

*“Belknap County is a safe community where children and families can live with dignity and respect.”*

## *Director's Report #9 ... 07/01/02 – 07/20/02*

### *Looking Back ~*

#### **Outreach**

Council staff has participated in the writing and coordination of a Model Community grant proposal which was submitted to the state of New Hampshire on July 19<sup>th</sup>. The purpose of the grant is to develop local initiatives to problem solving through the creation and support of local action groups made up of consumers who share a passion and desire to develop leadership skills in identification resolution of specifically identified issues (e.g. transportation, housing, recreation). The Council signed-on to a statement of participation (Appendix A), along with other local partners. Additionally, several other organizations provided letters of support for the initiative. If accepted, the grant should be awarded this fall. The grant is for \$90,000/year for up to three years.

The *Evolving Community Justice* series has formerly been approved by the Community Technical College /Laconia and we have begun to advertise in earnest. We have delivered, for distribution through the Chamber of Commerce's newsletter, 700 copies of the brochure for the series. Additionally, all Council members have been asked to distribute copies to various stations throughout their respective communities including their libraries, police departments, and schools. Not-for-profit organizations have been asked to distribute to their Board of Directors, staff and volunteers as well as youth and families served by their organizations. To date, a total of 1,175 brochures have been distributed and more will follow. The Editor of the Citizen has been approached to assign a reporter to interview presenters of upcoming sessions for additional articles and advertisement in the local paper preceding the week during which the presenters will be speaking in an attempt to interest further participation by the general public attending sessions as workshops.

The Director has met with Michael Coughlin, Executive Director of Genesis Behavioral Health, Inc. the local Mental Health Center

Meetings of the NH Rural Development Council were attended as the Executive Director continues to serve as the Chair of that statewide organization.

Council staff participated in discussions with Laconia High School Assistant Principal (Jim McCollum) and Jay Apicelli regarding the need to develop more accountability for youth who are suspended for school for drug possession/use and awaiting a court appearance. There is concern for the length of time that transpires between the offense and the arraignment. Judge Martin has been notified and we will convene a meeting of all parties in an attempt to resolve this matter.

Council staff also met with Jim Sawyer, Laconia City Prosecutor to orient him on the Council and to elicit his participation in the Juvenile Justice Advisory Council. Jim indicated an interest in doing so and will be informed of future meetings.

Council staff attended a website directory meeting along with several other local agencies. There is a great need for an update of a resource directory which is web-based and consumer-friendly.

The Council facilitated a meeting of a Belknap County Courthouse Exploratory Committee involving Mayor Mark Fraser, City Manager Eileen Cabanel and City Councilor Fred Toll of Laconia, Judges David Huot and Bud Martin and Diane Lane of the Laconia District Court, Linda Wilson, of the NH Division of Historical Resources, Joe Adrignola and John Howe of the Main Street Program, Peter Goodwin and Gary Fowler of the Administrative Office of the Courts, Leo Sanfacon, Wes Colby, Judy Buswell and Alan

Robichaud of the Council and others. A smaller group was assigned by Mayor Fraser to do some follow-up work and report back to the larger group.

### *Administrative*

Staff has reviewed the need to reorganize the website as many new developments have occurred since the inauguration of the Council. Some outdated material needs to be removed while new information needs to be added to reflect current Council status. Part of the problem of upgrading the site is the result of staff workload. Staff met with David Stamps and discussed some ways of making some initial upgrades and setting up a process for the future.

County Commissioner Daigneault apprised us that progress on discussion of the northern detention facility has reached the stage of inquiring of the Department of Resources and Economic Development regarding two parcels of land adjacent to Meredith Center Road. Commissioner Daigneault continues to follow this matter along with commissioners of bordering counties. This issue is of great interest to the Council and local law enforcement officials.

Council committees continue to meet and develop agenda for year-long activities on behalf of the Council. Most efforts have recently been directed to the Retreat held on July 12<sup>th</sup> and attended by 18 of our Council members and staff.

The Juvenile Integrated Information System workgroup has conducted another meeting with key presenters including the Department of Health and Human Services administrators of the BRIDGES system. This group is facilitated by Council member Wes Colby and continues to include a wide range of participants across various juvenile and adult justice, safety and human service agencies. The group is pursuing technical assistance from the Center on Network Development, a national contractor of this project and one that provided training to an initial state contingent that attended a training session in Boston in April.

The Council convened the first Juvenile Justice Advisory Committee meeting on July 11. As a requirement of receipt of Juvenile Accountability Incentive Block Grant (JAIBG) funds issued through the state by the Office of Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention (OJJDP) of the US Department of Justice (DOJ). The Council successfully submitted a JAIBG grant in collaboration with the local Juvenile Probation and Parole Office and the Belknap Sheriff's Office. The nature of this grant is to provide joint intervention of paroled or otherwise court-ordered youth by a team consisting of a Juvenile Probation and Parole Officer (JPPO) and a law enforcement official. The purpose of this program is to hold youth accountable for their orders and to reduce recidivism back to court ordered placements. Approximately \$11,000 has been acquired through September 2003.

The Council conducted a Retreat at its regularly scheduled monthly meeting on July 12. Facilitated by Deborah White, of Helms & Co., Inc., the Council developed its Mission Statement which reads as follows:

*The Mission of the Citizens Council on Children and Families is to promote Community Justice in Belknap County so that children and families can live safely with dignity and respect. The Citizens Council will realize its mission through:*

*active citizen participation;  
comprehensive planning;  
advocacy and collaboration; and  
stewardship through governance, funding and advisory roles within the County.*

### *Looking Ahead ~*

The New Hampshire Department of Corrections has been notified that it will receive nearly \$2M to implement its proposal for Serious and Violent Offender Reentry Initiative of youthful offenders as part of its three-phase approach to bringing placed individuals back home. Reentry efforts begin while offenders are still in correctional facilities, continue through offenders' transition back into the community and help sustain ex-offenders through services such as employment training and substance abuse and mental health

treatment. As one of two pilot sites for the reentry project, Belknap County's focus will be on youth between the ages of 14 and 17 years of age. Meetings will be attended by staff of the Council as the state begins implementation of the project. The Council Executive Director is a member of the Reentry Advisory Committee.

Miami Blake, Executive Director of Parents and Children Together (PACT) has been selected by the Reclaiming Futures project to serve as Belknap County Site Coordinator for the next two years. Funded by the Robert Wood Johnson Foundation, New Hampshire's Reclaiming Futures project will work with local youth who experience substance use/abuse issues. Initially funded for one year, the NH District Court System has received preliminary approval to extend its funds over a two year period. Rather than hiring a full time Site Coordinator for each site (Belknap County and Nashua), the project has opted to collaborate with agencies through acquiring a portion of a current position. Thus Miami will maintain her position with PACT but reallocate a portion of her time to this project.

The Division of Alcohol and Drug Abuse, Prevention and Recovery (DADAPR) will be conducting a bidders' conference on Monday, July 29<sup>th</sup> from 2:00 – 4:00 PM at the Belknap County Complex on how it intends to issue Requests for Proposals for the funding allocated to the Governor's Commission on Alcohol and Drug Abuse Prevention, Intervention and Treatment by the State Liquor Commission. The Council has confirmed that the new Director of the DADAPR Division (Riley Regan) will present at one of the fall sessions of the Evolving Community Justice series at the Community Technical College. Riley has also agreed to attend a meeting of providers, coordinated by the Council, on Monday, August 12 from 10:00 to 11:30 AM. Riley is interested in looking at alternative structures through which the Division works with the community and is interested in the work of the Council.

Staff of the Council has set up a meeting between the County and Annette Schmitt Foundation administrators to discuss transfer of funds for Council operations for the second half of the fiscal year.

The Firesetter Intervention Team will be conducting its Annual Meeting on July 30<sup>th</sup> at the Gilford Fire Station. The Council Director has been invited and will attend the meeting.

The Juvenile Integrated Information System Steering Committee is scheduled to meet at 8:30 on July 30<sup>th</sup> at the Busiel Mill.

The next full Council Meeting is scheduled for Friday, August 9 from 8:00 to 10:0 AM at the Sanbornton Town Hall.

Respectfully,

*Alan*

## *APPENDIX A*

### **Civic Engagement Coordinating Team**

We, the undersigned, hereby agree to work in partnership with one another, with other organizations and agencies, and with individuals throughout our communities to ensure that all citizens have opportunities to participate in processes that identify issues, practice community organizing strategies, and develop leadership skills with other citizens sharing similar vision and passion for civic change.

It is our belief that in supporting citizens actively engaged in civic change, people who are typically perceived as passive recipients of services will become active advocates in creating healthy communities where all citizens participate in the public discourse of issues impacting their families, their neighborhoods and their communities.

We support the initiatives described in the *Model Community* grant and, through our respective efforts and resources, pledge to create an environment in which all citizens are welcomed and engaged in building local capacities with local resources through the efforts of local people.

#### **Lakes Region Community Services Council**

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Rich Crocker, Executive Director

#### **Belknap County Citizens Council on Children and Families**

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Alan Robichaud, Executive Director

#### **Lakes Region United Way**

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Bruce Van Derven, Executive Director

#### **NH Community Technical College - Laconia**

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Tom Grogan, Human Services Program

#### **ServiceLink of Belknap County**

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Lisa Morris, Director

#### **Genesis Behavioral Health, Inc.**

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Michael Coughlin, Executive Director

#### **Laconia Human Relations Committee**

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Carol Pierce, Co-Chair

#### **Laconia Main Street Program**

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David Stamps, Vice-Chair

Coordinator