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Christine Joyce

From: Marge Kennedy [mgeken@comcast.net]
Sent: Tuesday, February 02, 2010 1:46 PM
To: Christine Joyce
Cc: Board of Selectmen; Laura Ducharme; Carol Steiner
Subject: Safety Net presentation



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Hello All, I am grateful that the Board of Selectmen has given me time to speak about the Safety Net Committee at 8 p.m. on Monday, Feb. 8. Attached is a copy of my remarks that have been reviewed by Lauren Rosenzweig. I have included contact information about Carol Steiner and Laura Ducharme in one of the last paragraphs and want to be sure it is okay to mention your phone numbers when I speak since the meeting will aired on cable. Also, I will be forwarding a copy of these remarks to all those who are members of the Safety Net Committee. Thanks. Marge

The Safety Net Committee meets monthly at the Acton Congregational Church to share information and concerns about meeting the needs of local residents. It provides a means to coordinate rather than duplicate efforts in meeting such needs. The Committee was established following the Safety Net Forum convened by the Acton Board of Selectmen and the Acton-Boxborough United Way and held in November 2008.

The Safety Net Committee includes representatives of the following agencies and groups: Lauren Rosenzweig, Board of Selectmen; Steve Ledoux, Acton Town Manager, Laura Ducharme, Acton Community Services Coordinator; Frank Widmayer, Chief of Police, Carol Steiner and Jean Fleming of the Acton Council on Aging; Kelley Cronin, Acton Housing Authority; Marilyn Peterson, Domestic Violence Services Network; Rev. Bob Moore and Rev. Andy Armstrong, Clergy Association; Rachel Sagan and Corrina Roman-Kreuze, Acton-Boxborough United Way; Bob Magowan, Community Alliance for Youth; and Marge Kennedy, Acton Area League of Women Voters and Acton No Place for Hate Committee.

It will come as no surprise that there is a continuing demand for food, fuel assistance, and affordable housing in Acton, as well as the need of support for those experiencing job loss, eviction and domestic violence. Before and during the December holidays, many Committee members concentrated on various ways to provide gifts of toys, clothing, food and other such items for families who otherwise would not have had them. We are most appreciative of the work done by Laura Ducharme, Acton Community Services Coordinator and the generosity of Acton employees and volunteers who contribute to the SERVE program that provides funding for gift cards for fuel and food.

At each meeting we learn more about circumstances of domestic violence, mental health issues and growing incidents of vandalism in Acton. Added to those concerns, are ones about the need for local transitional housing for individuals and families as well as ongoing ones about the lack of public

transportation. We intend to further communication with those providing services in Acton public schools and to inform the community about the work and concerns of the Safety Net Committee. A valuable outcome of each meeting is the mutual support given those of us who deal with the demands and challenges of providing assistance to others.

Those in our community who need assistance and are over 60 years of age can call Carol Steiner at the Council on Aging, 978 264-9643. Those under 60 years of age can call Laura Ducharme, Community Services Coordinator. She can be contacted at the Public Nursing Office in Town Hall at 978 264-9653. Or if you wish to make a donation or volunteer services to help those in need, please also call Laura Ducharme.

If feasible, we will prepare a handout about the Committee to distribute in April at Acton Town Meeting. Such a handout would cover much of the same information I've shared with you this evening.

Thank you very much for making time in your busy Agenda for me to speak on behalf of the Safety Net Committee. Do you have questions of me or ones that I might pass on to the Committee at our next meeting on February 25?