



KAIROS ADVISORY COUNCIL NORTHEAST CORRECTIONAL COMPLEX

MAY 2024 MINUTES (May 18th, 2024)

Attending:

Tom Egan, George Fulwider, Rob Roberts, Jody Mims, Jim Catt, Jeff Fannon, Jim Hawley, Harry Ennis, Elgin Gonce, Jared Malone, Scott Hale, Scott Stodola (by phone)

Excused:

Brad Wilson

Call to Order

Rob opened the meeting at 9:01 AM

Opening Prayer

Jody opened meeting with a prayer.

Approval of April 2024 Minutes

Tom previously distributed draft minutes of the April Advisory Council meeting that Jim H. expertly prepared. Scott H. made a motion to approve the draft minutes, Jim H., 2nd. Motion passed without exception.

Financial Report – Harry / George

Harry distributed a summary of our monthly financial activity with the Kairos Tennessee State Chapter. It showed for 2024, we took two cash advances totaling \$7,799 and reimbursements of \$1,662 resulting in a negative balance with the State in 2024 of \$6,252. George indicated that our 2023 end of year balance with the State was \$5,848 and therefore we estimate we have a negative balance with the State of approximately \$400 at this time. We are required to provide a reconciliation by June 2nd of our \$6,199 advance for K 43 we took in March. However, George has still not received all of the receipts and disbursements for K 43 and we have not conducted the instructional reunion, which is planned for Saturday May 25th. There will be additional expenses we incur from that event. George is not sure but “thinks” from what financial data he has seen to date, we may have a positive financial impact from K 43 and that should also bring us back to a positive financial position with the State.

Rob, Scott H. Scott S. and Tom attended the State meeting last Saturday in Nashville where we were instructed that the State is requiring new stamping on all receipts and disbursements

to better identify the Council the items are coming from. Currently when the State treasurer has to reconcile the checking account for the State each month, the Council name is sometimes not evident or confusing which delays the reconciliation. It was also noted that since the State is now maintaining all of the Advisory Councils finances in one checking account, each Council must report on time for the State to complete their statewide reconciliation and provide financial data back to each AC. Obviously, without accurate and timely input from each AC, financial data will be delayed for every AC. All states, except Texas, are now using this single state bank account setup as this is the way KPML is providing financial control over all of the Advisory Councils.

We understand that George and Harry need to work within this framework to provide us accurate and timely financial reporting for our Council but we asked if they can get together and see if there is something they can do to help us know where we are financially on a more timely basis. They will investigate options.

Spiritual Director Devotion – Jim C.

Jim C provided an inspirational meditation about the term Inseparable, based on Romans 8:25 where it states; who should separate us from the love of Christ. Even though we identify many issues in our world, we still have God's loving arms wrapped around us. His love will never dry up or leave us. He also provided us the promise of ultimate victory over evil but it will not be without problems and issues. This message is what we need to bring with us to the men inside. Tell them nothing can separate us from the love of Christ. God chooses us and gives us His love. Thank you Jim.

Review of Action Items – Tom / Rob

Tom and Rob reviewed the action items. Updates were made but no items were completed at this time. There are no critical action items on our list and we will continue to monitor the items we are currently tracking. One item was added to our list to secure sound equipment for our weekends as this was a big issue on K43.

Ongoing Ministry (Journey) Report – Jeff

Jeff reported that our Prayer and Share last Tuesday, which was the first one since the K43 weekend, had a very good turnout with 61 residents and 14 volunteers attending.

Jim H. also noted that open mic last Tuesday provided some excellent feedback from the participants of K 43. In particular, one of the gang leaders attending the weekend, John, was so moved that he called his son to tell him how wonderful the experience was for him. He was at Shawn Lilly's table and Shawn had a big influence of him during the weekend. This should have a future positive impact in not only John's gang but hopefully in other gangs at NECX,

Communications Coordinator – Scott Stodola

Scott S. called into the meeting and told us he is currently working on the next edition of our newsletter. He should have it done in the next couple of weeks.

Kairos Outside / Emmaus Liaison – Scott H.

Barbara Hale made a presentation on Kairos Outside at the Closing of K43. This was well received.

NECX Liaison Report – Jim H.

Jim C. attended the LCRB meeting last Tuesday representing Kairos. He indicated that we are in good standing with the institution.

Men of Valor reported that they have secured Katie Souza a highly regarded speaker to come into NECX for motivational talks in November. A former drug addict, Kathy provides highly inspiring talks to incarcerated men. We should see if we can take advantage of hearing her speak or being involved with her program.

There were only 5 in attendance at the LCRB meeting last Tuesday. One item discussed was a request to increase the time we meet with the men for reunions and Prayer and Share groupings on Tuesdays. The response was that Admin is doing what they can to get our meetings started earlier but with the demands of the chow line, getting the men released earlier, does not seem feasible. On the back end, they cannot extend the meetings past 8:15 as the men need to be in their cells by 8:20 PM, which is a statewide requirement. They are doing what they can but there is no way they can increase this timeframe in the foreseeable future. They reminded us that we do have until 8:15 PM even if we hear differently on Tuesdays.

A potential issue for future Kairos weekends was discussed at the LCRB meeting as the prison is considering transferring from paper coming into the prison, to an online and electronic communication capability, with the men inside having access to an iPad device. The main reason for this change is that institutions, including NECX, have found fentanyl laced in paper products trying to be smuggled into the prison. Prisons in Virginia have already made this transition so are not allowing paper products into prisons in that State. Red onion being one of them where letters to inmates are copied and only the copy gets into the prison with the original letter destroyed.

Paper is a big part of our weekend with our letters, prayer chains, posters, freedom guides, talks and other forms of Agape. This would be a difficult change for us to make and Jim H. thinks we need to ask for an exemption if this happens. Jim C. doesn't think we will get one. We need to keep our communication channels open with Resy on this and know how something like this will be implemented in NECX. We need to stay on top of this as it will make a big difference on our weekends. There may be ways we can circumvent this by sending paper items directly to Resy to offset the impact of this change but we do not know at this time. We should also escalate this to the State level as this will impact all of the prisons in the State when it happens.

Kairos 43 – Scott S.

Scott reported that the Instructional Reunion for K43 is scheduled for Saturday, May 25th from 7AM until 3:30 PM. A number of team members told Scott that they have conflicts with this

date but Scott does have 3 confirmed who are attend. He also has 3 who have agreed to do the 6 talks. 5 Council members indicated to Scott that they will also attend and 3 will do talks, so Scott has volunteers for all of the talks and they can now be assigned.

The major issue on K 43 was the sound quality. Our new Bose speaker worked great and totally solved the problem of the echoes in the gym. The issue on K 43 was the mixing board and the microphones which were not set correctly resulting in sound breaking up during the weekend. This was a major distraction. Kevin Wilson from the music team has agreed to lead an effort to solve this problem for K44. He will also try and get donations for new sound equipment including a mixing board, microphones and lapel devices. Kevin is working with Brian from the music team, Brad, Jared and Scott H. as a committee to get this fixed for Jared's weekend. Scott H. said we need a 16 channel mixer with an auto gain function which will work great for our weekends. This would make it much easier to provide quality sound during the weekend as everything would be pre-set into memory on the new mixing board. It would be a lot easier to manage as our sound tech would only need to hit one button in most cases. Once we get this new equipment we may not need anyone to run it during the weekend but since this managing sound is part of the support provided by our Inside Server Team, we would still like to have Zoe be our sound tech. Both Kevin and Brian said that they would ensure he was properly trained on the new equipment prior to K 44. Inadequate training on our current sound equipment contributed to the problems we have been having.

Ongoing Fundraising for Kairos Weekends – Jared

Jared has informed the Council he is going to have to step away from fundraising while he is leading K 44. This obviously is essential for him to do that.

Rob noted that our expenses are going to go up for K44 as we will have extra expense for food since we used what we have already stored and the cost of copying material is also to be higher. Therefore, fundraising is important. We need ideas and people to carry out fundraising activities.

Jody talked about a fundraiser with a local restaurant, 5 Guys, where they provided a promotion for eating at their restaurant a particular evening and part of the proceeds would be donated as a fundraiser. He said he could not take over as the head of fundraising but would agree to do one of these restaurant fundraisers for K 44.

Elgin indicated we need to check with our Kairos Community to get more fundraising ideas. He will draft something and have either Tom or Jim H. send it out to all of our volunteers.

Scott has been involved with a fundraiser at his Church where food trucks provided meals on a specific evening and then donated a portion of their revenue to a particular charity. It was mentioned that he would look into this and Cross Fellowship Church may be good place to do a fundraiser because it is next to the interstate with a good parking lot. Scott and Jared will get together and discuss this as a fundraising option.

We learned at the State meeting last Saturday that on group did a Social Tea as a fundraiser and made \$6,400. It was a lot of work but they made money.

We also discussed a walk-a-thon as a fundraiser.

Jared mentioned again that he and Scott are still planning to go and solicit support from Churches in Mountain City.

New Kairos leadership for weekends an Advisory Council – Scott H

Elgin reported that Ray Hayes has declined our offer for a leadership role as Observing Leader of Kairos 44 and Leader of Kairos 45 in spring of 2025, however, the good news is Dean Yates has accepted our offer and will Jared's Observing Leader in the fall.

Ray noted that his plate is very full at this time but in the future he may be able to accept a leadership role.

We discussed other volunteers who have shown leadership qualities for future leadership positions as follows:

- Rob Cole, who was the Coordinator for K43 and will be at a table and give a talk on K44.
- Shawn Lilly will be asked to work K 44 as he needs more experience but likes Kairos and make a good leader in the future.
- Gregg Benefield has the qualities but is very busy with career and family right now. We will make sure he is asked to work future teams.
- Greg Watlington has demonstrated good leadership skills and has recently retired. He will be asked to work a table and give a talk on K 44.
- Kevin Wilson worked his first weekend doing music. He will be asked to work a table and give a talk on K44.
- Kyle Ewart is young (23) but has shown good leadership skills. Will make sure he is given the opportunity to do more weekends and grow into a future leadership role.

Jared also highlighted that he plans to bring back individuals from past weekends who have leadership skills and this list may grow after K 44.

Old Business

New Busines

Scott S. has expressed a desire to become more involved in the leadership of our Council and as part of that would like to attend the annual conference for KPMI in Lexington Ky. this year. He would handle his travel expenses but is asking for help with Conference fees and room expenses.

George made a motion to have Scott attend the KPMI convention, Jared 2nd and the motion passed without exception. We will determine how we fund these costs. Jim H. is also attending the KPMI convention as a support resource for KPMI and may be able to help Scott's expenses by sharing a room with him if Jim's wife Gayle does not attend. Regardless, it is important for Scott to attend and the Council will make that happen. A number of Council members have indicated they would also help financially to make this happen.

Brad has relocated to North Carolina but would like to remain on the Council as Data Coordinator. It is felt he can handle that position from a remote location. We agreed this is a good idea as Brad contributes a lot in a lot of different areas. It was, however, mentioned that this may give us an opportunity to put Kevin Wilson on the Board, as we will have an opening and still have Brad in his position as a non-voting Council member. This would seem to enhance our Council with a future leader and still retain Brad. We are going to ask Kevin about joining the Council and maybe helping with fundraising, since he is doing this already with our sound system.

Prayer Requests

- Barb Hale's father, John Willis passed away.
- Hugh Johnson's significant other, Phyllis is in the hospital
- Harrison Seagrade, a 2 year old neighbor of Jared has recently had cancer surgery
- Elgin's mother had a bad reaction with her medication levels and also her 1st cousin is facing end of life and moving to eternal salvation
- Praise for Elgin's father-in-law who finally got new hearing aides
- A Stanley employee of Jody has multiple family members in the hospital at different locations.
- Harry is doing a sermon at his Church on May 26th if anyone can join the service. Doing some fundraising for Kairos also.

Closing Prayer

Tom led an ending prayer highlighting our prayer requests.

Meeting Ended

Rob closed the meeting at 11:03 AM.

Respectively submitted,

Tom