compassion Peace Justice (CPJ), to improve the structure from the configuration of 2009. The current work in progress is designed to make CPJ more intentional about its collective impact with an integrated model of three Collectives based on – Compassionate Engagement, Equipping Disciples, and Prophetic Witness.

On Thursday, Adrian Washington presented the work of a non-profit group, Sight Unseen, with the assistance of Robert Hites, (via Skype). The group has developed eyeglasses for 30-60 days use during disaster recovery, in the U.S. first, in International legalities later (due to prescription regulations). The product is being distributed through missionaries currently, for 3rd world children without glasses available. If PDA were to support, would likely be part of an international response, rather than national.

Videos developed by David Barnhart were shown and suggested to be useful to the church with shorter pieces, combined with communication events.

Fort Hood – discussed with Suzanne Malloy, Licensed Professional Counselor/ Nation Response Team (NRT) working in Post Traumatic Shock Disorder (PTSD) - developed into a larger story. For military base families, trust & safety are key. The trauma of Human Caused Disaster on base is very dramatic. PDA’s mission was to help them to find their way back to a new normal.

David is working on a follow up on one Tsunami story tied into Resilience and Recovery in Indonesia.

Website has been in the works outside the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.)(PCUSA) structure, as a three year process. Sara Otoum helped PDA work with a local programmer who only works on faith based projects. Users can locate vimeos through the Resources area, contains a wide variety of video and paper resources.

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Access is through PCUSA, as opposed to Presbyterian Mission Agency (PMA). Donations can be done by cell phone. Special Appeals we organize can be put as a banner ad on the Presbyterian Mission Agency (PMA) home page. We work with Funds Development and World Mission. PDA pulls the trigger on Special Appeals, in consultation with others, permission in 24 hours; taking 10 days total to communicate through channels to the churches.

PDA controls our own website contact. PMA is tweaking their site also. A quiet page is in the works on the website for modification of NRT documents & grant forms to be made available to mid councils.

Site adapts to cell phone use. Disaster Responses area has US map with current disaster response we are hosting. Some reports can be connected with Twitter; PDA works through PMA Twitter.

Kathy Fay Lee and Sally Campbell Evans are working on a devotional guide for deployment – on website “on the job training” by Bobbie Uptegraff.

National Work John Buchanan and Rick Turner discussed the upcoming October 28th meeting of the New Orleans project, which Rick will attend. Joseph Johnson with Self Development of People (SDOP) is working on a project organically through Detroit, with Presbyterian Hunger Program (PHP) & SDOP.

John Robinson presented the need to work up a research model to determine the cost to rebuild a home. Stephanie asked if we track the contribution per hour that our volunteers provide; the cost to recovery? Rick responded that National Voluntary Organizations Active in Disaster (VOAD) tracks this at @ \$22 per hour, depending on the type of work being performed.

John Robinson and Rick Turner are working with our NRT to write curriculum in San Antonio on Congregational Disaster Preparation, Long-Term Recovery and a new product in Long-Term Recovery Orientation with community leaders to create cooperation during recovery.

Border Crisis conference calls led to a consultation with affected Presbyteries in the Southwest met in Tucson to discuss the changing dynamics of the asylum process.

John and Susan Krehbiel have been working on the Border Crisis; a conference call led to a consultation of affected Southwestern presbyteries in Tucson. Several of the group met at the Lutheran Refugee and Immigration Service (LIRS) conference following the PDA meeting to form responses, including NRT Harvey Howell, whose First Presbyterian Church (FPC), San Antonio is across the parking lot from where the bus drops off Unaccompanied Children (UAC). Kids are likely to live in foster/group homes for 2-5 years waiting for their hearing. Susan may co-lead learning trips with World Mission in late Jan.

PDA is sending portable indoor showers to FPC Yuma to help with influx of UAC. Susan is forming a strong coalition among the border presbyteries to share best practices to handle the border crisis.

Two years ago, National Preparedness was developed in a meeting that Susan & John Robinson attended on how the government and other groups should respond this type of crisis. None of the Directive has been followed in the current situation – leading to frustration and the leader of Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE) is furious.

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Care for Caregiving (C4CG) sent a team to High River, Alberta, CANADA following flooding in 2013, major damage/destruction of home with mold issues. Team had an excellent response. Planning other follow-up training.

Operation Dragonfire – John Robinson serves on a Center for Disease Control (CDC) committee – developing response data to utilize Facebook or social media to communicate with people during disaster re: availability of gasoline or electricity.

John is working on Ebola concerns with an Emergency Planning Committee to determine when we step in to respond, writing protocols on how we respond. John will copy documents and send to the Advisory Committee.

International Work – Liberia’s methods of handling **Ebola** are being exaggerated to create fear in U.S. ACT Alliance, Presbyterian Hunger Program (PHP) and others involved in joint response in Ebola areas in Liberia. Protective kits are needed; farmers unable to work without these \$50 kits.

Ebola has not reached a place in the U.S. where presbyteries have requested PDA to become involved; the community hasn’t maxed out its ability to cope with Ebola. We work with our partners, asking what they need. Communities cannot quarantine Ebola areas, because it shuts down the economies of those communities.

We must work with the churches. East Africa has a lot of Presbyterian influence, but West Africa does not. Nigeria was very aggressive about quarantine those affected. Communal activities, public schools closed; people are frustrated with isolation, want immediate improvements. People are hoping the “dry season” will slow down the spread of the disease. They feel God is punishing them. The government is bringing in ex-patriates to treat people. However, care is being provided to caregivers, rather than citizens.

Liberian Council of Churches is being left out. Food and transportation costs are high. Please keep them in your prayers, the situation is very stressful – they’re sending desperate pleas.

U.S. needs to prepare before Ebola takes hold and it becomes too late. PDA’s response is related to ACT. Deb Braaksma, in World Mission has reached out to revitalize a Presbyterian response.

Luke Asikoye discussed **Philippines** work, advocacy response, and developing a recovery plan related to HAYIAN disaster.

Working with Food Resource Bank (FRB), to implement an exit strategy in **Malawi**, after a ten year response. Local farmers are being connected to more global resources.

Presbyterians have strong influence in **Sudan, Africa**, where soldiers have gone into churches to kill people; Presbyterian ministers have been killed. PDA is continuing efforts for Compassion Fatigue support.

We are working with partners, dealing with difficulties in **Syria**, due to the Presbyterian Church not having a strong base there. PDA/PCUSA is much more ecumenical than other denominations. Medical disaster/Home based cares are being emphasized, rather than assist people in the best way. The Syrian Council of Churches is asking for assistance to help people appropriately. Life in the camps is so difficult that many groups are leaving and returning to their own countries, despite wars, Christian persecution.

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As a marketing strategy, what should Presbyterian pastors say PCUSA is doing? We are working with Act Alliance, which was created after **Rwanda** and local partners. Local agencies get marginalized when the International partners, with greater resources, come in to help.

In **Iraq**, where we have church partners, we are sending blankets to Iraq this fall. Church partners in Syria and Iraq have very fractioned contributions to their areas, orthodox to orthodox, etc.

We've proposed to decentralize offices from Geneva, putting directors into regional sections to address issues.

We are proud of our partners. Through our contribution to the ActAlliance appeal, a **sand dam** was built in Kitui. The dam brought increased drought resiliency for 2,000 people by providing a well, the ability to dig in the sand for drinking water that is purified by the sand/gravel and irrigation to crops with fertile soil and limited rainfall.

The concept was created by the Chinese. The dam was built across dry rivers, to trap the water in an underground aquifer. Local people are proud of their ability to build a school and a church, with solar power (because they are five years away from being on an electrical grid). The church serves as a community center for activities. Upon viewing the pictures of the Sand Dam, John Buchanan suggested adding an Instagram account to website and Facebook.

Adrian Washington requested International Humanitarian Standards to be sent to him by Laura Stricklen.

American Red Cross (ARC) grant & PDA Call Center Accomplishments were indicated in graphics presented by Kathleen Kelly. Webinar development is another growth area in PDA's work. The first webinar to be presented is being designed to train NRT on responding to domestic violence following disaster.

Thru ARC, we are funding 2-3 Young Adult Volunteers (YAVS) to go to Jamaica Queens, NY to do PDA work with diverse communities running volunteer work sites.

Financial Report Toni Carver-Smith delivered news on budget. Grant making processes and contracts are being reviewed; a new database for grant records is in development— about three years out. Cost allocation expenses have been reduced from 15% to 12%.

Rick indicated that Equipment Reduction has taken place, except for shower trailers; moving toward portable showers.

We are tracking the costs to support 2014 – 2015 Training workshops.

PDA Expansion is implementing a “train the trainer” program with **Presbyterian Women (PW)** to teach disaster preparation to congregations and mid councils. This provides an opportunity to recruit younger presbyterian women to do this training as mission work. PW will supplement our disaster response work, where we don't have enough NRT or funds to provide training to all the churches or to mid councils who request training.

Advisory Committee members were asked what PDA should do about NRT who are in churches that are splitting with PCUSA to Fellowship of Presbyterians (FOP)/ A Covenant Order of Evangelical Presbyterians (ECO) churches. Take it to Justice Committee to establish an MOU process with FOP/ECO churches, to provide services collaboratively with their funding. In Orlando, in Jan 2012 the

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FOP/ECO was formed. We are not asking for funding, but reimbursement from FOP/ECO. We have ecumenical mission work teams, to receive designated gifts.

Colorado Springs was the first presbytery to ask to include FOP/ECO in a joint area. Laurie Kraus has permission to have contact with FOP/ECO, but needs permission make this automatic. PMA and General Assembly (GA) are still working through the breakup.

Jeff Holland will draft a proposal to open PDA invitation to work with other reformed traditions to have permission to deploy people from other denominations work with PDA & reimburse PDA. Presbyterian Church in America (PCA) has its own Disaster Response. PDA does not play church politics in the community; can work with any other denominations.

Online deployment tools were presented by Suzanne Case. In conjunction with Rick Turner, the organization of PDA's work is improving by the development of:

- Online NRT directory, accessible by cell phone with contact listing, picture, training/expertise of NRT members
- Mid council Disaster Contact Data
- The NRT Availability Chart in Google Docs has been expanded to contain ordained NRT, City, State, Cell Phone and Email contact information for each member.
- A Deployment Cost report is in development to determine the Average Cost per Person, per Day for a variety of deployment to help control costs.

Compassion Fatigue Video was shown and discussed.

Self-Development of People (SDOP) Coordinator Cynthia White brought greetings from SDOP, continuing to look for ways to work with PDA on common projects, currently a project in Detroit. SDOP works with indigenous populations, Mayan women in Belize. SDOP hosts three meetings per year in different major cities, to make grants to assist the poor communities.

SDOP has provided a half-million dollars during in 2014 to communities. There are younger voices on SDOP committees (60 and under!). They have committee members preach on Sundays in the local community where they host their three annual meetings. Committee members on the ground in these major cities do a lot of the groundwork to make connections to local projects related to each meeting. SDOP will be meeting together with PDA, likely in Portland, OR in March 2015.

A favorite project was three years ago, LaHinte Crew, helped teenagers to get out of the gang life by removing tattoos. Participants have told SDOP that the project saved their lives.

On Friday, the Tapestry video was viewed and discussed as best for congregation or presbytery events. David Barnhart suggests NRT panels attend screenings in their area to engage congregations and the wider public. Trigger is more open to the wider public

Our meeting relocated to meet with Presbyterian Hunger Program (PHP) for a presentation from **Special Offerings**. Sam Locke, Director, Special Offerings/Appeals and Sally Wright, Associate for Special Offerings Ambassador gave the One Great Hour of Sharing (OGHS) preliminary report and planned advertising campaign and Giving Catalogue. There were questions and opposition to areas of the campaign and catalogue.

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Administration Beth Snyder reported on Presbyterian Investment and Loan Program (PILP) and investments reports – PDA has not spent these funds, can spend the interest? Can we seek higher returns? John Buchanan responded that it depends on what you want to risk. Adrian Washington 4.5% returns within the Presbyterian Foundation are available – why don't we research that? John Buchanan will look at the risks/options for PDA & email recommendations to us about what to invest and where.

Proposal was made to support FLAPDAN for \$38,000 – sent to legal – delayed and questioned. PDA has supported Florida Presbyterian Disaster Assistance Network (FLAPDAN) since 2007.

Grant reports & financial statements – we have received refunds from the Presbytery grants. International grant refunds have been easier to receive.

Laurie Kraus explained Special Appeals and the results go direct to PDA vs. Special Offerings desire to go general funding. A joint grant with PHP & SDOP collaboration with donor intent to Hyaian relief. PHP asked for PDA's support on two grants - \$18K Philippine movement for climate justice, a community level of response.

Advisory Committee Action List:

- Provide names to Sally Wright for the Special Offerings Ambassador Program
- Promote Tapestry and the Gift Catalog within your church
- Adrien to attend Natural Hazards Conference in Broomfield, CO
- Rick to consider organizing an Advisory Committee trip to the Northeast to visit Sandy Sites