

MINUTES

MEETING: Citizens Council **DATE:** Friday, February 8, 2002 **TIME BEGAN:** 8:06am **TIME ENDED:** 10:10am

FACILITATED BY: Alan Robichaud/Gil Schohan **NOTES BY:** Judy Buswell

PRESENT: John Irwin, Wes Colby, Mark Condodemetraky, Gil Schohan, Leo Sanfacon, Sue Smith, Kevin Washburn, Alida Millham, Jim Carroll, Dick Wallace, Evelyn Auger, Andre Paquette, Linda Brewer, Bob Rovella, Peter Michaud, Mary Alice Warner, Scott AndersEn, Alan Robichaud, Judy Buswell **Guests:** Judge Martin (left early),

NEXT MEETING: FRIDAY, MARCH 8th 8-10AM Humiston Building in Meredith

ITEM	DISCUSSION	ACTION	WHO?
Welcome	Alan began first formal meeting of the Citizens Council by explaining that monthly meetings will move around the County and will not always be held in Laconia. He asked for ideas for meeting venues in various communities. Scott AndersEn offered the use of the Humiston Building in Meredith for the March meeting.	Council members will identify appropriate meeting sites in their communities and will notify Alan or Judy of these possibilities.	Council members
Introductions	<p>As this is a County-wide group coming together for the first time, Alan invited all present to introduce themselves and share reasons for their interest in the Council. While complete bios are in Council Member notebooks, this is an opportunity for those present to match names and faces.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Judge Martin</i> (special guest) has been a resident of Belknap County since 1941. He grew up, and attended schools in Laconia. Following college, law school, and joining a law practice in Laconia, he was appointed a Special Justice to the Laconia District Court in 1972. He is now in his 30th year in this role as a juvenile judge. • <i>John Irwin</i> (Laconia) His first exposure with the juvenile justice system was as a volunteer with the Youth Services Bureau. He remains very concerned about kids and is interested in opportunities where he can improve the environment for children and families. • <i>Wes Colby</i> (Laconia) became acquainted with the juvenile justice system while serving as a County Commissioner. He became very frustrated with the mandate from the State that the County pay 25% of the total costs incurred by juveniles (close to \$1 M in 1999) and yet not have any input as to how money is spent. 		

ITEM	DISCUSSION	ACTION	WHO?
	<p>When Judge Martin, asked him to join the Belknap Juvenile Justice Initiative, the task force convened by Martin to study the juvenile justice system and make recommendations for improvement, he saw this as an opportunity to develop a system that included County input and reduced escalating costs.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Mark Condodemetraky</i> (Belmont) said he is a relative newcomer to this arena, but that his involvement with youth as a Lacrosse Coach has made him very interested in improving circumstances for area youth. • <i>Gil Schohan</i> (Belmont) is a panelist with the Youth Services Bureau, is a trained mediator, and has served as a Board member and Board Chair of Lakes Region General Hospital. These experiences have helped to focus her interest in helping kids and families. • <i>Leo Sanfacon</i> (Gilford) is a retired dentist and has served on numerous committees as a citizen of Gilford. As the coordinator of Teen Court with Youth Services Bureau he is very interested in helping kids find their way through the challenges of growing up. • <i>Sue Smith</i> (Gilford) is a former healthcare administrator and a current administrator at The Taylor Community. She has 2 children who along with her work experiences with families have provided her good insight into the challenges families of today must face. She would like to help create an environment that will help to raise children to be productive members of society. • <i>Kevin Washburn</i> (Tilton) has lived in Belknap County all his life. He and his wife have 3 children. As an employee with the NH Dept of Corrections for the past 17 years, he has seen that the correctional system is not doing an adequate job with juvenile offenders as the vast majority of adult offenders were also troubled youth. He would like to be a part of projects and programs that make a difference in the lives of children and their families. • <i>Alida Millham</i> (Gilford) has lived for the past 42 years in the Lakes Region. She began her work career here as a pediatric nurse at Laconia Hospital. All she has experienced throughout her life tells her that “prevention” is the key. This Council provides an exciting opportunity to make a difference. • <i>Andre Paquette</i> (Laconia) is a former educational administrator. Both through his work career and as a volunteer with community activities he has become increasingly concerned about domestic violence and child abuse. 		

ITEM	DISCUSSION	ACTION	WHO?
<p>Introductions (continued)</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Jim Carroll</i> (Laconia) is a 3rd generation resident of Laconia. Today is his last day as the City Prosecutor, but he remains very committed to working in the community with children and plans to continue in any way he can. • <i>Linda Brewer</i> (Meredith) was raised here in Laconia and as a licensed LADC (Licensed Drug and Alcohol Counselor) has worked with multiple DWI offenders and incarcerated women. She now is working with State employees, assisting them in locating resources in their communities. She is a proponent of prevention strategies. • <i>Bob Rovella</i> (New Hampton) has been in the healthcare regulatory field with LRGHealthcare for 9 years. In this role he has seen how the issues of poverty impact children and families. • <i>Peter Michaud</i> (Center Harbor) met his wife Robin while a student at Saint Anselm College here in NH. They have 2 children. As the Victim Services Coordinator with the NH Dept of Corrections he finds that people tend to minimize and underestimate the role that crime has on victims. He is also interested in improving community participation in the juvenile justice system, especially as the current mandates of confidentiality impact public involvement and confidence in the system.. • <i>Mary Alice Warner</i> (Center Harbor) was born in New Jersey, but after many years of vacationing in the Lakes Region moved here with her husband. Prior to retirement she worked as a family counselor and saw a vast need for improving training and supports for parents who often feel isolated and alone. As a volunteer with the “Alternatives to Violence” project at the Laconia Prison, she continues to see this void and thinks the Council can be a mechanism to bring positive changes for families in Belknap County. • <i>Evelyn Auger</i> (Sanbornton) is a 10-11th generation citizen of NH. Retired after 30 years with the NH Division of Welfare and Mental Health, she identified two concerns where she would like to put her efforts. (1) While there are an impressive number of organizations who work on behalf of children and families, these groups are often not connected with each other (2) In assisting families, fathers are often left out of the picture. The label “Dead Beat Dads” often shames the children as much as the father. • <i>Richard Wallace</i> (Alton) was born in Manchester. He says as his interview with the Commissioners is not until next week, he is not yet a formal member of the Council. As the former Director of the Computer Center at the Wentworth Institute in Boston where he interacted frequently with young adults, he would like 		

ITEM	DISCUSSION	ACTION	WHO?
	<p>to be involved with programs that can assist families and young people.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Scott AndersEn</i> (Center Harbor) is the current Superintendent of the Interlakes and Ashland schools districts. He has been involved with research that shows that early intervention and prevention are key to making positive changes for families. He is also involved with CORE, a community-based initiative in his SAU to design community response to a recent survey that showed students in Meredith, Center Harbor and Ashland are involved in risk behaviors at a higher rate than the rest of the State. • <i>Alan Robichaud</i> (Exec Director), a native of NH, has a background in developmental disabilities. He has served as a committee and board member for numerous organizations and through this work and his involvement in the field of developmental disabilities has developed a strong interest in community development. This new opportunity is very exciting for him. • <i>Judy Buswell</i> (Program Specialist) has worked in a number of areas including education, preschool administration, arts administration, job development, and healthcare. As a staff member with the Juvenile Justice Initiative and now with the Council, she sees how all these arenas inform each other and have the potential to support children and families. <p>Wes Colby noted that the process used by The Initiative to hire Alan was complete and exhaustive. After a national search that yielded 80 or so candidates and involved input from Deschutes County, Oregon, Alan emerged “head and shoulders above the others”. The Initiative was thrilled to recommend Alan to the Commissioners, feeling that his experiences - both with the Initiative and throughout the State - uniquely equip him to lead this Council.</p>		
Overview of the Juvenile Justice Initiative	<p>Judge Martin offered a brief overview of the Belknap Juvenile Justice Initiative, a task force he convened in early 2000 to study the County’s system of juvenile justice and make recommendations for improvement. He commented on the productive networking among members of the Initiative that resulted in today’s meeting. He talked about his early experiences as a juvenile judge at the Railroad Station in Veteran’s Square where the courtroom was housed. Lou Athanas served as Clerk of Court, Probation Officer, and Truant Officer. Back then, the systems for children and families were primarily local, not State, and were strong where there was strong leadership among law enforcement. This local responsibility ultimately became extremely burdensome for communities that had large numbers of special needs youth and families. Because of this, the responsibility was taken from the communities and</p>		

ITEM	DISCUSSION	ACTION	WHO?
	<p>given to the State, which while it improved many factors, led to a decline in local input and involvement. While Belknap County has many excellent programs such as YSB, YAP, PACT, HealthLink,, Community Health & Hospice etc, there is still the need for citizen involvement and connection. However, he said that volunteers acting alone to make systemic change also need financial resources, pointing to the Schmitt Foundation that has provided and continues to provide substantial support to this effort. The Schmitt Fund is underwriting the total costs for the next two years of The Council, meaning the Council has two years to prove this type of citizen connection to human and social service programs does make a difference in costs and outcomes. This can be done <u>before</u> the County has to ask for one taxpayer dime to fund this Council. Judge Martin commented on the partner relationship developed with Deschutes County, Oregon, a national leader in developing cost-effective programs for juveniles. Bud also noted another emerging trend – that of asking judges to take an active role in their communities - without fear that this integration will compromise their abilities to make fair judgments in the cases they see.</p>	<p><i>YSB = Youth Services Bureau</i> <i>YAP = Youth Assistance Program in Tilton</i></p>	
<p>Selection of Temporary Officers</p>	<p>Alan recommended that the Council appoint an Interim Chair and Vice Chair to serve for a minimum of three months allowing Council members to become acquainted with each other, develop bylaws and a plan of action. Following a brief discussion, Wes nominated Gil Schohan as Interim Chair. Andre Paquette seconded the motion. All members voted in support of this motion. Bob Rovella volunteered to serve as Interim Vice Chair, which was put into motion and also approved by Council members.</p>		
<p>Review of Council Manual Content</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Alan called attention to the various items in the notebooks given to each Council member. A glossary, now being compiled by Judy, will be made available before the March meeting. Alan asked Council members for suggestions for additional material. • Alan explained that the County Organization Chart may change following a discussion regarding placement of the County’s Restorative Justice Program, another new program brought about through efforts of the Initiative. • Alan also said that until the County budget is formally passed in March, his and Judy’s salary will continue to be paid directly by the Schmitt Foundation, meaning that The Citizens Council will not <u>formally</u> become a County Department until that date. This is a technicality and will not affect the progress of the Council. • Brief discussion regarding best and most efficient way to distribute monthly minutes. Judy has been emailing minutes as a Word attachment to BJJ members and hopes to continue with this practice with the Council. • Alan noted that Council office will be moved to second floor of Busiel Mill by 	<p>Council members will consider what additional types of information will be needed and in what format and will share their input with Alan or Judy.</p> <p>Council members will let Judy know if they cannot open Word attachments.</p>	<p>Council members</p> <p>Council members</p>

ITEM	DISCUSSION	ACTION	WHO?
	<p>next week. Visitors are encouraged to park in the large City lot beyond City Hall or in the Parking Garage to avoid the 2-hour spots and a possible fine.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • He encourage members to take and distribute these around their communities extra copies of bookmarks that identify our website and the New Futures publication, <i>"We Need Treatment"</i>, that outlines treatment programs needed in NH. 	Mail a copy of the Deschutes Commission on Children and Families bylaws to all members of the By-laws Committee	J. Buswell
Policy re Council providing Letters of Support	<p>Alan has already been approached by one agency to provide a Letter of Support to accompany this particular Agency's grant application for State funds. As preparation for this discussion Alan had emailed a draft document as a suggestion of what might be given to agencies requesting such letters. He would like guidance from Council, as supplying these Letters of Support, while well intentioned, could also create issues. Following a brief discussion, it was decided that Council members need time to "settle in", develop overall goals and policies, endorsement criteria for such letters, and other operational procedures by which the Council will operate.</p> <p><i>Andre made a motion that "The Council not provide Letters of Support for outside agencies for at least three months and that The Council develop policies and procedures around writing these letters."</i> This motion was seconded by Kevin Washburn and voted in the affirmative by Council members.</p> <p>Jim Carroll suggested that ultimately we ask each agency that requests such a Letter to also provide a brief synopsis of their project, the void their project fills, and how their project will be evaluated. It is possible that the Council's Executive Committee, once formed, could review these requests. The Council also determined that it is appropriate for Council members to write private letters of support as long as they do not reference the Council. However, Alan should not write a personal letter of support, as he cannot easily detach himself from an area that is part of his work domain. It was also noted that this particular requested Letter of Support came from an agency that has been caught in the State's decision to limit the number of State-supported providers of in-home family therapeutic counseling in each County to only one. This generated a brief discussion regarding the nature of the potential advocacy role for the Council when and if decisions, actions, proposed legislation etc. from the State are deemed a barrier for families and children in Belknap County. Jim Carroll also suggested that the Council develop a strong "Conflict of Interest" policy that should be signed by Council members.</p>	Alan will notify requesting agency of Council's decision re Letters of Support	A. Robichaud

ITEM	DISCUSSION	ACTION	WHO?
Facility & Space Needs	<p>Wes Colby who is continuing his work on facility and space needs for juvenile justice programs and services presented some background information for Council members. There is a lack of space for both shelter and detention facilities, not only in Belknap County but also throughout NH. The State is studying this issue via a committee appointed through the Senate. Belknap County has three members on this committee: Bud Daigneault, representing Counties; Judge Martin, representing the judiciary; and Wes Colby who has been attending as a lay member. The committee has been working with an architectural firm and recently sponsored a charrette around the design of a new detention facility on the current YDC site in Manchester. This facility will replace the very outdated Youth Detention Center in Manchester and will also add the Youth Detention Services Unit, now in Concord. This facility will be built at a cost of \$28 million, \$13 million coming from federal monies. However, part of these funds will be used to build a much smaller facility (12-15 beds) somewhere in Belknap or Grafton County to better accommodate the detention and shelter needs of the North Country. Wes said that due to funding restrictions, final decisions regarding the location and nature of this facility must be decided in 60-90 days.</p> <p>Wes was one of a group of NH professionals who attended the “Alternatives To Detention” national conference in Portland, Oregon sponsored by the Casey Foundation. He explained that as detention is very expensive, the goal is to develop a continuum of appropriate but less expensive detention alternatives (i.e. electronic monitoring) that keep the youth in his/her home and community. A report of his conference experience was emailed this week to all Council members. Additional Casey materials are available for Council members to borrow.</p> <p>Jim Carroll noted that the Legislature is now considering returning the age of majority back to 18 and in so doing associated detention costs that include these additional juveniles will rise. However, these additional expenses have been included in the cost estimates for this proposal. Kevin Washburn who works with the Dept of Corrections noted that one of the problems in siting the prison in Berlin included the lack of qualified staff to run this facility. He hopes that staff needs will be part of any considerations around building new facilities, especially in the North Country.</p>	Interested Council members may borrow Casey materials by contacting Judy Buswell.	Council members.
By-Laws	Alan would like a subcommittee to complete the Council By-laws that were prepared by BJJI. Volunteers for this project include Alida Millham, Mark Condodemetraky, John Irwin, Sheila Weeks (she was “volunteered”!), Sue Smith, and Bob Rovella. John Irwin feels that “visioning” must occur before these by-laws can be finished.	Alan will schedule a meeting date for the By-laws committee.	A. Robichaud

ITEM	DISCUSSION	ACTION	WHO?
Interim Executive Committee	It was suggested that an Interim Executive Committee be organized to work with Alan on organizational, administrative details that cannot be completed in monthly meetings. Those volunteering for this interim committee include: Andre Paquette, Rob Rovella, Gil Schohan, Kevin Washburn, and possibly Sheila Weeks. One of the issues to be resolved are designing training strategies for new Council members	Alan will schedule a meeting for this committee. <i>(This meeting has been scheduled for 4:30pm at Council offices on Thursday, Feb 14th.)</i>	A. Robichaud
New Futures Community Leadership Institute (CLI)	Alan explained that several slots are available for the next CLI scheduled for March 7 th . These all-day trainings are sponsored by New Futures and are designed to develop leaders and advocates in NH communities around substance abuse issues. Another CLI is planned for May.	Any Council member interested in attending one of these CLI trainings should contact Alan Robichaud who has the application forms. Application deadline is February 28.	Interested Council members
Deschutes County Plan	Alan called attention to the Deschutes Plan given to each Council member. Creating a County-wide plan for children and families will be one of the first responsibilities for the Council.	Council members will review the Deschutes Plan in preparation for beginning this process in Belknap County.	Council members
Substance Abuse Hearings	The State is sponsoring focus groups around the state, which are designed to gather input from NH citizens on this important issue. A hearing is scheduled for March 20 th for this area and will be held at the Community Technical College here in Laconia. Scott AndersEn said his entire CORE Group will be attending.	Interested Council members should plan to attend this March 20 th hearing.	
Adjourn	Andre Paquette moved that this Council meeting be adjourned until Friday March 2 nd at 8am.		
NEXT MEETING	The next Citizens Council meeting will be held on Friday, March 8th at the Humiston Building, Main Street, Meredith. The meeting is scheduled from 8 to 10am.	Judy will send directions to Council members.	J. Buswell