

Volunteer Coordination Steering Committee Meeting Notes

April 1, 2025
9:00- 10:30 am

Attendees:

- Jackie Golz
- Andi Cook
- Thomas Holstien
- Trevor Barnett
- Gary Flaharty
- Robert Nnake
- Jackie Miller
- Jeremy Samuels

Committee Updates:

- Recruiting: Robert Nnake
 - Goal: To establish pipelines of volunteers from organized sources and set up processes/relationships to bring in spontaneous volunteers
 - Approach: Develop a list of asks for corporations/companies to easily sign off on (a checklist)
 - Make a list of organizations/groups who would have volunteers
 - Get commitments from elected officials, corporate and civic leaders, and community influencers to broadcast asks to their people
 - These partners will be ready to accommodate volunteers in a disaster situation
 - Who will send out the letter during disaster time?
 - Could be Robert, Tommy, or Gary, or something automated could be created
 - We should have drafts of the requests that are ready to send out with a list of needs and job descriptions so they are readily available to share. These should be made for different types of disasters to make them most useful.
 - In terms of execution, a person needs to be assigned to send this out.
 - There should be one short coordination meeting to organize the asks.
 - What We are Doing Now
 - Working on identifying a contact at GHP for corporate outreach, and a religious contact to help include those perspectives while we're developing approaches
 - Current membership, County Judge's Office, Baker Ripley, and AARP
 - Andi to help build connection with CLDS

- To be added to goal: hammering home what the expectations and opportunities are
 - Organizations should be aware of the needs and why those needs are important
 - What will be the actual communication tree that will be used? Will this be Volunteer Houston?
 - Can an email be sent out through OEM?
 - Could be OEM or VOAD, email could include the OEM and VOAD email
 - Both the city and County have the ability to send out communications like this
 - City of Houston would likely share it through Disaster Houston alerts
 - Could communications be sent out to specific individuals/organizations through Houston OEM?
 - Roman can help with this
 - Once the pool of volunteers is established, who would be ready to assist as part of a general pool.
 - It may be better to send out messaging through the VOAD
 - Organizations with large groups of volunteers would likely want one coordinated group to work with, instead of receiving various communications
 - In the communications, we should encourage teams of people from the same organization, instead of 5 individual volunteers so that the efforts are more coordinated. These groups can also be trained on specific tasks beforehand
- Portal: Andi Cook
 - Goal: Refining the process for recruiting, placing and assigning unaffiliated volunteers with NGOs, VOADs and Jurisdictions
 - How it works:
 - Train organizations on how to set up an account on Volunteer Houston
 - Train organizations on entering needs on VH portal
 - Feedback and data sharing through VH
 - Samir is adding more functions to the VH portal
 - Portal has the following details
 - Title
 - Description
 - Privacy
 - Duration
 - Need Date
 - Hours
 - Zip code
 - County

- Samir is adding the ability to add volunteers as a group instead of as individuals
 - Posting Needs
 - Put together a template that organizations can use to create a needs post
 - Making an Agency
 - Navigate to the VH portal and Sign up to create an agency account
 - **Organizations need to do this on blue sky dates**
 - Volunteer Desk
 - This gives a simple platform for the volunteers to use as well
 - Will display information on the volunteers who have signed up, and will allow for you to send out automated communications as well
 - Needed from Agencies
 - Pro active Volunteer Engagement
 - Next Steps
 - Will need the ability to add agencies to the portal in a matter of hours, not days
- Volunteer Experience
 - Brooke not present, but has been making progress
 - Will be presenting tomorrow
 - Creating a manual for expectations for the volunteer experience
- Capacity Building: Gary Flaharty
 - The deployment to Spontaneous Volunteers hinges on how many the VOADs, NGOs, and jurisdictions can accept
 - Establish
 - Job descriptions
 - Standard and practices
 - Recruitment and training
 - Train
 - Civic organization, unions, and faith communities to carry out critical volunteer tasks
 - Blue Sky
 - Project Hospitality (Houston Responds, Gulf Coast Disaster Readiness)
 - Find locations for out-of-town groups that are strategically placed in communities with high needs and historically low volunteer engagement
 - Socialization with OEMs
 - Grey Sky
 - VOADs receive RFA and Check-In
 - Will be needed to identify where there are damages and where response is needed
 - Orientation to Volunteer Houston
 - OEMs from Houston and Harris County are on board

- Add Standard Jobs to Volunteer Houston
- Afternoon Coordination Meeting
 - Will get together each afternoon around 4pm to share where VOADs are at, and assess where the needs are

General Notes:

- All groups are on board to have goals completed by the end of April

Action Items:

- Slides for next meeting to be sent by 9am 4/2
- Expecting 15-20 attendees for meeting on Wednesday
- Give Samir as many asks for the portal and he will work on these
- Jackie Miller and Jackie Golz will set up a time with Samir to view the portal, cannot attend meeting tomorrow