

August 25, 2015

Strategic Planning & Partnerships Commission

Proceedings by Authority

State of New York,  
City of Jamestown ss.:  
Mayor's Conference Room

The regular meeting of the Strategic Planning & Partnerships Commission of the City of Jamestown, New York was held on Tuesday, August 25, 2015 at 3:30 P.M in the Mayor's Conference Room, City Hall.

Members Present: Co-Chairwoman Jennifer Gibson, Len Faulk, Linda Swanson, Jim Olson, Becky Robbins, Marty Idzik,

Members Absent: Co-Chair Greg Rabb

Others Present: Max Martin, Joelle Conti-Washer, Vince DeJoy, Paul Leone, Rosary Kolivas, Indo Quinones, Kirk Young, Tom Vitale, Valle Blair, Julie Poppleton, Michelle Hoden, Karen Mason, Debbie Yahn, Bobbie Caswell

Co-Chair Gibson called the meeting to order and asked everyone present to introduce themselves.

The minutes of the July 2015 meeting were approved.

### **HISPANIC IMMERSION**

Ms. Gibson: Thank you all for coming. There seems to be a lot of life in this topic, this issue, which we're excited about. Over the last month or so, Linda's been busy at work developing relationships with the New York Council for the Humanities. Do you want to give an overview of that, of our conversation there and what we're proposing for September 23<sup>rd</sup>?

Ms. Swanson: They do work all across the state and I believe, for those that are new here, this is a recent cold kind of call. I had been receiving emails from their organization. They are based in New York City. They fund all kinds of events and activities around the humanities across New York State. Jamestown has had participation. There has been an art exhibit most recently at JCC that got Council for the Humanities grants. I believe SUNY Fredonia is a regular recipient. They are doing a big initiative in Buffalo around the Arts and I somehow got on their email list and they keep asking for grant applications for small grants to do events. Typically they're around community conversations and around books. So I connected with them when this action team started to think about what they wanted to do and we connected with them late last June. They were submitting an application for the entire state to do community discussions and at the very last minute we asked if we could be put in as one of the communities that might want to have a community discussion about diversity. So we'll find out in December if we are part of that grant.

In the meantime, they were very interested in working with us. They also have a Hispanic program officer from Puerto Rico, of Puerto Rican descent on staff and when Jennifer and I

August 25, 2015

called them back, we requested information about a children's reading program and they shipped us some books. I shared them with Tom. Tom has some of them, I brought them to the last meeting and the concept was parent-child reading bilingual. So there are two sets of books, one in English one in Spanish and so they were kind of following through asking if we got the books. So Jennifer and I called them a couple of weeks ago and talked to them about that program, how it really works, how it's been received and they kind of thought the better scenario wasn't an afterschool type of setting. It was hard to program parents to come and in New York City they were running it over the dinner hour and they were providing dinner and free childcare and it seemed to be hard to get it off the ground. So I mentioned that we have a pretty robust afterschool program here and that maybe we could work that into one of their enrichment activities. It's a 5 – 6 week program and there would be a cost to purchase books, but they were looking into that and then I connected with Tom who had recently visited us and looking for ways the library system could be an outreach and I thought of the Amigos Program and the Eastside Y; hence why we started roping you all in. Coincidentally I saw in their travel plans they were going to be in Buffalo for this big weekend in September and they decided they'd like to come visit with us so we jumped on it and said we'd love to have you. The date is...

Ms. Gibson: Wednesday September 23<sup>rd</sup> and it would probably be a 3:30 meeting; 3:30 to 5:00 and what they would do is a mock community conversation with an adult version and a child version.

Ms. Swanson: I assume we're going to model what a book discussion might look like.

Ms. Gibson: Using their program so we understand.

Ms. Swanson: So we're looking at a couple different things that they could do for us. One is an adult book discussion; and we're thinking of all the book groups out there. That would be more targeted to our Anglos; then the idea is to increase compassion and awareness and then acceptance. We're not sure what the book would be. The other was this bilingual children's program to work with the Hispanic community and outreach workers and wherever we can figure out. They provide the training of facilitators, but we've never experienced anything like this so we kind of wanted to see a demo of what this would look like. So that's what we're previewing. If we like something or we want to embellish something, they're willing to work with us. We were thinking we would like to have this initiative be more organic, kind of bottom up if we can instead of top down. We're afraid if we just have a meeting then nobody would come. So we're looking for all the different ways that we could have something bubble up organically through groups that we're aware of, faith-based organizations, whoever we can think of bringing in. So that's the thought – see if it has legs. They'll come and demonstrate what a facilitated thing would look like.

Ms. Gibson: What they've seen work across the state to give us some ideas.

Ms. Swanson: That's a first step. If it's not for us, it's not for us. We'll figure out something else. No harm. There's no cost to us at the moment and if we like it then we'll figure out how we fund it.

August 25, 2015

Ms. Gibson: I'm not worried about the money piece of it at all. It's just getting the engagement and finding the right tool. I think it's going to be a lot of different tools because I think that it has to come from both directions, whether it's top down and bottom up as Paul and I talked about. It has to be grass roots, but we also have to educate.

Ms. Swanson: Be organized and intentional and have some structure.

Ms. Gibson: So the idea with the Big Read to see if we could tie in to the Big Read with all the book groups. There are several of us in this commission that happen to be in the same book group and just having a book that's read by all the book groups across the county was an idea and have it be a very direct book discussing – we're targeting Puerto Rican – it can be any Hispanic, but Jamestown is predominantly, the largest Hispanic population is Puerto Rican descent. Right?

Mr. Martin: Yes.

Ms. Gibson: So just to educate all of these predominantly white female book group readers on the Hispanic culture. Is that a discussion on art or music or whatever part of the culture? I don't know. I don't even know what book it would be. I called SUNY Fredonia and spoke to Randy and I had a great conversation with him and he has a ton of ideas. The Big Read, the book is already picked that they'll roll out in February or March. He had an idea of a whole different community reading project separate from the big read. We could promote it similar to that, but he said how about Puerto Rican folk lore; an out of date publication...

Mr. Vitale: I have a meeting with him about that next week. He had called me and asked if I'd come to his office.

Ms. Gibson: That sounded like a beautiful idea because it's something that, it's a five or ten page – do you want to give an overview?

Mr. Vitale: He didn't go into great detail with me, but he said when I come to meet with him we will plan it out.

Ms. Gibson: Beautiful. His idea was, you can print it off the internet, you can make copies for 20 cents. The copies would be a very cost effective way to provide this publication both in English and Spanish all across the county really, not just Jamestown. His idea was to have a side by side illustration by local high schools and colleges throughout the county to kind of illustrate this book. I think it could be very impactful. You can have it paid for by businesses with sponsorship ads. I thought that was a kind of an interesting concept that he came up with, a five to ten page thing is really doable. I think that you could get people engaged in that. He also talked about slam poetry – I was educated on a lot today.

Ms. Swanson: The library has got an active slam poetry group.

Ms. Gibson: There is pulse poetry in Jamestown and this girl Autumn, I think he said Echo. Autumn Echo, her real last name is Swanson. But he said she's amazing, she's a good

August 25, 2015

poet. She's very bright, she's a local Jamestown girl and she does this. This slam poetry is a competitive poetry thing. It can be original works or someone else's work that they read them. It sounded really cool. I think the idea is to program several different things going on all throughout the community so you're engaging people in all different venues in all different levels to bring awareness and dialogue. That's what our idea is, getting people talking. The over-arching goal of all of this is making Jamestown more welcoming. And it's more welcoming period. Whether you're from Utah or you're from Puerto Rico, Jamestown sometimes is not the most welcoming community. There is an over-arching purpose. My conversation with Randy was that I loved this idea and after today's meeting we'll see where we're going to go and we'll get together with him and I'm glad you already had something scheduled. I thought that would be neat if everyone here feels the same. So that is all bubbling up. Paul and Max are co-chairs...

Mr. Martin: We met last week.

Mr. Leone: First of all Len, thank you for this because it gives us a plan to follow. Len calls this a framework for putting together a team and an action plan for implementing our vision. It's easily followable and very helpful so thank you.

Mr. Faulk: We've used it many times to get things off the ground.

Mr. Leone: Max and I have been looking at this and we basically know, and you I think said it in a broad way to make this community more welcoming, I think what we're doing is we're targeting Latinos, the Spanish speaking people in this community to try to implement methods of inclusion. Our mission is pretty clear and the next step in Len's framework is to build a team so that's one of the reasons why all of you people have been invited. We don't need a team of 50 people. We need a team to sort of report back to the SPPC, a team to generate ideas and programs that we might implement and then having all of these different little agencies, organizations, for example, ASA – is that right ASA? And there's Max's work program, there's JBC, there's a whole bunch of stuff that's already in place. So we have places to step off on with this organization. I myself have all kinds of ideas. I love the idea of the folklore. I think it's just one of many opportunities to use the arts because the arts are very inclusive. The arts and sports together are very inclusive. What we are looking for is not only methods to include, particularly newcomers, Latin newcomers in this community by way of social services and jobs and actually working in this community and intending to remain and grow in this community, but we're also looking for social interactions between the Anglos and the Latins. That's why, and this is what Jennifer and I talked about on the phone briefly, that I feel and Max feels and I believe Jennifer feels too, that we have these organizations in place. For instance JBC, JCC, JHS, Tim Mains is on board with this and so is Kirk and JBC is really onboard. So we have these institutions in place which is sort of the top, we work from the top, but we also need to work from the bottom. I think the Eastside Y is the best organization to spring board that because we want social interaction. We want people to talk to each other. We want people to appreciate each other. So that's the direction. From the top and from the bottom and so what we need to do now is to build this team, HAT team and begin to dream up the programs we want to implement.

Ms. Gibson: Actionable items would be...

August 25, 2015

Mr. Leone: Right. Exactly. There are many that I think now, according to Len's framework here; be realistic about a time, how much time you're going to put into this and what sort of goals you want in a certain time limit. Get an action team in place and prepare a document for the process we intend to follow and do that in 3 or 6 months. Along the way be thinking about programs that we want to push. For instance ASA; this is just Love School. Am I right about that? That should be in all the schools. That sounds like a great program. All the elementary schools – it sounds wonderful.

Mr. Martin: They accomplish things with this program that I've been trying for five years.

Ms. Gibson: Can we get an overview of the program because I don't know that everyone...

Ms. Kolivas: I'm the Director of Jamestown Community Learning Council and these gals came with me today to talk about one of our programs which is called After School Amigos. Julie Poppleton from the district actually has a grant - extended school day that helps provide funding – actually is the sole funder of the program and it's an afterschool program that children of parents who are non-English or limited English speaking can participate in two afternoons a week. The parents agree to be part of the program by having home visits on a monthly basis. The home visits usually involve a meal and some interactive parent-child activities. The afterschool program is run by Debbie and Michelle as well a teacher at Love School, Pat Cunningham and the children that we recruit are K-4. So we started out with the kindergarten and first graders, but we found that the older siblings of those children in those families wanted to join too so we decided we were going to include everybody.

We can take 10 families, we've taken up to 15 because we're good-hearted and hate to turn anybody away and it's been going for about 3 years now. We have very good success in that Max was so complimentary to us. He was astounded when we said that our family nights are always well attended by the whole family. I think it's all about the relationship that our visitors are able to achieve by going into the homes and meeting with the families and getting to know them and showing appreciation to their culture. What I have discovered, from my perspective, the families love to share their culture, especially their food. When you think about it, every celebration, no matter what your nationality is revolves around food. They're so excited when you're showing interest in the food and when they have opportunities to bring their food. I don't know what else I can say about it. Right now, and I'll have these guys chime in, currently the program is very strongly linked to the curriculum that the children are doing in school as well as being fun and interactive so there is a homework component to the program where we're working trying to get the homework done and helping the parents to understand. We've had the luxury of having a couple of bilingual Paras in the school district who have helped us with translating and more recently, we have a couple of Latino moms right from the community that have gone through some of our other programs that are accompanying these gals on home visits.

Ms. Swanson: Touch on the adult education piece also because I think that's also...

Ms. Kolivas: Okay – I'm sorry Debbie, you can jump in too. We're going into the homes and we're talking about what the children are learning at school and bringing in the

August 25, 2015

materials and we're bringing all sorts of material that is also bilingual Spanish, but we also have made opportunities available; they can take ESL classes on site at Love School. We have a partnership with BOCES; those are very well attended by the community. Many of the parents that are involved have come through our PACT program at Love School which is Parents and Children Together and that's a program that's been in existence since the beginning of JCLC which is 26 years now and the children are involved in a pre-kindergarten program every day, but for them to be involved, their parents have to commit to coming at least one day a week, but they have the opportunity to come five days a week. We have found that in the recent years, this year I think it's nearly half of the 16 families that can be in that program are of Latino descent so more and more of that program is largely becoming Hispanic culture.

The word is spreading and they are eager to be in the school with their children. As long as they feel warm and welcome. These guys are the ones that are actually in the trenches so if you want to chime in. Did I forget anything?

Ms. Yahn: We also partner with James Prendergast Library so at least a few times a year, if not more, we invite the entire family to the library because we want them to feel comfortable being a part of the community because they're not going to just go to the library and bring their children. I've been really pleased because I've noticed the last few times we've gone, I've seen more and more Hispanic people are starting to go to the library. Their children are there. We do a family night and then we invite the whole family. The library is wonderful; they'll even help us with the group activity. We've had parents that will lead an activity with the children. This is something that we've been doing the last few years with them. It seems to be very successful. Also Cooperative Extension; we've had family nights with them where we cook, we break the families down into groups and one family is in charge of this particular part of the meal and then we break it down into groups and we let everybody participate and then we cook together and do another learning activity after. These are some of the things that we've been involving the families in the community.

Ms. Kolivas: Another component of that; Pat happens to also be the high school girls' basketball coach and he has gotten the whole team to come in and mentor the children one-on-one and then we've taken the families to a field trip to watch a basketball game. That's been another nice thing.

Mr. Young: How often are the home visits would you say?

Ms. Yahn: The home visits; what we do is we have a family night every month that the families need to attend. If they for any reason do not attend that then there is a home visit involved. It can be anywhere up to an hour depending. During the summer Michelle and I have been going and visiting families and that's what we find, an hour to an hour and a half usually is the length of the visit, but we just want to make sure if the parents have any concerns at all with what's going on with school or in any part of their life. That's what we're doing on the visits and bringing activities for children too. We bring that for any children in the program. We might bring them a book or some information.

Ms. Poppleton: I just want to say because you're not going to say it. We hear Debbie explain what the expectations are. If you're going to school, if your child is going to access the

August 25, 2015

program, we expect you to attend a certain number of times or we expect that you attend monthly family meetings. The reason that folks come is not because it is an expectation, but it is the expectation that you are my partner and I need you and I'm not going to let you down and you're not going to let me down. That is the culture that you build in that program.

Ms. Yahn: I agree with that because Michelle and I have been asking some questions as we've been visiting this summer because we want to know with Love School closing and we're moving, I'm located at Ring School so things are different for our families

Ms. Poppleton: Just for a year

Ms. Yahn: Just for one year. They have children in different schools and people have their questions or concerns and then we're moving our afterschool program so we've had lots of questions or they may have questions for us and that's all part of it. We do come right out – because we have that relationship with them, we can ask those questions. We've asked and they have said that they value, because they like to feel valued, that it's a team, that it's a partnership, that their opinion counts and we do it together.

Ms. Poppleton: Great respect, very respectful relationships.

Ms. Yahn: Exactly and that seems to be very key to them because they really do care about their children and what's happening with their children and sometimes it may not appear that way, but they really do when you get to know the families. Respect is very key. It's very important.

Ms. Kolivas: I think we should just jump in and say because of Love School closing for a year, what we're exploring is having it at the Eastside Y and bussing the children there and perhaps not only having it on the Tuesdays and Thursdays that we normally meet, we are offering to the parents that they could go to the Eastside Y Monday through Friday and on Tuesdays and Thursdays, the children would have the ASA club. Debbie and Michelle are busy making those connections with the families to see if they'd be interested and some are right on board. Some are a little reluctant because we're all protective of our kids. They don't know the Eastside Y, they don't know Max. So we might want to talk about having a little orientation or a little open house or something so they'll feel more comfortable and signing them up for all five days.

Ms. Caswell: And the library has rooms to book also.

Ms. Kolivas: Right. We've been meeting with the library – the team has about having some family nights again this year at the library as well as at the Eastside Y. We're going to continue that partnership.

Mr. Leone: Does this include English speaking kids or is it all Latinos?

Ms. Yahn: Some children do speak English.

August 25, 2015

Mr. Leone: I mean those whose first language is English.

Ms. Yahn: No.

Mr. Martin: It's Afterschool Amigos. That's good for all the kids.

Mr. Leone: Yes, but we want to encourage the English speaking kids to learn Spanish as well.

Ms. Swanson: Julie is also head of all the afterschool programs that are in the elementary schools and middle schools in the City. Half of them are run by the YMCA and half are run by the YWCA. In their resources, they have rotating – each of the afterschool programs does a six week...

Ms. Poppleton: It tends to be about nine weeks typically.

Ms. Swanson: In any given nine weeks a child has choices for elective things that they can do. They have to do homework, but they usually are given some physical activity and then there are other enrichment things and Julie warehouses a revolving resource library of all kinds of things from science kits to art to languages, storytelling and through the years, the school district was the beneficiary of 21<sup>st</sup> century grant money which allowed them to purchase a plethora of things. So at any given time across the City, there are different enrichment units happening and so there's an opportunity to do something bilingual. We would have to do some training of staff and acquire materials that can rotate through, but she's good at that and these are pretty seasoned afterschool workers that come up with ideas on their own, share it with each other and they have this incredible lending library. So when I was looking at those bilingual books, I was thinking for sure Afterschool Amigos, but I was also thinking maybe this is the way that we could do this with children, not parents and they have two sets of books so the kids can also read the Spanish books.

Ms. Poppleton: There are some beautiful peer-mentor possibilities too because we've got peer-mentoring at Eastside and on a limited basis, throughout our afterschool programs with Reading Buddies, where older children will read to younger children; definitely some possibilities there.

Ms. Swanson: I think now we just have to ruminate on how creatively could we do this.

Mr. Leone: This is something that can be implemented for grownups too, to encourage those social interactions. This is something that the Eastside Y is just perfect for and a lot of it's about language. It's all about language and I feel that if you can get enough English speaking people to want to learn Spanish or those that have some Spanish and want to improve their Spanish to connect with those whose first language is Spanish and include those social functions like food and playing and music. That's the way to go. That's what to do. That's how to get an appreciation for each other.

August 25, 2015

Mr. Vitale: I was just going to say with the Afterschool Amigos, that's limited only to children of Hispanic heritage and their parents; so building off the point of inclusivity, if you had first language English speaking students.

Mr. Idzik: Gringos. Afterschool Gringos.

Mr. Vitale: If they wanted to be a part of this program, they would be excluded from it based solely on the fact that they...

Ms. Poppleton: May I just comment? The reason that the program was built in that direction was that at the time, we were applying for the extended school day grant dollars. That was protocol. It was to specifically address the needs of our Hispanic community and English language learners. In response, and hoping to have the best chance of being successful to get funding, that was within the structure, it was a requirement of the grant.

Mr. Vitale: My question and concern really just comes down to – these programs are wonderful, but if they're created specifically for one group, then you're blowing off other groups. So one of the things that Jennifer and Linda and I had discussed last week when we met with some of the cultural heritage parades and events that go on in Jamestown. It's only attended by the Hispanic community and we don't see the Anglos coming out, so why is that? If you're talking about a bottom up type of response to this, then if we connected the smaller venues then perhaps that would push the community to come out in scores.

Mr. Martin: Last year we celebrated Hispanic culture at the Eastside. We had a lot of Anglos show up. Vince was there.

Ms. Poppleton: And ASA can certainly evolve. However, we have to think about the funding because our ASA folks really can't serve the population. There's more demand than there are resources.

Mr. Vitale: Are there opportunities for volunteers to come in to help with that program?

Ms. Poppleton: Always.

Mr. Vitale: Okay. I'm just wondering.

Ms. Kolivas: The basketball girls come in.

Mr. Martin: What the program is doing is actually bringing the family together. With an Anglo around which is really helpful. I'm telling you that for a Latino to trust a non-Hispanic and bring them to your home and to welcome you is really hard. They were telling me that and I said holy cow. This is really a good program because when you get a large percentage of families that when you knock, they let you in and feed you...

Ms. Hoden: We had lunch the other day again.

August 25, 2015

Mr. Martin: That's a huge partnership. Paul was talking that we need to integrate Anglos and Hispanics and the only way sometimes is through food and art.

Mr. Vitale: So culture, not necessarily just language.

Mr. Martin: Exactly because if you know the language you can ....

Mr. Vitale: Learn the language through the culture.

Mr. Martin: Right. If you learn the culture, the language becomes easier.

Mr. Idzik: Is anybody doing anything with the Boy Scouts and the Girl Scouts?

Mr. Martin: They come to the Eastside.

Ms. Poppleton: And in our afterschool programs.

Mr. Idzik: They are?

Ms. Poppleton: Not with a particular – do you mean, Marty, just in general?

Mr. Idzik: I'm thinking scouting would be an area where you could combine Anglos and Latinos. If you talk to the local Boy Scouts and Girl Scouts and told them about your program, maybe we could get some of these Hispanic kids in the program and thereby mix up the Anglos.

Mr. Martin: The Girl Scouts come to the Y and it's a mix. It's definitely a good mix.

Ms. Poppleton: The notion is there that they have, apparently, is this your understanding Max that they had some funding – is it United Way funding? Be able to come in and provide some very nice programming for the kids, but also once they're involved, they have opportunities to attend summer camp experiences that they otherwise might not.

Mr. Martin: This summer for the Eastside, it was a really good mix. I think for the middle school it was 50/50 and usually it's 100% Latinos. This year it was a really good mix.

Mr. Idzik: Paul also mentioned sports which I agree with. Are any of these Latino kids involved in sports any place?

Mr. Martin: At the high school level; maybe some middle school, but it's very limited.

Mr. Idzik: You've got the Boys and Girls Club...

Mr. Leone: Baseball and soccer and I've been thinking about this and I'm thinking; is it a good idea to have a complete Latino team versus an Anglo team?

August 25, 2015

Mr. Idzik: No.

Mr. Leone: Not necessarily no.

Mr. Idzik: Well I don't know.

Mr. Leone: I don't know Max. You and I have to talk about that. We have a model here in using the arts for bringing out our youngsters and that's Infinity. It's a perfect model.

Mr. Vitale: You're point is to integrate, not make it Westside Story correct?

Ms. Swanson: There is an intermural league that is by the City's teen center at the Y and John Barber has a whole group of young men that are half and half. Half white, half black and Hispanic and they have a minimum academic eligibility rule. He requires they have a C or better. They put together a basketball league and they play against the Boys and Girls Club and the Boys and Girls Club has a large Hispanic population now and they play against whoever they can get together; a couple Christian schools in the region. So they're active. There are sports going on.

Mr. Martin: And a boxing club.

Ms. Swanson: And there's a boxing club which is popular with the Hispanics.

Mr. Leone: Got Anglos in that?

Mr. Martin: A couple.

Ms. Swanson: A couple, yes. This is at the downtown Y and the Jamestown Boys and Girls Club so it's a start.

Mr. Leone: The other one is music and encouraging Latin jazz and bands; youngsters getting together and forming groups, musical groups.

Mr. Martin: Last night I had a conversation with a student that has an interest in that.

Ms. Gibson: Kirk, do you want to talk about anything that's going on at JCC? I've heard that you've been involved in initiatives similar to this with success.

Mr. Young: Where I worked before, we were part of a program called Latinos in Action and that was an afterschool program that the founder of the program was from southern California and it's picked up. He's in schools all over the West now. What they do is, it's basically an afterschool club where students come, Latino students come and they participate in afterschool activities, but one of their major components is that they go down to the elementary school and they tutor the students in the elementary schools and they partnered with us at the university that I was at before. I oversaw a leadership program; we had a pretty strong leadership

August 25, 2015

curriculum that taught leadership soft skills, communication, goal setting, time management, things like that. They used our curriculum in their club in the schools to teach those leadership skills to the students and the students would then use those to go and tutor the students in the elementary schools.

I was also a part of a – and we talked about this before – a dual immersion elementary school. My kids went to a dual immersion school where half their curriculum was in Spanish, half was in English. They did that because the test scores were suffering because we had a high Latino population that came in where English was their second language and they spent more time teaching English than they did math, history, or whatever. That was a great program. My kids walked into kindergarten and one day, every other day was all in Spanish and they were not allowed to speak any English whatsoever in the classroom. It was amazing. We would go to parent teacher nights with our students in the evenings and the Latinos in Action kids would come from the high school and they would interpret for the parents at the parent teacher conferences and so on. We've been talking about that. We're moving toward trying to set up a leadership club at JCC where we can start to integrate some of those leadership components to try and tie them together.

The thing that I've found here that we didn't have in Utah where I was at is that there are so many programs that are already doing great things. It would probably be better for us to try and integrate some of those elements into what's already going on. The thing that was great for us was, because we had that tie with that leadership program, the students in their club would use our leadership curriculum and they would get college credit for it; so it was like our college connections courses at JCC. They would get college credit for it and then they would move that into the institution so our Latino attendance at the university where I was at increased because we were kind of creating a pathway for those students to come into the school. Plus because of the mentoring component that we had in our leadership program, a lot of students received private scholarships from mentors that we could connect them with. Those were great things.

I was also going mention that I worked for Gear Up for quite a while I was a Gear Up counselor and probably the primary component of our program was home visits and speaking Spanish. It's like Max said, I'd show up in a suit and tie and they didn't want to answer the door. The moment we connected like that I gained weight. I say those are great and that was one of the most important components of what we did.

Mr. Martin:           The high school has a Hispanic club, but it's not active. It was active about four years ago; for some reason it has died out. Futuro Latino it's called, but it's still part of the high school so maybe we can go talk to Mike about activating it again.

Ms. Gibson:           I like the sounds of that program. It sounds pretty interesting. Why couldn't we do an immersion like that at Jamestown Public Schools?

Mr. Martin:           Florida is going to have a lot of immersion classes, every other day is Spanish.

Mr. Young:           They got federal funding. The funding is there.

Ms. Quinones:        It has been, but the public shuts it down.

August 25, 2015

Mr. Young: That was the problem we ran into. We had the funding; and it was federal funding that we received to pay for it and the teachers were hired. My son's kindergarten teacher was from Argentina, had an education degree from Argentina. His first grade teacher was from Spain, his third grade teacher was from Mexico and they were all excellently trained teachers in their countries and they came here to teach our kids. The problem was when we'd go to the community. This was kind of a small, hick town where I was at so it was tough to change that cultural perspective.

Ms. Gibson: Will you explain that?

Ms. Quinones: When I worked for SUNY Fredonia I was part of a grant called COPSU for short, but it was a community grant through SUNY Fredonia partnerships with Dunkirk and an immersion program was tried in the Dunkirk Public Schools, I'm not sure about Jamestown, and it was literally shut down by fear from parents and fear from – they didn't know what exactly immersion meant. The people at our meetings were people who were already informed and knew exactly the benefits of it. The people who needed to be at that table weren't and it was just shut down.

Mr. Idzik: Both Anglo and Latino?

Ms. Quinones: Mostly Latino.

Mr. Idzik: Mostly Latino.

Ms. Quinones: Because they knew the benefits of immersion because that's our culture.

Mr. Idzik: So the opposition was more from the Anglo side.

Mr. Young: The response we got was why are we teaching our white kids Spanish? We need to be teaching the other students English.

Ms. Quinones: People didn't understand the benefits of knowing two languages.

Mr. Young: However, once the program was there for two or three years they did see the benefit to it. The other elementary schools in the valley where I lived were applying for the funding for it. It didn't take long for people to realize that.

Ms. Quinones: Because it's not only knowing two languages; it's knowing two cultures because eventually it benefits all around.

Mr. Leone: That's not to mention what it looks like on your CV because if you have that second language and Spanish is really important right now because of the numbers of Spanish speaking people who are coming to Los Estados Unidos. There is plenty of need for Spanish speaking people.

August 25, 2015

Mr. Young: I spent two years in South America when I was in my early twenties and every job that I've received since then, a big reason that I received it was because I was bilingual.

Mr. Leone: Exactly. I want to mention, and this commission knows of JBC's bilingual program placing graduates into the medical field. Those of you who are guests probably don't know this, but JBC had their first graduating class and Max gave me a picture of the graduating class and it's just so heartwarming. My only problem is that there's only one male. The graduating class is what Max, 18? 19?

Mr. Martin: 16 of 19.

Mr. Leone: 16 of 19 graduated; 92% of them are employed. These are Spanish speaking students who went through a course at JBC to prepare them for positions in the medical field.

Mr. Martin: But not all of them are in the medical field. All the people asked them to – like Bush Industries they knew about it, they needed bilinguals, they still don't have bilinguals.

Mr. Leone: That's what I'm saying. This is in place and JBC is onboard. That's one of the programs that we push and push and encourage and encourage.

Ms. Yahn: They also offer a business degree too. Now they do.

Mr. Martin: They're going to do the medical part with the business part.

Ms. Gibson: We've had, I think, a very good discussion at this meeting and I want to continue this conversation and get some actionable items and I want to work toward this immersion. Personally, I think, what a great benefit for all. We do have a meeting coming up; our next month's meeting. Depending on how many people we have; we'll plan here, but if we have more people than this room will hold then we'll change venues and maybe we could go to JCC.

Ms. Swanson: The library has a beautiful room.

Ms. Caswell: Yes we do.

Ms. Gibson: Quickly, for the meeting; it's 3:30 on the 23<sup>rd</sup>. Does that work for the majority of the group if we do it at that time? 3:30 to 5:00 will be the planned time.

Mr. Vitale: Do you want the visitors here too?

Ms. Gibson: Absolutely and if there's someone else that you feel should be invited that you know is working in this field, just let us know.

Ms. Swanson: This is our time to try out what they've got to offer.

August 25, 2015

Ms. Gibson: And to tie things together. Obviously we all didn't know everything that's been discussed today. We're all active in the community and we didn't know.

Ms. Swanson: Who else is not here?

Ms. Poppleton: Amanda Geising needs to be here. She is Striders.

Ms. Poppleton: I know they've retooled a little bit over there Linda, but is she formally the elementary education coordinator?

Ms. Swanson: I think that's her new thing.

Ms. Poppleton: I think she'd be. I tried to get her today, but we weren't able to connect.

Ms. Swanson: Who else is not here?

Mr. Vitale: Rebecca Ruiz. If this does well in Jamestown, at least for the library system, we'll see it spread through Chautauqua. We need to include the northern people.

Mr. Leone: The other thing is that, BOCES, I think there's an opportunity with BOCES because that classroom at the Eastside Y that they are sponsoring has high opportunity. And the opportunity for that is to include Anglos.

Mr. Martin: When we started that with BOCES at the Eastside, I invited Paul to come and visit.

Mr. Leone: That's why I'm on the Hispanic Action Team.

Mr. Martin: He started and he showed up every day. When he didn't show up one day, they asked where's Paul, where's Paul? They already missed him. He brings a little something extra to it, he's learning Spanish, but they're learning the proper English. A couple of days he was missing and they asked where he was and if he was coming back. He became family.

Mr. Leone: So if we can get BOCES to understand that including Anglos in that class is helpful, that it's valuable for the class. I think it won't be hard to convince them of that. I don't know if you and I should pay them a visit and talk to them first before inviting them to the table here.

Mr. Martin: Tell them Linda Swanson said we should talk to them.

Ms. Gibson: Just as you think of people name them.

Ms. Swanson: Please. You are more than welcome to invite them, bring them.

Mr. Leone: We could do that. We can make a phone call to them or visit.

August 25, 2015

- Ms. Swanson: I think we should book the library.
- Ms. Caswell: Our new community room would hold over one hundred. Right now we're not booking the fireplace room because of our art.
- Ms. Gibson: One of you will book that for us then?
- Mr. Vitale: You can book it, okay.
- Ms. Swanson: Is that hard for you? The afterschool time period?
- Ms. Yahn: For Wednesday we'll be fine.
- Ms. Swanson: Okay good. We grabbed them and they were willing to travel here for free so we took them.
- Ms. Gibson: Linda is there anything else that we need for that? We'll work out the details with them.
- Ms. Swanson: I don't know. We'll talk and send you – so if the visitors just give me their emails.
- Mr. Martin: I also think Tapestry should play a key role with the cultural immersion because I know you are ready to go on that. To teach the committee members first what it's all about and then we can go from that point.
- Ms. Quinones: If you're willing to help me, bring in the cultural competency aspect.
- Ms. Swanson: We need to learn ourselves.
- Mr. Martin: We did that for the job fair and every response was tremendous.
- Ms. Gibson: So we need cultural competency refresher.
- Ms. Quionones: I think everyone benefits from a cultural competency refresher.
- Ms. Swanson: Maybe that's October's...
- Mr. Martin: So that would be really great.
- Ms. Gibson: Okay. We'll plan that and invite some others.
- Ms. Poppleton: You did a nice job for us in afterschool programs.
- Ms. Quinones: I did the Y...

August 25, 2015

Ms. Poppleton: Yes it was an afterschool program for YMCA and YWCA. Was that two years ago?

Ms. Quinones: I think it was. It was my first one after I joined Tapestry.

Ms. Gibson: Okay. The other piece is creating this community read.

Mr. Martin: We model it after the ASA model.

Mr. Vitale: Are there the book clubs you are talking about? Or are you talking about the thing with Randy.....

Ms. Gibson: With the folklore, yes.

Mr. Vitale: After I meet with him do you want me to talk to him about setting up a meeting for you to come to so we can all sit and discuss it?

Ms. Gibson: Yes anyone who would like to participate in that conversation. He was very excited about the idea of getting together so whoever has an interest in being involved in that conversation, how we could do that, would be great.

Mr. Vitale: I'll shoot you an email after our meeting to let you know.

### **NEW BUSINESS**

Mr. Faulk: A report on our regionalization of government. It seems like the update is similar. The similar update is that the efforts and discussions between the Jamestown Police Department and the County Sheriff's Office are continuing. Our consultant is re-engaged and we're having now a series of meetings involving the Police Chief and the Sheriff so we're at the tactical level of how something like this would work in terms of, not a merger, but a contract for Sheriff services in the City of Jamestown as a way of streamlining the police action. So those discussions are continuing.

There being no further business, the meeting was adjourned.  
James N. Olson, Director of Finance/City Clerk