



Where Life is Sweet

FAITH-BASED ADVISORY COMMITTEE

2nd Floor Large Conference Room, City Hall, 180 NE 2nd
Street

December 02, 2025 at 4:00 PM

AGENDA

1. WELCOME / INVOCATION

2. MINUTES

[A.](#) Minutes of the October 7, 2025 meeting

[B.](#) Minutes of the November 4, 2025 regular meeting

3. PUBLIC COMMENT

4. CHECK-INS / UPDATES / REPORTS

A. Stepping Stones Update

B. First Responder Updates

C. Christmas Express

D. Food Insecurity Updates

E. School Adoption Updates

5. NEXT MEETING

A. Next Meeting January 6, 2026

6. BENEDICTION

**** AMERICANS WITH DISABILITIES ACT NOTICE****

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567-5521) at least 48 hours prior to the scheduled meeting time if you need an accommodation. TTY and TDD users please call Oregon Telecommunications Relay Service at 1-800-735-2900 or 711.



Faith-Based Advisory Committee

Meeting Minutes of October 7, 2025

Present were committee members Dan Mahon, James Lafolette, and Joe Sharon. Rafael Vargas and Terry Cummings were excused. Also present were Council Representative Allen Hayward and Planning Assistant Heather La Beau. Council Representative Jackie Linton was not in attendance. There were no Youth Advisors present.

Minutes

James moved and Joe seconded to approve the minutes of the September 9, 2025, regular meeting. Motion passed with Dan, James, and Joe voting in favor.

Stepping Stones Alliance (SSA) Updates: SSA Executive Director Jessalyn Cole delivered an update on Stepping Stones to include:

- Gala Fundraiser Oct 11- ticket sales are at about 160
The event will include dinner, live and silent auctions, dessert dash, heads & tails game, and an impact video
- Solar Panels have been installed as part of an AWS project
- Recently the sleep center hosted 26 guests; max capacity is 40
- The huts are at capacity

TruCare Pregnancy Clinic Presentation

The presentation will be rescheduled to a future meeting. Dan stated the clinic is hosting a dessert fundraiser on Oct 21 at 6pm at the Hermiston Community Center. The speaker is Representative Greg Smith.

October is Pregnancy and Infant Loss Awareness Month. This was established in 1988 by President Reagan to recognize parents' grief and demonstrate support. Solid Rock Community Church is hosting a remembrance service on Oct 15 at 6pm. Oasis Vineyard Church

School Adoption support

Joe shared he coordinated providing translation services for the Fall and Spring Welcome (parent-teacher conferences). Dan suggested Joe reach out to the Catholic Church and for all to consider outreach to the teachers, not just the students at the adopted schools.

Dan is to follow-up with Zeal Church, Church of the Nazarene, and Living Faith Church. Rafael is to follow-up with New Hope Community Church, Cornerstone Baptist Church, and the Seventh-day Adventist Church.

Next Meeting

The next meeting is scheduled for November 4 at 4pm at City Hall, 180 NE 2nd St.

Adjournment

There was no other business, and James closed the meeting in prayer at 4:38pm.



Faith-Based Advisory Committee

Meeting Minutes of November 4, 2025

Present were committee members Dan Mahon and James Lafolette. Members Joe Sharon, Rafael Vargas, and Terry Cummings were excused. Council Representative Allen Hayward and Planning Assistant Heather La Beau were also present. Youth Advisors Kaytlynn Leos and Yaretzi Alcazar were in attendance. Councilor Kelso attended as a member of the public. Council Representative Jackie Linton was absent. There was not a quorum for the meeting.

Minutes

Without a quorum present, the minutes could not be approved at this meeting.

Youth Advisors

Introductions were made to welcome Youth Advisors Kaytlynn and Yaretzi. Members are happy to have their participation at the meeting.

TruCare Pregnancy Clinic Presentation

The presentation will be rescheduled to a future meeting.

Stepping Stones Alliance (SSA) Updates SSA Executive Director Jesalyn Cole delivered an update on Stepping Stones to include:

- Gala Fundraiser was a huge success, with 130 attendees
- Sleep center hosting 28 guests
- The huts remain at capacity
- Proactively working with members impacted by reduction of SNAP benefits 13 of 23 members use SNAP
- Continue to be without a stove, cooking with crockpots, skillets, microwaves, and air-fryers

First Responder Updates

Dan relayed from Terry the following updates:

- Mario Peralto Santana, pastor of Templo Abarim Church, is the newest staff Chaplain
- Christmas dinner for the police department will be hosted by the chaplains and provided by area businesses, donations of items are being accepted
- Christmas Express continues this year – questions can be directed to the police department

Agape House Update Mark Gomolski & Cathy Putnam

Mark Gomolski and Cathy Putnam, both with Eastern Oregon Mission shared updates on Agape House services.

- Largest food bank in Eastern Oregon serves 1,000 families (4,000 people) each month
- Backpack program provides food during weekends for 275 school age children each week. They expect to see an increase in this due to reduction in government food benefits
- In one day served 90 families (250 people) and expect that level for several months



Faith-Based Advisory Committee

Meeting Minutes of November 4, 2025

- Donations of food from state is down
- Encouraged community to donate directly to local food banks and organizations to hold canned food drives to assist

It was suggested that the Youth Advisors reach out to various high school clubs to inform them of volunteer and service opportunities available through Agape House. Allen suggested bins for food donations be placed at grocery stores to make donating easier. Mark was encouraged to schedule a time to present the Eastern Oregon Mission at a city council meeting to help bring awareness to the services available.

Food Insecurity Updates

Dan shared the monthly meeting was well attended with 9 churches and 9 organizations represented among the 22 people in attendance. It was good to learn about and connect the various resources. A list of local food resources was made available and is attached.

Next Meeting

The next meeting is scheduled for December 2 at 4pm at City Hall, 180 NE 2nd St.
James ended the meeting in prayer at 4:44pm.