

## External Research Working Group results

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**Summary:** We looked at a total of 115 organizations focusing on volunteer organization and management; number of staff; board of director organizational structure and size; fee vs. non fee paying; and funding and fund raising.

**Overall Structure, Purpose, Funding:** Organizations ranged from large faith-based neighborhood or community groups to university and medical center based entities. Almost all focused on some variety of “aging in place”. Multi-generational programs seemed to focus on offering services to children with disabilities or long term illnesses, or were time bank programs that included high school/college students. Most seemed to offer the same kinds of helping services offered by Fearington Cares in terms of transportation, handyman services, and health related referrals and programs. A small number had nurses or social workers and few were free. Most had fees ranging from \$150 to \$1000. In many cases the services they offered were no different from ours – they were volunteer-based but used the fee income to fund salaries, programs and infrastructure. Most organizations around our size had small paid staff of 1 to 3 people. Board size ranged from 7-9 members with larger organizations having larger boards.

**Services:** Many groups restricted transport only in terms of distance traveled so within a certain radius volunteers would take folks to medical appointments, shopping malls, movies, food shopping, cultural events, museums, etc. Many had strong social programs which to a great degree are taken care of here in Fearington by our many and varied programs, clubs and associations. Many offered services we do not like cooking, meal delivery, pot luck suppers, bill paying and paperwork help, exercise programs (doctor’s note required), biking and walking groups, pet care, and light housework. Some offered sewing, knitting, quilting, scrap-booking, and craft help. Several in concert with material from the Library of Congress had volunteers who helped veterans write their war memories.

**Volunteer Programs:** Most organizations had moved from having volunteer programs run by volunteers to a more formal program with a paid coordinator (usually part time), and offered specific training to volunteers along with vetting processes that ranged from requiring references to criminal checks requiring fingerprinting. Most had developed volunteer time sheets, handbooks and formal orientation programs. All had a variety of volunteer recognition programs ranging from yearly appreciation teas/lunches to volunteers of the month/year and pre-printed thank you cards signed by the ED noting a particular volunteer effort or endeavor. Certificates of Appreciation noting hours (some gave out pins as well) were often presented by a prominent local minister/pastor, the mayor, councilperson, or in our case could be RB Fitch if he was willing. One had a time sheet drawing every month and handed out one or two \$25 gas gift cards as an incentive to volunteer (which also encouraged timely submission of time sheets!).

**Funding:** In terms of fund raising larger organizations had more elaborate programs like golf tournaments while organizations our size tended – in addition to their annual giving program – to have holiday concerts/sales, silent auctions, ice cream socials – events that tended to bring in \$500-\$3000. Some were moving toward the ability of residents/members to have a monthly sum deducted from their bank account and some were just starting to think about planned giving. Several were beginning to question the value of these events in terms of fund raisers since they require so much staff time and energy.

Funding-wise all were supported by combinations of donations raised through a regular yearly annual giving campaign, membership dues, fee for services, grants, county, state or local government funding, community organizations, and from affiliated churches.

In addition to the above we also looked at some other innovative programs that Ferrington Cares might consider in the future as follows.

**A. Preferred Providers/Village Concierge concept:** This type of program does not provide services per se but rather connects community members to vetted service providers acting as a central “call center”. These connections can be to related to care giving, to medical personnel like nurses or to physical or occupational therapists, to service providers (plumbers, roofers, electricians, picture framers, etc.) as well as to services available in a community (bus transport, grocery delivery, auto repair) there is no real limit to what could be available. Organizations that have such programs usually solicited suggestions from community members; interviewed/screened all providers and collected references as well as supporting documentation such as certificates of insurance, licenses, etc. Users of the services receive a post-service evaluation within one week of service delivery asking for their impression of the services received.

**B. Development of a connection to a university school of social work:** We looked at the University of Utah's School of Social Work program established in 1997 and begun as a demonstration project. It is now a fully structured, non-profit, community-based service organization operating out of U/Utah's College of Social work's W.D. Goodwill Initiatives in Aging. Staff consists of a director, an administrative assistant, and two community specialists. It provides services to older adults in need, living in a defined catchment area, free of charge, regardless of their income. Building a relationship with a local university would give Ferrington Cares possible access to graduate student interns who could augment our volunteers and could help draft proposals and other materials. U/Utah's students help them maintain volunteer websites, assist with PR efforts; distribute flyers, brochures, and other program materials throughout the program's catchment area; maintain community resource file/loan library; mass mailings; follow-up with internet resources and information; create flyers and cards on computer.

**C. Time Banks:** Time banking is an international initiative that works to bring communities closer together by allowing residents to exchange services. Simply put it is about spending an hour doing something for somebody in the community. That hour then goes into the Time Bank as a Time Dollar (or Beltie Buck!). It is a simple but powerful way of keeping people connected and involved and allows older and younger members of a neighborhood to interact with each other – from a housebound member teaching knitting to a neighbor, to a retired teacher tutoring children. The purpose of the organization we looked at was created to “nurture, inspire and motivate a network of neighbors to come together to create a caring and sharing community. Time-banking honors the unique gifts, talents and resources that each of us has to share, regardless of age, employment or ethnic background — such as tutoring, yard work, simple repairs, running errands, and storytelling.” Two volunteer co-coordinators interview potential members, facilitate transactions between members and oversee the daily operation of the time bank.