Faith-Based Advisory Committee

Meeting Minutes of October 13, 2026

Present Committee members were Chair Dan Mahon, James Lafolette, Rafael Vargas, and Joe Sharon. Also present were Council Representative Allen Hayward, Youth Advisor Alivia Littlejohn and Records Retention Clerk Dawne Shaw. Councilor Jackie Linton was not in attendance.

Joe opened the meeting in prayer at 4:03pm.

Minutes:
James moved and Joe seconded to approve the September 1, 2026, minutes. Motion carried unanimously with all voting in favor.

Public Comment: None

Introduction of Youth Advisors: Youth Advisor Alivia Littlejohn introduced herself, noting that she is a Junior at Hermiston High School and is eager for volunteer opportunities. She stated that Paytyn, Ethan and Levi had prior commitments and were unable to attend the meeting. Everyone introduced themselves to Alivia, and Dan explained the committee's function and purpose.

Stepping Stones Alliance (SSA) Updates: SSA Executive Director Jesalyn Cole delivered an update, noting they now have an endowment account which gives them a vessel to accept long-term donations. She stated the Gala went very well, and while she does not have the numbers yet, she believes the total is about the same as last year. Gala ticket sales went well. Councilor Hayward noted the video documenting one member's journey was very well done. Jesalyn stated that onsite, things are going well. They are in discussions on how to get the $1.5 million dollars needed for utilities and services to build an apartment complex on the second acre of land. They hope to have a public announcement soon. She noted they had 12 successes last year and also stated there has been more trust and more engagement from clients. Other updates included:

- They are continuing to provide tours for other cities.
- The need for meals is still a pressing issue.
- The individual units are full; sleep center average is down to 15 guests per night

Jesalyn stated they have one more year of State Grant funding for operations; brief discussion continued on the operational budget.

School Adoption Updates:
Dan stated that he still needs to reach out to the school district and invite someone to attend a FBAC meeting. Brief discussion followed on the need to start planning for next year and for the school supplies backpack distribution program.

Food Insecurity Updates:
Dan explained to Alivia the free meal program, i.e., which church serves meals on which day, etc. There was brief discussion on the churches doing joint food preparation of meals for Stepping Stones. Jesalyn stated she will be speaking with the Family Career and Community Leaders of America (FCCLA) advisors

regarding the students helping with food prep. Dan stated Oasis Church is looking at ways to store their abundance of produce for future use; brief discussion continued on canning and freeze-drying options. Alivia asked if meals are provided to students during school breaks – holidays, etc. Dan noted that the Agape House has a backpack program to provide food during the weekends for kids in need. Brief discussion followed on the free Community Fellowship Thanksgiving and Christmas dinners provided at the high school.

Elect Chair through July 2027: James nominated Dan Mahon to continue as Chair; Rafael seconded the motion. Motion carried unanimously with all voting in favor.

Elect Vice Chair through July 2027: Joe nominated Rafael as Vice Chair; James seconded the motion. Motion carried unanimously with all voting in favor.

Next Meeting:
The next meeting is scheduled for November 3, 2026, at 4pm at City Hall, in the large conference room.

There being no further business, Rafael closed the meeting in prayer at 4:52pm.