

## Press Release

For Immediate Release

April 17, 2020

### **Long-term Recovery Committee Formed to Support County Response to COVID-19**

- *Blaine County community leaders have joined to create a long-term recovery team to develop a recovery plan and coordinate local resources in response to the COVID crisis*
- *The Blaine Recovery Committee will focus on business, nonprofit and personal recovery including economic, physical health and medical services, mental and spiritual health, food resources, and youth.*
- *The Committee will create a multi-agency resource center (MARC) to connect resources to community members, especially those most in need*
- *The Committee includes leaders from government, non-profit, business, and faith-based communities*

*Blaine County, Idaho* -- Leaders from government, non-profit, business, and faith-based communities have created a long-term recovery committee for Blaine County, called the Blaine Recovery Committee (BRC). The BRC will coordinate efforts to assist those impacted by the COVID-19 pandemic and its associated economic disruptions.

The Committee will identify and prioritize challenges facing the community's recovery, seek and help advance solutions, and pursue resources to address those needs. The BRC will help to coordinate resources, information and volunteers and connect them with those in need, prioritizing the most impacted members of our community. By providing up to date, accurate, and reliable information to the community, the BRC will reduce key barriers to effective recovery. With a high per capita rate of infection and the drastic impact on local business and individuals in the community, crafting effective response tools and strategies is a top priority for the community.

"As we work through the current situation and move into the recovery from the COVID pandemic, the creation of the Blaine Recovery Committee is vital to making sure we have a coordinated response to recovery. It will serve as a clearing house to help coordinate private philanthropy, nonprofit and government support to those affected," said Chris Corwin, Blaine County Disaster Services Coordinator.

To provide access to these resources, the Committee's first work is to build a multi-agency resource center (MARC), a bi-lingual, online resource, where individuals and organizations can find available assistance and support. While starting out online, the MARC aims to have an in-person presence as well. The BRC Steering Committee includes Aimée Christensen of Sun Valley Institute, Scott Fortner of Visit Sun Valley, Sally Gillespie of Spur Community Foundation, Harry Griffith of Sun Valley Economic Development and Mike Higgs of Blaine County Chaplaincy.

“Since the beginning of this crisis, we have seen the pandemic's disproportionate health and economic impacts on our county,” said Jacob Greenberg, Chairman of the Blaine County Commission. “Coordination between the County, the local non-profit and business communities, and faith-based organizations will help to ensure a rapid, effective recovery to this crisis.

“Our community is fortunate to have dedicated government, nonprofit and business leaders coming together to maximize results,” said SVI founder and Executive Director, Aimée Christensen, who is helping coordinate the effort. “With our focus on resilience, Sun Valley Institute is honored to serve this supporting role at this critical time.”

BRC member organizations include: Mike Higgs of Blaine County Chaplaincy; Mary Fauth of Blaine County Charitable Foundation; Chris Corwin of Blaine County Disaster Services; Jim Keating of Blaine County Recreation District; Laurie Strand of Blaine County School District and 5B Suicide Prevention Alliance; Mike McKenna of The Chamber - Hailey & Wood River Valley; Tammy Davis of the Crisis Hotline; Lindsay Mollineaux of the Environmental Resource Center; Ryan Redman of Flourish Foundation; Carol Waller of Fly Sun Valley Alliance; Lisa Emerick and Steve Guthrie of Friedman Memorial Airport; Jeanne Liston of The Hunger Coalition; Christina Cernansky and Brittany Shipley of NAMI; Herbert Romero of PROJECT.O.O.L.S & PARTNERS & NAMI; Lorna Hoopes of The Red Cross; Erin Pfaeffle of St. Luke's Wood River Medical Center; Sally Gillespie of Spur Community Foundation; Harry Griffith of Sun Valley Economic Development; Aimée Christensen and Wendolyn Holland of Sun Valley Institute; Sarah Busdon and Grant Loomis of University of Idaho Extension; Scott Fortner of Visit Sun Valley; Stacy McLaughlin of West Magic Fire District; and Jason Shearer of Wood River Community YMCA.

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### *About the Blaine Recovery Committee*

*Blaine County, Idaho community leaders have joined to create a long-term recovery committee, the Blaine Recovery Committee, to support effective and rapid recovery from the COVID-19 pandemic. The Committee includes Blaine County-based representatives of government, non-profit, business, and faith-based, community-centric organizations. The Committee identifies and prioritizes challenges facing the community's recovery, and advances solutions to address those needs. As a first action, the Committee is setting up a multi-agency resource center (MARC) to connect information resources (including economic, physical and mental health, spiritual/faith), to community organizations and individuals, especially those most in need. By providing up to date, accurate, and reliable information to the community, the LTRC will reduce and eliminate key barriers to effective recovery.*