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**“Many Heads, Hearts and Hands Working Together for a Healthier Lake Worth”**

For a Cleaner, Greener, and Safer Lake Worth Beach

Submitted by: Carmelle Marcelin-Chapman, HLWB Project Director

**Our Mission:**

**Our Mission is to improve the Cleanliness, Environment, and Safety of Lake Worth’s Neighborhoods and to Promote Healthy Behaviors that Impact the Overall Health and Well-Being of its Residents.”**

## **Executive Summary:**

Last October 2019, we presented our revised Strategic Plan, with our Framework (HLWB's "Pillars" based on the community's Priorities) for 2019-2020 and beyond, to our Steering Committee members and the community at large. Presenting the community's vision and priorities within a clear and focused Framework generated a lot of excitement. Over the past year, stakeholders, organizations, sponsorship recipients and other partners have generated a lot of momentum for the Initiative and have laid a firm groundwork for the future of the LWB community. In particular, the sponsorships received from Healthier Lake Worth Beach enabled many groups within LWB to increase their capacity to serve and impact more residents' lives. The Framework is designed to further this growth by providing direction and a structured model for all parties involved to follow. It also includes an equity lens to help begin a conversation with our local system leaders about health and race equity inclusion when addressing community issues, particularly in the marginalized neighborhoods in LWB. This will eventually translate into giving these neighborhoods the same attention and urgency currently reserved for the more affluent neighborhoods in the community.

We believe that our unique "Sponsorship" approach has been very instrumental in funding many community projects that address the issue of Behavioral Health, identified as the community's "Health Focus". Though the Sponsorship guidelines have helped HLWB and the community to address many important Projects and strengthen partnerships, over the past year we have reviewed and redefined our application categories to bring further clarity and purpose to each funded Project and more closely align them to specific Pillars. The Sponsorship Review Team has also recommended that we reduce the maximum amount allowable per Sponsorship request. We believe that these changes will maximize the benefit of available funding.

HLWB realizes that the success of the Initiative relies on the capacity of residents and stakeholders to lead and to share their gifts of heads hearts and hands. Everyone involved has done a great job in moving the Initiative from one level to the next. To facilitate this process, HLWB has provided tools to build the leadership capacity of our committed members, including sending them to national and

International Community Engagement and Leadership Conferences to expand their knowledge and enable them to hear about and share new and creative ideas.

As we ended our second year and calendar year 2019, HLWB opened the door to its Steering Committee members to increase their leadership skills by offering them a seat on the Leadership team or the various Action Workgroups. Members nominated other members who have been committed to the Initiative since the beginning, and some volunteered to take the lead on Workgroups. By the end of the year, we had elected new Steering Committee Co-Chairs and several Action Workgroup Chairs. At the same time, the community expressed their heightened excitement, as HLWB began planning our annual celebration of a well-accomplished year filled with Wins. This was a one-of-a-kind celebration that not only included HLWB Steering Committee members input, but also local stakeholders' and partners' and residents' input as we collectively strove to recognize the many good things that had been accomplished in the community and the valuable work that local stakeholders, volunteers, and partners did in the community. We also wanted to recognize external partners, including volunteers who came into the community to help fill gaps in resources. Thus, the Healthier Lake Worth Beach "DO GOOD" Award was created. We honored, celebrated and thanked nine stakeholders and partners, with a Plaque, and seven volunteers, with a "DO GOOD" Acknowledgements Certificate and gift card.



Over 200 culturally diverse community members, partners and friends attended the celebration in December 2019. Many of the HLWB sponsorship recipients spoke about how the HLWB funding impacted their Programs. Dance and music performances by the members of For the Children's "Youth Empowerment Program" and South Grade Elementary Band students enhanced the joy and positivity felt by all. Attendees said that the joy and excitement they saw and felt that day was like nothing any of them had seen before!





We entered 2020 with excitement and started to lay the groundwork with an array of strategies, community projects and events focused on our organized framework. These projects and events included expanding our community cleanup initiative to other neighborhoods at the North end of LWB, engaging the Highland Elementary School Safety Patrol students and their parents in the cleanups, to support their

annual educational trip to Washington DC, in May, continuing the work on implementing the Trash Can Project in the Whispering Palms Neighborhood, sponsoring the Royal Poinciana Neighborhood Park Project, beginning conversations on restoring the Unity Wall, and many others. Everything was looking rosy and going smoothly, until suddenly everything came to an abrupt halt as the world and our country were collectively hit with the Pandemic in mid-March.

Though the country was shut down, we knew we couldn't shut down our community. After all, the "Health Focus" was not magically going away on its own and could be expected to worsen during the pandemic, as concerns about employment, food, and health would exacerbate the situation. Covid-19 forced us to reach deep down to find the collective energy, flexibility, resources, and innovation to keep going. Based on CDC guidelines, HLWB shifted to "virtual" monthly Steering Committee and Action Workgroup meetings. We then shifted its focus and attention on how Covid-19 was impacting the neighborhoods in Lake Worth Beach, particularly the more vulnerable communities, with hard to reach families. HLWB took the lead on gathering the stakeholders, partners, and businesses in the community together to discuss problems, behaviors, and challenges to following health and safety guidelines established across the country to combat COVID-19.

As a community, with the guidance of Healthier Lake Worth Beach, we began to shift from initial, collective feelings of fear, panic, and paralysis, to planning how best to move forward, with specific, purposeful action steps. Steps that can only be accomplished by combining our assets, and sharing ideas, observations, and innovative ways to help navigate this new and unknown landscape and adapt to it.

### **Goals:**

Healthier Lake Worth seeks to improve behavioral health by improving the cleanliness, environment and safety of Lake Worth's neighborhoods and to promote healthy behaviors that impact the overall health and well-being of its residents.

- 1) **Community Engagement:** Increase residents' participation in Healthier Lake Worth Beach's community/neighborhood activities, events, and meetings.

- 2) **Cleaner Neighborhood for Better Health:** Support and build neighborhood associations, community stakeholders' leadership capacity and identifying opportunities for solutions to create a cleaner and healthier environment.
- 3) **Safer Neighborhood for Better Health:** Strengthen our partnership with local Law Enforcement leaders and the City of LWB Officials to reduce on violent crimes and increase safety in LWB.
- 4) Distribute funds through our HLWB Sponsorships to support community projects.
- 5) Support and help local youth connect to meaningful opportunities and resources that will enable them to thrive and become successful adults.
- 6) Leverage and strengthen our partnership with the City of Lake Worth Beach Leaders and its departments and our local Sheriff leaders to pursue equity inclusion and local system change.

## **DETAILED NARRATIVE:**

### **From Celebration to Uncertainty**

We ended year 2019 with a Bang as HLWB put together a celebration of WINS accomplished during that year. This year-end celebration was about thanking and recognizing residents, volunteers, stakeholders and partners for their leadership, ownership, and collaboration that created an incredible amount of energy and generated momentum leading to a long list of WINS for LWB community. It was also about using that energy and momentum to plant seeds for the future and laying the groundwork to roll out our Framework for 2020. A Framework that could only be executed by the people who attended the celebration event. This understanding of the community's power and role in ongoing and future success was evident, as the attendees exhibited their excitement at continuing to be part of the movement.

We started 2020 by getting consensus for our updated sponsorship guidelines, which we feel has brought clarity and purpose to our identified Pillars. The HLWB Sponsorship Review Committee decided to reduce the maximum amount of funding per Project from \$10,000, then to \$5,000, and currently to \$2,500. This will "spread the wealth," maximize the impact of our funding, and insure that only Projects that closely tie in with our Pillars are funded. These Sponsorship Guideline

changes were made with an understanding that the HLWB Sponsorship Review Committee will keep an open mind and be flexible to the possibility of considering a bigger project that involves infrastructure work and more funding (i.e. the new Royal Poinciana Neighborhood Park).

There were several approved projects from 2019 that had not been implemented by the time the pandemic hit. However, even with new barriers placed in our path, we knew it was essential that we continue to work on implementing those projects. They included such things as the Whispering Palms Trash Can Project, the HLWB Bi-Monthly Meet & Greet, the partnership with the City's Code Enforcement Dept. on the New Ordinance Project, the HLWB Documentary Film Project (Which I am proud to announce was completed and presented to a chorus of thunderous applause at the Art of Recovery Film Festival in October 2020), and other Projects. Many of those projects are essential to strengthen our relationship with the community, and to strengthen the community's relationship with City Leadership, and to obtain the City's "buy-in" and "ownership" of certain projects.

### **Nothing For Us Without Us.**

In February, the City's Management Office's Parks and Recreation leaders approached us with a proposal for HLWB to join in a partnership to build a much-needed park in the Royal Poinciana Neighborhood. This partnership required that HLWB sponsor a large amount of money to cover the playground equipment for the park. The park has been a long-time dream of the Royal Poinciana's residents (long before HLWB was established). In addition, during conversations and dialogues, that eventually led to the residents of LWB choosing Behavioral Health as their "Health Focus," the need for this park was raised, repeatedly. HLWB agreed to sit down with the city, with the caveat that the Royal Poinciana residents be part of the conversation. We invited the RP Neighborhood Association President and its leadership members to join the conversation, so their collective "voice" would be heard and their needs and wants would be incorporated in any plans to proceed. However, as we began the conversation, it became clear that the city had already decided what the park was going to look like. To the community's dismay, the park was not going to include lighting, due to a high cost that the City could not afford. It also became readily apparent that RP residents were not even aware of the City's decision to build the park in the first place.

We knew that if we were going to collaborate with the City to build the park, we would need to open lines of “back and forth” communication. We took the initial step of informing the City that HLWB would only consider providing sponsorship funding to assist in building the park under the condition that the RP residents be allowed to provide their input during the design phase. In addition, we stressed the requirement that RP residents’ input be factored into the implementation phase of the park. In concrete terms, this meant that the design of the playground would have to be reviewed by the residents to ensure it meets their needs; for instance, that the park must include lighting and cameras, for safety. This resulted in many subsequent meetings with the City’s leadership management, RP neighborhood leaders, residents and the HLWB leadership team and, most importantly, led to the RP residents being a part of the process of designing the park. In early March, at a community Fiesta event, the RP Neighborhood Association presented three-park design proposals with drawings to families and children living in the neighborhood to vote on.

The reaction to the news that this was really going to happen was pure joy and excitement by the children. In the end, the City of LWB was presented with Sponsorship funding of \$24,300 and the RP neighborhood residents are getting a recreation park that meets their families’ recreation needs. Of course, the HLWB name will be added as partner on a plaque at the park. A tangible and permanent

record of HLWB's Legacy in the community. This is an **Outcome Win for HLWB**



### **Shifting our Thinking and Learning**

In the second week of March, the unimaginable happened: the Global Pandemic known as COVID-19 made its way to the U.S, in devastating fashion. Our country was shut down; and people began experiencing a wide array of feelings and emotions: denial, fear, sadness, anger, and grief. However, the HLWB community leaders, stakeholders and partners new that they could not allow these feelings to dominate the community for too long without acting to address them. This quick response was particularly important in a community such as Lake Worth Beach, with its many complex issues, the absence of health and racial equity, marginalized neighborhoods, language barriers, joblessness, threats of eviction, lack of financial aid, and a myriad of other issues. Often times, these neighborhoods, where one size solution definitely does not fit all, are the forgotten ones, but also the ones that get hit the hardest during disaster and times of health and economic crisis.

HLWB quickly shifted our thinking and feelings of being “stuck” to paying close attention to the community’s reaction to the pandemic, with a particular focus on vulnerable and hard to reach neighborhoods. We rallied our local and external stakeholders, partners, and leaders to combine their strengths and assets to help the community to adapt to this unknown landscape and support our diverse neighborhoods, with their different needs. Though the country issued a “Sheltering at Home” order, we knew we would need to be very active in the community to identify the problems or challenge our families were facing, by asking questions in order to learn to respond with the most innovative ways.

**For Example:**

One of the first issues we saw was a lack of adherence to CDC Health and Safety Guidelines designed to keep them safe from the virus. They were still in their usual “survival” mode. Families were standing in line at food pantries and other food distribution sites and did not practice proper social distancing or wear a mask. When asked them if they understood the seriousness of the COVID-19 and if they were aware of the CDC Safety Guidelines put in place to keep them, family members, and their friends safe, they would often answer with a shrug or say, “We don’t matter, anyway”, “I still need to feed my family”.

**Neighborhood Health**

**Navigating through Unknown Landscape**

We put a halt to all project activities relating to improving the physical appearance of our neighborhoods, because it was clear our Lake Worth Beach neighborhoods were facing more critical health issues. Based on observed behavior, we came to a consensus that we needed to bring awareness and education about COVID-19 to our neighborhoods and try to convince the residents of the importance of following them. However, we had to determine what that educational effort would look like for families with challenges and barriers to communication such as literacy, reading, and language. Therefore, in addition to multilingual flyers and other typical means of communication, we had to develop some innovative ways to get the information to them. We took the CDC’s COVID-19 Prevention and Safety Guidelines, we translated them into Haitian Creole and Spanish, and we reached

out to our external radio communication partners and asked them to help turn the translated guidelines into a PSA in all three languages. We chose Arms of Hope as our test site to determine the effectiveness of this approach. As the families were standing in line to pick-up food, the PSA message was played in a loop, loud and clear, in English, Spanish and Haitian Creole, through a speaker set-up outside. We also shared the PSA messages with many of our local and external partners.

**(Insight Win)**

The following week, we started to notice that not only were families beginning to wear masks; they were even being creative about it, using whatever face coverings they could find or create. They truly demonstrated the phrase: “When Life Gives You a Lemon, You Make Lemonade”. Some of them had a T-shirt or a blouse covering their nose and mouth, others lifted the front part of their shirt up to their nose. What was most telling was that they showed that they understood the danger and what to do to minimize risk for themselves and their fellow residents. This was a huge Win! **(Capability Win)**

This response led us to our next action, which was to provide families with the personal resources that they need to keep themselves, their families, and friends safe. We combined our resources to get masks, gloves, hand sanitizer, hand soap, and toilet paper. With the help of volunteers, we put together over 500 care packages and distributed them to the families, as they stood in line to pick-up food. We also distributed masks to our stakeholders who provide services to the families and children in the community.





families to determine what resources had more priority to them. As we heard and captured the information on paper, we began to reach out to our external partners to help fill the gaps.

Project Lunch-out – A community effort to provide meals to local LWB hospitality workers that were laid-off due to COVID-19, was coordinated by the LWB CRA in partnership with LWB restaurants and the City of LWB. HLWB contributed \$700 to the project. Over 700 restaurant workers received a lunch meal from one of the restaurants. This was an on-going project that went on every Friday with different local restaurants.

In order to increase and expand access to food capacity. HLWB supported our most recent partner Youth Empowered to Prosper, a program of City of Faith Church, with the implementation of their food pantry at the North end of LWB. We contributed to the installation cost of the donated equipment needed to maintain the quality and freshness of the perishable items to be distributed. The food Pantry opened on Saturdays and served over 400 families.

With the partnership of United Way, HLWB connected Arms of Hope Soup Kitchen with FLYPPANY a Miami food company that delivered Grab and Go breakfast and lunch for 600 kids per week.

Our HLWB member Patrick Livingston continues to be a champion at serving the community and going beyond his scope to meet the overwhelming needs of the community. The pandemic has increased the number of families he serves by the hundreds during the days he distributes hot meals and grocery. HLWB and For the Children combine their assets and strengths, and attracted additional volunteers to help Patrick respond to those additional needs. During the serving days, we would put together over 800 to-go hot plates and distribute at least 300 lbs. of groceries to over 800 families. In addition, one day per week, Patrick delivered grocery bags to 250 seniors at an assisted living facility.

Our city leaders began to take notice and began providing assistance to Patrick by delivering boxes of to-go meals and essential items weekly to Arms of Hope and helping to serve and distribute groceries.

As the Pandemic progressed, the situation worsened, rapidly with no sign of the end in sight. Many of our most vulnerable members were in the hospital and some

had died. More and more youth and their families were contracting the virus. Meanwhile, HLWB noticed that there were no testing sites in our community. HLWB reached out to an external partner, Genesis Clinic in Boynton Beach to discuss the need of bringing COVID 19 testing to the LWB community. We were able to facilitate a meeting between the Genesis Clinic's Executive Director, LWB's City Leaders, and their COVID-19 Response Team via Zoom to discuss the growing need and coordinate a response. As a result, four COVID- 19 Testing Sites were implemented across the city giving access to residents living in the South, Central, and North areas of LWB, four times per week, with flexible hours, to meet the community's testing needs. Up to 600 people were tested per week. **(Capability Win)**

### **Neighbors Helping Neighbors.**

Palm Health Foundation, established the "Neighbors Helping Neighbors" Fund in all six Healthier Together communities. The purpose of the Fund is to distribute community relief efforts to families affected by the pandemic quickly, without the red tapes. People struggling to meet basic needs such as paying rent or mortgages, utility bills, food, essential protective needs, pharmaceuticals, and other medical needs etc. The funds have been entrusted to For the Children who, a long-time trusted stakeholder serving families and children in the LWB community. Over 25 families have gotten financial assistance with rents, mortgages, utilities, food and funeral arrangement. **(Capability Win)**

### **Safety**

#### **Raising Our Voices**

We entered the New Year with the anticipation of combining our efforts with our local Sheriff's "Community Based Crime Reduction" implementation plan, since we share the same vision for the Safety of LWB. Some of the activities in the plan included starting the New Year with a large community engagement event, "Community Fiesta Day", in which HLWB sat on the Planning Committee with many other partners across the County, and a Neighborhood Crime Walk (or "Mayor's Crime Walk), organized by City of LWB leaders, in collaboration with the

Neighborhood Association Presidents (NAPC). The purpose of the “Community Fiesta Day” event was to bring families together to celebrate and interact with each other in fun ways and, equally importantly, to learn to see our local law enforcement in a more positive way. A way that is conducive to building relationships and increasing safety in the community, for all. After months of planning, The “Community Fiesta Day” event happened the first Saturday of March and was very successful. Over 200 families and children attended the event, more than 30 providers distributed resources to attendees, and PBSO deputies and leaders engaging in games, dance and all sorts of planned activities with the youth. Unfortunately, the pandemic hit the next week, severely hampering efforts to build on the momentum generated by the event. Ultimately, however, HLWB sees the event as a WIN for the Initiative and the community, because it showed to the City of LWB that we are a clear conduit to the community and its residents. **(Capability Win)**



The Neighborhood Crime Walk Program (or the “Mayor’s Crime Walk,” as it was also known) was designed to engage one neighborhood at a time, starting with the one where the percentage of crime was highest, with the intent to eventually reclaim LWB from the criminals; sending them a clear message that the community is on alert. Each neighborhood association in the LWB community who wished to participate, would be allowed to pick a month and coordinate their Crime Walk with the assistance of the local PBSO and City Leaders. The first Walk happened at the end of January in the South Palm Way and Pineapple Beach Neighborhoods. More than 50 residents, included the City of Lake Worth Beach Mayor, the Commissioner in charge of that District, local PBSO Mounted Police and Deputies, the Captain, and the News Media.



**Mayor Triolo's Community Crime Walk  
South Palm Park and Pineapple Beach  
Saturday, January 25<sup>th</sup>, 2020  
From 3 p.m. to 5 p.m.**

**Meet at 15<sup>th</sup> Avenue South and South Federal Highway**

**The PBSO Mounted Unit will be there**

**See you there,**

**Captain Baer**



Just as the next Crime Walk was scheduled to happen, in the Royal Poinciana Neighborhood, in Mid-March, the country shut down due to the rise of COVID-19, and this became one of the many projects that needed to be postponed due to CDC Guidelines.

As COVID-19 began to ravage communities across the country, infecting and killing by the hundreds and thousands, on a daily basis, in May we witnessed a shocking, heinous, heartrending example of police brutality, the killing of George Floyd at the hands of a Law Enforcement Officer, an event recorded on a cell phone camera and witnessed by the entire world. This blatant display of systemic racial inequity and injustice incited the largest and longest period of Civil Unrest in many, many years in the United States and throughout the world. People of all races, genders, and nationalities united to demand Justice, and became “woke” as they worked together for a common cause. Community felt increasingly unsafe and demanded to have conversations with their local law enforcement leaders to ensure that they have safe practices in place to protect the citizens, and not kill them solely based on their race or the color of their skin.

The HLWB community echoed the same sentiments. We collectively seized the moment to spark the start of a community conversation, holding a Panel Discussion on the topic of Racial Inequality and Social Injustice; an open discussion facilitated and moderated by Barbara Cheives. The Panel included some of our city leaders, faith-based leaders, community stakeholders and residents. Though our local PBSO Captain was invited to join, he could not attend due to restrictions from upper management. However, as the HLWB Project Director, I had the opportunity to speak with him, privately, on the likelihood that PBSO would reinstate Community Policing in the Lake Worth community. I am happy to report that as a result of our conversation, he knows and understands what the community is striving for and how important this issue is to them. The event was held at the Lake Worth Gym, a venue that was large enough to ensure compliance with all CDC safety guidelines for in person gatherings, and simultaneously via Zoom and Facebook Live. This two-hour conversation engaged more than 60 participants via Zoom and through Facebook live. We received many, many questions during the discussion, demonstrating the community’s interest in this important topic.

Healthier Lake Worth Beach

HEALTHIER LAKE WORTH BEACH & ARMS OF HOPE INVITE YOU TO

# A VIRTUAL COMMUNITY CONVERSATION

WITH CITY LEADERS & COMMUNITY INVESTORS TO DISCUSS ISSUES SUCH AS SOCIAL AND RACIAL INEQUALITY, HEALTH DISPARITIES, AND INJUSTICE

*Join us for this open discussion on  
Wednesday, June 17 / 3pm*

*Zoom link: <https://bit.ly/LakeWorthBeachZoom>*

*Meeting ID: 811 2137 6538  
Password: 9TGAEe  
Dial-in: (929) 205-6099*

The conversation generated two major **Outcome Wins**:

1. The City of LWB Leaders have now taken steps to hire the National “League of Cities,” also known as REAL (Race Equity And Leadership) to help them move forward in integrating equity as a value that is put into action throughout the LWB Community. The scope of the work will help Leadership and staff to **normalize** racial equity as a key value and develop a clear understanding and shared definitions, **operationalize** equity via new policies and transforming the underlying culture of organizational, and **organize** both internally and through partnership with other institutions and the community.

The Framework includes trainings, community conversations, capacity building and on-going consultation. The proposal has already been presented to the City’s Commission Meeting and approved. The City has asked HLWB to lead the “community conversation” effort.

2. In Mid-August our local PBSO contact, Captain Baer, sent an e-mail to the community announcing that **Community Policing Deputies** have been assigned to the Sector that encompasses our neighborhoods. Those Deputies will be attending meetings in neighborhoods assigned to them, discussing crime data with the residents, answering questions related to that data, and helping solve problems in their assigned neighborhoods.

## Sponsorships

Even in the midst of the Pandemic, the HLWB Sponsorship Review Team has managed to commit their time to continue to meet (via Zoom) to review applications, as they are submitted. They carefully assess each application and interview applicants (via Zoom) on their project to verify that the timing is appropriate, that the event is not likely to be cancelled, due to the pandemic, and that proper Covid-19 safety measures and guidelines will be in place to protect the attendees.

Over the past year, HLWB gave \$38,000 in Sponsorships (including the new Park Project) and \$3,800 of discretionary funding to smaller projects (under \$1,000 each). The sponsorship projects ranged from improving neighborhood recreation a youth summer project (at the Zoo Health Club), community cultural engagement and awareness, and education in the recovery community (Art of Recovery Film Festival).



As mentioned previously, the new HLWB documentary was released to the public at the Art of Recovery Film Festival. It showed the progress the community has made since HLWB came into inception and began providing guidance to the community based solely on the changes that the community and its residents wanted to make. It showed the many Wins achieved over the past three years and highlighted the growing empowerment of the community and how their collective “voice” was finally being heard and listened to, and how the members of the community had begun to learn to take control of their own situation, to make “real,” systemic change. Equally importantly, the film showed where the community was and where it is heading. This optimistic message was received by attendees with a growing sense of pride, power, and accomplishment.

### **Social Media/Awareness**

During the pandemic, the LWB AmeriCorps VISTA volunteer managed and revamped our Facebook and Instagram Pages in an attempt to make them more interactive and more informative. As a result, they became a reliable and valuable tool to disseminate information, resources, and education to the LWB demographic who uses social media. Over time, we have seen a steady increase in posts, engagements, likes and followers (primarily with Facebook).

When the COVID-19 Pandemic started, HLWB social media pages went into information overload mode, sharing important resources and education, preparing and reviewing the results of “current need” surveys, providing up-to-date information on all aspects of COVID-19 Testing (including Testing locations) and a myriad of other information. We did our best to help residents to stay healthy and safe. This generated a large increase in information sharing by followers of our pages.

Over the past year, our Facebook Followers have increased from 360 to 500. Our posts have reached closed to 1,000 users per month and post engagement has increased to 94%.

As far as our Instagram Page is concerned, we have not seen a significant increase in our engagement. This is not surprising, as our experience has demonstrated that that the population we serve tends to use Facebook much more than Instagram.

## Key Learnings

- 1) **“Zoom, Zoom, and More Zoom”** (LOL) – We found out as a country that it is never too late to learn new technology. The pandemic forced us to think “outside the box” when it comes to communicating with others, doing work remotely and, in general, staying safe. It also brought to our attention Key Learnings #2
- 2) While many of us were able to smoothly (sort of) flex over to a new-normal way of doing our jobs and living our lives, by utilizing new tools such as Zoom, the concept was foreign to and beyond the financial means of most of the culturally diverse, multilingual, literacy-challenged, low-income residents of the Lake Worth Beach community. As we soon learned, we can plan a hundred “well intentioned” zoom meetings to discuss what our residents are thinking and to identify their changing, day-to-day needs. However, if only a few of the residents are willing or able to attend those meetings, we won’t accomplish much. Besides not having computers and internet access, much of the population we serve lacks the technological knowledge to do so. Plus, they have jobs that do not provide health insurance or days off with pay. We quickly learned that during the pandemic (and even during “normal” times) the families we served had two major priorities: to keep their jobs and feed their families; certainly not attend Zoom meetings.

What this taught us was that even during a deadly pandemic HLBW needed to continue to be visible in the various neighborhoods and talk to the residents. Not only was this important to find out our residents “true” needs (and not make assumptions about what they are) but, in an environment that can easily breed despair and depression, it is crucial that they know that we were still there, looking out for their well-being. In short, that they were not forgotten. The pandemic forced us to find new ways to continue engaging with the community, while also complying with CDC Guidelines and Guidelines established for us by Palm Health Foundation (our “Funder” and Community Partners (our “Fiscal” Agent).

Though the pandemic has negatively impacted so many of us, there has been one major plus to the Covid-19 crisis. It has taught each of us to be more flexible in our approach to everyday life and to learn adaptive behavior, new ways of doing things that will better prepare us to face unanticipated challenges to our community in the future and continue interacting with the residents we serve.

**Next Steps:**

- Finalize the implementation of the Trash Cans in Whispering Palms.
- Refurbish and Restore the Wall of Unity in Whispering Palms.
- Reinstate Mental Health First aid training in the community
- Continue to identify potential leaders.
- Assist the City of LWB with the facilitation of Community Conversations as they move forward with their Equity Integration project.
- Continue to work with our local PBSO's Community Based Crime Reduction Framework to increase safety in the LWB neighborhoods.