

**CITY OF FALCON HEIGHTS**  
Community Engagement Commission  
City Hall  
2077 West Larpenteur Avenue

**AGENDA**  
October 16, 2023 at 6:30 P.M.

A. CALL TO ORDER:

B. ROLL CALL:

Cooley-Kistler\_\_\_\_ Ebbesen\_\_\_\_ Lindstrom\_\_\_\_ Stockford\_\_\_\_

COUNCIL LIAISON:

Councilmember Wehyee\_\_\_\_

STAFF PRESENT:

Van der Werff\_\_\_\_

C. PRESENTATION:

D. APPROVAL OF MINUTES:

1. September 18, 2023 Community Engagement Commission Meeting Minutes

E. AGENDA:

1. Neighborhood Liaison Handbook and List

2. Human Rights Day

3. Winter Coat Drive

F. INFORMATION/ ANNOUNCEMENT

G. ADJOURNMENT:

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**CITY OF FALCON HEIGHTS**  
Community Engagement Commission  
City Hall  
2077 West Larpenteur Avenue

**MINUTES**  
September 18 2023 at 6:30 P.M.

A. CALL TO ORDER: 6:40 PM

B. ROLL CALL:  
Cooley-Kistler\_X\_ Ebbesen\_X\_ Lindstrom\_X\_ Stockford\_X\_

COUNCIL LIAISON:  
Councilmember Wehyee\_\_\_

STAFF PRESENT:  
Van der Werff\_X\_

C. PRESENTATION:

D. APPROVAL OF MINUTES:  
1. July 17, 2023 Community Engagement Commission Meeting Minutes

Ebbesen motions to approve minutes; approved 4-0

E. AGENDA:

Stuckford suggest to add a recap of Night to unite to the Agenda. He believes it's the most important community builder event and a very successful one. There were 17 block parties this year. He adds, he would like to add more neighboring streets to his block party next year.

Van der Werff suggest more involvement from the City next year, by for example providing sidewalk chalk for children and also possibly having staff stop by block parties.

1. Neighborhood Liaison Handbook and List

Ebbesen is suggesting changes to the handbook. A number of items are not up to date anymore or were set up by previous commissioners, such as the CERT program.

Stockford explains that there is still crisis control programs with the County and probably with the surrounding fire departments.

Ebbesen brings up the idea of having a CPR training at City Hall instead, that could be used as an opportunity to get more commissioners and more neighborhood liaisons.

Stockford recalls having community conversations and wonders if this could be brought back again. Such as coffee with the mayor or donut with a deputy. Would be a good way to reach out to the apartments and get more renters engaged.

Van der Werff agrees and states she is able to contact property managers and share events and a call for commissioners.

Van der Werff and Ebbesen suggest to keep the liaison role simple and not divided up in groups as there are not many liaisons left.

Stockford adds that people are always aware of what happens in their neighborhood or in their street and are also welcoming to new neighbors, it might not be as formalized as neighborhood liaisons anymore.

Commissioners discuss what the current role of a neighborhood liaison would look like and how much work goes into it. They also discuss that with current data privacy laws it can cause issues sharing contact information. They also discuss how to further update the neighborhood liaison list.

## 2. Human Rights Day

Van der Werff reached out to Principal of Falcon Heights Elementary School to check availability for Human Rights Day. She also created a general task list for Human Rights Day and asked the commissioners about ideas for speakers and tasks. The time for the event will be 6:00 PM to 7:30 PM. Van der Werff will start creating a flyer and update the City website, once more details are known. Lastly, she is exploring options for a flu shot clinic with Ramsey County.

Ebbesen will check for speakers for the event and bring names to the next regular meeting.

Cooley-Kistler will check with the U of M for recommendations on speakers.

Commissioners discussed that speakers should have a maximum time of 30 minutes.

## F. INFORMATION/ ANNOUNCEMENT

Ebbesen will write a short paragraph to be included in the weekly newsletter about what the Community Engagement Commission does in an effort to get more commissioners.

## G. ADJOURNMENT: 8:08 PM

*Next scheduled meeting is Monday October 16, at 6:30 PM*

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<b>Meeting Date</b>	October 16, 2023
<b>Agenda Item</b>	E1 Neighborhood Liaison Handbook and List
<b>Attachment</b>	Neighborhood Liaison Handbook
<b>Submitted By</b>	Elke van der Werff, Administrative & Communications Coordinator

<b>Item</b>	Neighborhood Liaison
<b>Description</b>	<p>The goal of the Community Engagement Commission is to review and update the Neighborhood Liaison Handbook. The current online version was last revised on May, 2020.</p> <p>The Neighborhood Liaison List on the Falcon Heights website was last updated on March, 2020. Staff has reached out to the list to confirm who is still interested in being a neighborhood liaison and received an answer from 1/3<sup>rd</sup> of the list.</p> <p>Staff wrote an interest letter to be send out to Neighborhood Liaisons.</p> <p>Staff also made updates to the handbook, based on advice from the previous meeting.</p> <p><b>Suggestions made by Chair Ebbesen:</b> Goals: Curate relationships with neighbors to create safe spaces, safe streets and a welcoming community. Be a communication conduit between the city and your neighbors to help keep residents informed of important city updates and notify the city of concerns among a given neighborhood.</p> <p>identify individuals throughout the city that have already or are willing to develop a neighborhood network.</p> <p>What does a Neighborhood Liaison do? Help connect residents in your neighborhood by gathering and sharing contact information amongst neighbors Find ways to connect neighbors through gatherings of any size. These could include Night to Unite, block parties, cookie exchanges, happy hours, etc. Receive and share regular updates from the city about upcoming city meetings and events, safety alerts and other news. If concerns or issues are raised in the neighborhood the Neighborhood Liaison can send information to the city.</p> <p>Does it take a lot of work to be a Neighborhood Liaison? Absolutely not! Many neighborhoods already have one or some people who already are connected on their blocks or neighborhood. We're just hoping to connect with those individuals to be a point of contact for the city. There may be occasions to gather liaisons to share concerns or success stories as a group but there will not be more that 3-4 voluntary meetings each year.</p> <p>What kind of information is the city looking for? The only contact information that the city will request is that of the individual(s) who volunteer to be connected with the city as a liaison. Any information gathered among neighbors will not be sent to the city, only shared with neighbors</p>

	How will the city support the neighborhood liaisons? The city will recommend communications, communication techniques and occasions to create neighborhood gatherings throughout the year. For some events the city may supply kits or supplies to help facilitate events.
<b>Budget Impact</b>	N/A
<b>Attachment(s)</b>	Neighborhood Liaison Handbook with edits Neighborhood Liaison List Online
<b>Action(s) Requested</b>	Review and continue identify needed updates of the Neighborhood Liaison Handbook



# NEIGHBORHOOD LIAISON HANDBOOK



CITY OF FALCON HEIGHTS

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## What is a Neighborhood Liaison?

A Neighborhood Liaison is an extension to the Community Engagement Commission that formalizes a more localized outreach community engagement effort. They will provide a more familiar point of access to the assigned neighborhood community, while building and strengthening relationships. They will spend their time in the community talking with people, collecting suggested ideas, and forming relationships to keep the community connected. ~~Roles among the different sub divided groups are easily overlapped and can be carried out by one person or a number of different people. Community Response Team members (CERTs) complete a training program through the Ramsey County Sheriff's office, and in Falcon Heights they are included under the Neighborhood Liaison umbrella.~~

## Community Engagement Commission Role in the Neighborhood Liaison Program:

The Community Engagement Commission (CEC) promotes opportunities for residents to be involved by endorsing and facilitating community outreach events. They will act as a human-bridge, defining ideas and activities that help to connect Falcon Heights City Council to the people they serve. The Commission shall serve as the city's liaison with the neighborhoods, and may make recommendations to the City Council regarding changes to the Neighborhood Liaison Program. The City Strategic Plan will be used to guide the commission's direction

Emphasis shall be placed on the following activities:

- Recruit and retain neighborhood liaisons
- Identify areas with no liaison and focus recruitment efforts there.
- Update and distribute a neighborhood liaison handbook
- Implement appropriate Neighborhood Liaison training
- Provide suggestions on how to best communicate with the residents to keep our neighborhoods connected
- Act as a resource for neighborhood activities
- Provide regular reports to the City Council on the Neighborhood Liaison Program
- Attend Neighborhood Liaison training sessions.
- Plan, implement and evaluate city-wide events to promote community building.
- Begin including Falcon Heights businesses in community engagement efforts.

## How we Define Neighborhood

The word neighborhood, in this handbook, will simply refer to a group of people living near one another; a community. The Neighborhood Liaison will coordinate with the City to define the neighborhood they represent. Some neighborhoods may include specific blocks on a street, one or more buildings, or one floor in a larger building complex. However, you define your neighborhood, the role of liaison will be similar.

# History: Introduction

## *Where did the idea of Neighborhood Liaison come from?*

The idea of Neighborhood Liaison was defined in 2002, but was the culmination of many years of community-minded efforts by Falcon Heights residents.

1. Early 1990's -- The Neighborhood Watch program was initiated by a dedicated resident volunteer. Falcon Heights was the first city in Minnesota where every block in the city had a Neighborhood Watch volunteer!
2. 1995 -- The city council began a group called Keeping Connected to brainstorm and implement ways to keep resident and neighbors connected, in addition to fighting crime.
3. 1997 -- Keeping Connected sponsored an intergenerational dialogue to develop recommendations for improving the quality of life for all ages of Falcon Heights' residents. Fifty-one residents ranging in age from 11 to 81, suggested (among hundreds of other ideas):
  - Have kids organize welcome parties for other kids.
  - Encourage informal block "lemonade on the front lawn", BBQ, or potlucks.
  - Encourage individual initiatives such as sharing meals, block caretakers, and phone contact to check on the welfare of the young and elderly.
  - Expand opportunities to match volunteer mentors with children and teens.
4. 1999 -- In response to concerns over potential computer problem (Y2K), the city sponsored an Emergency Preparedness meeting, developed recommendations for neighborhoods to keep them sustained in any type of emergency. Their long list of suggestions for each generation included:
  - Develop neighborhood "maps" which include names of residents, equipment owned and special needs.
  - Encourage people to exchange names and numbers of family members at the annual neighborhood meetings.
  - Organize "Citizen Emergency Response Teams" in each neighborhood.
5. 2001-- The city council sponsored an Intergenerational Dialogue, which brainstormed ideas for citizens to feel as prepared as possible for any situations in their own neighborhoods. Among the many:
  - Make a neighborhood phone tree with home, work and emergency phone numbers.
  - City Council to create a Neighborhood Security Task Force to develop materials for use by block leaders and formalizing this group into a permanent **Neighborhood Commission**, to oversee the training and recruitment of Neighborhood Liaisons.
6. 2015 -- The Neighborhood Commission merged with the Human Rights Commission to form the Community Engagement Commission (CEC)

## Neighborhood Liaison Roles:

A Neighborhood Liaison may fill several ~~roles and responsibilities~~ activities:

- Welcome new residents
- Actively participate in training opportunities sponsored by Community Engagement Commission (CEC), ~~such as CPR Training.~~
- Promote neighborhood meetings and/or block parties.
- Use this Neighborhood Liaison Handbook as a guide. Submit handbook suggestions and improvements to the CEC.
- Keep neighborhood data current.
- Distribute collected data only with neighbors.
- Communicate with City Hall or CEC
- ~~If part of the Community Emergency Response Team (CERT), complete required training with Ramsey County Sheriff's Department~~

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Neighborhood Liaison Code of Ethics:

- Respect your neighbors.
- Maintain a positive attitude and image.
- Maintain local privacy of collected data.
- Be a community builder.

## Neighborhood Liaison Sub Divided Groups

### Information Liaison

Engage with assigned neighborhood by gathering block directory information from your neighbors. Providing this information is voluntary. Welcome new neighbors and provide them with the collected information so they may get familiar with their near community.

### Social Organizer Liaison

Responsible for coordinating activities for the assigned neighborhood, such as block parties, potlucks, and Night to Unite (National Night Out), book clubs, or a kids' holiday parade, just to name a few potential ideas. Create group activities designed to promote community togetherness.

### Communication Liaison

Communicate activities defined by the Social Organizer Liaison and other activities that may be sponsored by the Community Engagement Commission (CEC). This may include phone calls, emails, door knocking, letter writing or social media communication.

# Information Liaison

## General Description

The liaison updates information (name, address, contact information) on your block. Then the information is distributed to each resident. Please do not ask for more information than people are willing to share. As new neighbors arrive, provide them with collected information about the neighborhood residents in their area. As a community builder it is important to know your neighbors.

### BASIC INFORMATION

1. Name
2. Address
3. Preferred contact information

### OPTIONAL INFORMATION

Other information may be collected if it is useful and residents want to share it. Examples may include other means of contact, number of people living in household, pet names and characteristics, emergency equipment available for use (chainsaw, extension ladder, generator), or if someone in the home would need more help in an emergency due to medical problems.

### ADDITIONAL OPTIONAL INFORMATION

1. Neighborhood Newsletter editor
2. Alley-plowing contact(s)
3. Is anyone willing to snow shovel or baby-sit?
4. Does anyone provide services, free or for a fee (e.g., gardening advice, taxes, etc?)

## How to Collect Information

A primary consideration for the collector of a neighborhood's information is **privacy**. Many neighborhoods in Falcon Heights have block directories and several have completed neighborhood surveys, with no issues arising and with no one objecting to giving this information to their neighbors.

People in the neighborhood should know that the information asked of them is voluntary and will only be seen by others in the neighborhood. Consider asking the resident in person, for they may be more receptive to providing information.

- The liaison may drop a questionnaire at each home and ask people to return them by a certain date.
- The liaison may put a questionnaire out at a party and ask people to fill in the information.
- Ask for information in person.
- The liaison may ask a CEC member for assistance.

## Social Organizer Liaison

### General Description

Coordinate activities for your block, such as block parties, potlucks, bridge night and Night to Unite (National Night Out) get-togethers.

### Block Party Planning

Block parties do not need to be elaborate affairs. Depending on the amount of time you have and the amount of help you want to plan the party, you can take one of several approaches:

#### *Easy*

1. Plan the date, time, and location.
  - To request the following, fill out form through Ramsey County website: <https://bit.ly/24bTm80>
    - Law enforcement and squad car
  - To request the following go to [www.falconheights.org](http://www.falconheights.org)
    - Street barricades

- Fire fighters and fire truck
  - City Council or Commissioners
2. Distribute flyers announcing the date, time, and place of the party.
  3. Invite neighbors to bring a dish to share and their own table service.

#### *Average*

1. Plan the date, time, and location.
  - To request the following, fill out form through Ramsey County website: <https://bit.ly/24bTm80>
    - Law enforcement and squad car
  - To request the following go to [www.falconheights.org](http://www.falconheights.org)
    - Street barricades
    - Fire fighters and fire truck
    - City Council or Commissioners
2. Distribute flyers announcing the date, time, and place of the party.
3. Have neighbors contact you regarding what they'll bring, or circulate a sign-up sheet.
4. Arrange for table service, tables and chairs, and games for kids.

#### *Advanced*

1. Distribute flyers inviting neighbors to attend a planning session for a block party.
2. At the meeting:
  - Select a date, time, and place.
  - Decide who will bring what. (Make a list.)
  - Select a spokesperson to contact the city.
  - Plan additional related activities, such as games, entertainment, decorations, or inviting the Crime Prevention Liaison to make a presentation.

Neighborhoods in Falcon Heights have done parties at all of these levels. Some have simple ice cream socials where they send out a note with a date and everyone volunteers for paper supplies, ice cream and toppings. The leader makes sure there are tables and garbage cans.

Another neighborhood has combined several blocks, raised money, solicited donations from local businesses for door prizes, and hired ponies for rides for the kids. Following that fun is a potluck meal.

It depends on how much energy, volunteer help, contacts, and imagination you have. The page that follows takes you through the steps for planning any type of event.

Remember, there is no right or wrong way to plan or conduct a block party. The most important things to keep in mind are the needs and personality of your block and its residents!



## Steps in Organizing Successful Events

### I. **WHY:** Define the Purpose of the Event (Why hold the event? What need should it fill?)

Will your event inform, improve community relations, welcome new people to the neighborhood, etc...? Be sure to recognize if one of the purposes is to have fun. It's much easier to involve volunteers in a cause or need if you can make it fun.

### II. **WHAT:** Choose the Right Event (pot-luck, picnic, ice cream social ...)

- A. Remember your goals
- B. Who are your participants? (young, old, interests, schedules, ...)
- C. What is your neighborhood interested in or what have they done in the past?  
*Ask around to see what people would be interested in doing.*
- D. Do you want to extend your event beyond your own neighborhood?  
*Involving other neighborhoods can contribute more resources and broaden the audience.*
- E. How much will your event cost?  
*Very little, if it's a potluck. Talk to others who have tried a similar event in the past. Were there any hidden costs?*
- F. What are your resources?  
*Who are your volunteers? Are there any businesses that would help sponsor your event? Is there someone in your neighborhood who could make a contact?*

### III. **WHEN/WHERE:** Set the Date and Location

- A. Check the calendar to avoid conflicting community events
- B. Choose the location and get confirmed reservations  
*Most neighborhoods in Falcon Heights have used barricades to block off their street and just use the street itself. Some smaller groups have used city hall or alleys.*

*If you decide to rent a space, be sure to plan ahead, get enough room, and have something that fits your budget. Considerations include requirements for deposits, insurance, and cleanup as well as facility features like floor plan, seating, lighting, electricity, and restrooms. And be sure to get any agreements in writing.*

### IV. **HOW:** Planning and Organization

- A. Leader  
*Informs others of process, delegates responsibilities to persons/committees, coordinates activities of different committees, sets time limits, settles disputes, praises progress*
- B. "Committees" defined and staffed, as needed (many will have only one member!)

*Decorations, Entertainment, Refreshments/Concessions, \*Publicity, Budget/RSVP List, Donations, Clean-Up*

*If the Committee is larger than one, the members should hold scheduled meetings at set places. Specific agendas help provide logical steps for attacking tasks. Written descriptions of individual responsibilities help to avoid duplicating effort, chronologically order tasks, and clarify time requirements and deadlines. Always give praise to individuals meeting deadlines.*

*\* Publicity types can include: group e-mail, phone calling tree, posters, balloons, sidewalk chalk, door hangers, mailings, plywood corner signs, t-shirts, city newsletter, website, ...*

#### V. **POST EVENT**

- A. Follow-up  
*Return any borrowed items. Write thank you notes to recognize volunteers and donors.*
- B. Evaluation  
*What went right? What went wrong? Record each step for future reference. Determine the true cost (consider donations) and true benefit. Should it become an annual event? File it away in a folder for future reference.*
- C. Begin preparing for next year

## Communication Liaison

### General Description

Communicates activities defined by the Social Organizing Liaison or the Community Engagement Commission (CEC).

Includes:

- Organizes communication within and between blocks
- Liaison to the Community Engagement Commission (CEC) and assigned neighborhood
- Community news from city website

Types of communication:

- Email
- Phone
- Door Knocking
- Social media

# Liaison Resource Page

## City Information

### *Falcon Heights Elected Representatives*

Mayor Randy Gustafson	651-642-9694
Council Member Melanie Leehy	651-646-8113
Council Member Eric Meyer	218-384-1645
Council Member James Wassenberg	952-290-6580
Council Member Yakasah Wehyee	612-802-2239

### *Community Engagement Commission (CEC)*

Chair Julie Ebbesen  
Curt Stockford  
Zach Lindstrom  
Karen Kistler  
Council Liaison Yakasah Wehyee  
Staff Liaison Elke van der Werff

### *Neighborhood Liaisons*

Names of Neighborhood Liaisons can be located:

City Hall	651-792-7600
City Website	<a href="http://www.falconheights.org">www.falconheights.org</a>

### *City Hall*

City Administrator Jack Linehan	651-792-7611
City Hall	651-792-7600
City Website	<a href="http://www.falconheights.org">www.falconheights.org</a>

### *Police Department (Ramsey County Sheriff)*

Fire or Medical Emergency	911
Non-Emergency Dispatch	651-767-0640
General Questions	651-266-7300
Ramsey County Sheriff	<a href="https://www.ramseycountysheriff.us">https://www.ramseycountysheriff.us</a>

### *Falcon Heights City Calendar*

City Hall	651-792-7600
City Website	<a href="http://www.falconheights.org">www.falconheights.org</a>

Additional website information:

Night to Unite Registration (Ramsey County): <https://bit.ly/24bTm80>

Night to Unite Party Planning Guide: <https://bit.ly/2PGD3A6>

**\*\*\*Always reference Falcon Heights website for current information\*\***

October 13, 2023

Dear Falcon Heights Neighborhood Liaison,

I hope this message finds you well. The Community Engagement Committee (CEC) has recently been updating the Neighborhood Liaison Handbook and List and felt it was important to touch base with the individuals currently identified as a Neighborhood Liaison. The members of the CEC firmly believe that Neighborhood Liaisons play a pivotal role in connecting the Falcon Heights City Council with our residents. We deeply appreciate your dedication and the contributions you have made in the past.

We are interested in knowing whether you would like to continue your role as a Neighborhood Liaison for your street, block, or neighborhood. If you wish to continue, please do not hesitate to convey your response via mail, email, a phone call, or by visiting City Hall. My contact information is provided below for your convenience.

It would be greatly appreciated if you could let me know your response by Friday, November, 17<sup>th</sup>. This will allow me to update the Liaison List before the next CEC meeting, so we may discuss future actions.

Thank you for your past contributions, and we hope you'll consider this opportunity to further enhance our wonderful City.

Sincerely,

*Elke van der Werff*

Elke van der Werff  
City of Falcon Heights  
Administrative & Communications Coordinator  
Main: 651-792-7600  
[elke.vanderwerff@falconheights.org](mailto:elke.vanderwerff@falconheights.org)

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<b>Meeting Date</b>	October 16, 2023
<b>Agenda Item</b>	E2 Human Rights Day
<b>Attachment</b>	N/A
<b>Submitted By</b>	Elke van der Werff, Administrative & Communications Coordinator

<b>Item</b>	Human Rights Day
<b>Description</b>	<p>The Community Engagement Commission started conversations about this year's Human Rights Day at their previous meeting on July 17, 2023.</p> <p>The theme selected is "Racism in Medicine". This year's location is the Falcon Heights Elementary School. Staff has reached out to FH Elementary to reserve the location.</p> <p>The CEC will continue planning the Human Rights Day Event and determine a general timeline, possible speakers and other organizations.</p>
<b>Budget Impact</b>	TBD
<b>Attachment(s)</b>	N/A
<b>Action(s) Requested</b>	Continue discussions about this year's Human Rights Day Event.

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<b>Meeting Date</b>	October 16, 2023
<b>Agenda Item</b>	E3 - Winter Coat Drive
<b>Attachment</b>	Flier
<b>Submitted By</b>	Elke van der Werff, Administrative & Communications Coordinator

<b>Item</b>	Winter Coat Drive
<b>Description</b>	<p>The International Institute of Minnesota reached out to see if the City is interested in organizing a Winter Drive on behalf of the institute.</p> <p>With the increased number of arrivals, they are needing twice the number of winter gear this year.</p> <p>The CEC will discuss putting on a coat drive this fall/winter.</p>
<b>Budget Impact</b>	N/A
<b>Attachment(s)</b>	Flier
<b>Action(s) Requested</b>	Discuss a winter coat drive.





# WINTER COAT DRIVE

Help us give New Minnesotans a warm welcome!

**We are collecting men's, women's and children's winter jackets for newly arrived refugees:**

- New or GENTLY used and laundered
- Sizes S-L (small and medium, especially)
- Thick: not a light jacket or Peacoat

**We are also seeking other winter supplies in new condition:**

- Hats
- Gloves

**\*We cannot accept knitted or crocheted items.**

Contact  
Hayat Mohamed  
Volunteer and Community Partnerships  
Manager  
Hmohamed@iimn.orn  
651-377-8663



International  
Institute of  
Minnesota<sup>25</sup>

## Here are tips to organizing your Winter Coat Drive:

- **Choose a day** (or week) for your coat drive
- **Recruit volunteers** by reaching out to your family, friends, neighbors, classmates, etc. They will help you collect, sort, and pack donations.
- **Market the coat drive** through your school, neighborhood, community center, church, temple, or mosque. Hand out flyers, email your contacts, put up posters - whatever you can do to get the word out.
- **Let people know what is needed** by sharing the list of items.
- **Remind donors** that we only need clean, new, or very gently used items only. They can even purchase items from the Amazon Wish List and drop them off at the drive.
- **COLLECT!**
- **Sort, fold, and pack** the clean winter clothing into boxes and bags.
- **Call or email** to schedule a drop off appointment by contacting **Hayat Mohamed** at **hmohamed@iimn.org** or **651-377-8663**.
- **Thank your donors** and ask if they would like to receive our monthly newsletter. If so, please take note of their email address, we'll add them to the list.