

MEETING SUMMARY

COMMITTEE: Council Meeting

DATE: Friday, May 14, 2004 **TIME BEGAN:** 8:00am **TIME ENDED:** 10:05am **FACILITATED BY:** Alida Millham

SUMMARY BY: Judy Buswell

PRESENT: Gil Schohan, Dick Wallace, Steve Fountain, Christie Corrigan, Jim Pilliod, Katy Kannally-DeCarteret, Rob Rovella, Nancy Porosky, Ruth Castonguay, Kevin Washburn, Andre Paquette, Alida Millham, Mary Alice Warner, Sue Smith, Sarah Fox

GUESTS: Judge Willard Martin **STAFF:** Alan Robichaud, Judy Buswell

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1. **Approve Minutes** Motion to approve minutes of April 9, 2004 as written made by Andre Paquette; second by Jim Pilliod; approval by consensus.
 2. **Agenda:** Agenda OK as written but order of items to be changed because guest presenters will be late
 3. **Work Group Updates:**
 - *# 1 (Balanced & Restorative Justice)* Gil and Andre reported that their Workgroup, which also includes Leo Sanfacon, has been interviewing Police Chiefs and to date, have visited with 6 PDs. While the Chiefs voice similar concerns about the flow and management of juvenile cases, they express varying degrees of optimism about the recent changes in the County's juvenile justice system. However, the Chiefs have been providing good information that will be compiled into a report once all interviews are completed. Each Chief receives copies of Andre's data reports. It appears the Juvenile Officers, when present in the Police Departments, are an effective addition. This is also true of the School Resource Officers (SRO) that are also present in many communities in the County. While their role and relationships to PDs often depends on who supervises them (schools or Police Departments), they are playing a significant role in delinquency prevention.

Andre said that the information gleaned from these interviews would be shared with others according to the timeline their Workgroup is now developing. However, they do plan to offer the information first to the Juvenile Justice Advisory Committee (JJAC), probably this coming fall. Andre suggests that the Council and/or JJAC organize a meeting with the SROs in the County, as their insights are a missing piece in developing an understanding of the juvenile justice system.

Council members expressed some concern about trying to address the array of issues in the juvenile justice system all at once. Jim Pilliod feels that the Council must also examine a public policy approach to these problems. Nancy Porosky suggests we also talk with Assistant Principals, as they are often the ones who address disciplinary problems occurring in schools.

ACTION: This Workgroup will organize a meeting of SROs in Belknap County.

- *# 2 - Community Development* Katy DeCarteret, Workgroup "point person", reported that several Council members attended the recent "Asset-Based Conference" presented by the ABCD Institute and that there is interest in using these concepts in their work. One task now is to identify the resources and assets in each community, and perhaps Council members can take a lead in this process. Katy would like connections with businesses in this County who might provide youth with opportunities for community service.
- *#3 - Prevention* Jim P. read the notes from the last workgroup meeting (April 21): Alan reviewed the objectives that were defined at the March workgroup meeting and the associated partnerships with those objectives. Grants related for objective 1 (family support networks) were reviewed. Initial strategies for the first 2 objectives of the goal (Promote Strength-Based Prevention Practices) were reviewed, namely the Parent Leadership Series in collaboration with Upstream and PACT for obj. 1 and the Prevention Asset Inventory for obj. 2. So as not to slow the process down, Mary Alice Warner and Sue Smith agreed that workgroup #3 members should look at the objectives and pick one to focus on since there seems to be

difficulty in scheduling a meeting. Mary Alice is focusing on PALS and Sue is focusing on the Prevention Asset Inventory

- # 4 – *Infrastructure* Alida reported, in the absence of Peter Michaud, Workgroup point person, that this committee is looking at communication as its first project. John Vorel, public relations professional, has met with several members of this group and has made some recommendations. Committee members were emailed a list of questions to respond to, but to date; only three responses have been received.

ACTION: Committee members should complete this questionnaire and email responses to Peter.

4. **Genesis Behavioral Health Services** Special guests, Michael Coughlin (*pronounced Caulklin*), the Executive Director of Genesis and Joe Capucino, Quality Assurance Manager, provided an update on the changes at Genesis over the past several years. Mike Coughlin, who has been the Director for the past two years said that he is encouraged by the changes now underway at Genesis, but that the ongoing problems and challenges they face are quite the same as those of other Mental Health Centers across the State, and even across the nation. Genesis' mandate, from RSA 135C, is to assist the severely and persistently mentally ill so that they can live safely in their communities rather than in institutions. This population of people may not always be able to be "cured", but they can be "in recovery" and can manage symptoms so they can live independently. He stressed that there is no known cure for schizophrenia or bi-polar disease or other "bio-based illnesses", but there are good management strategies. Genesis serves about 2300 people each year, ages pre-school to the elderly.

Genesis has two offices, in Laconia and in Plymouth, and currently has 116 employees including 4.2 physicians on their staff. The increase in medical staff is a big improvement over their previous reliance on "locum tenens" physicians who have only short-term responsibilities and accountability. Right now the newest physician on their staff has been with them for 2 ½ years, a big improvement. Dr. David Bann is the Medical Director.

As with many agencies, the demand for Genesis services is larger, yet the resources allocated to them are smaller. Genesis has the same reimbursement rate as they did in 1993, except for Case Management, which was increased in 2001. The 100 million dollar shortfall in Medicaid reimbursements will impact community mental health centers such as Genesis, very hard meaning that every mental health center will be facing large cuts in funds yet increased waiting lists. Genesis' current waiting list is about 10 days. Other issues facing Genesis and other mental health centers is the aging population and the resulting increased need for long-term care. There are 5000 nursing home beds now in NH and many more will be needed shortly. Each bed costs about \$300,000. per year.

Ray Barrett heads the Children's Program. There is still a strong need for child psychiatrists in the Lakes Region. Genesis will be replacing one of their child psychiatrists, Kathy Ray, who is leaving. The Adult Team works with clients age 18 and above. They handle some dementia cases but the bulk is chronic mental illness.

The Genesis Board gave Mike Coughlin three mandates: (1) Increase the quality of care (2) Improve the fiscal health of Genesis, which was facing bankruptcy when Mike arrived and (3) build a bridge to the community. Community relations is an ongoing challenge, but Mike feels that their image in the community, once very poor, is improving. Mike makes every effort to participate in community initiatives such as the Community Benefits Group and to interact with other agencies and organizations in the County. One such improvement, based on community feedback, is their Court Liaison person, Carrie Corneau, represents all cases in Court. Therefore, in this role, as she has no billable time, this is an "expensive" strategy, "but well worth it", said Mike.

Joe Capucino who was hired by Mike to handle quality control issues is also the Director of Operations. A few of the improvements that he has been involved with include improving and standardizing the Intake Process. Psychiatrists are now a part of this process. Registered Nurses now handle a majority of the med checks. Clients must come in on a regular basis to Genesis to get their meds; 7-day packets of prescriptions are distributed to clients.

Genesis now has a staff person to work with area Pediatricians. Turf issues seem to be decreasing. The emphasis on Recovery has increased and every client must now have a Recovery Plan, a strategy that also helps the clients feel better about themselves. Joe is the “complaint officer” and he encourages anyone who has concerns to contact him at 524-1100 X 234. In this role Joe becomes the “client advocate”.

There is still some confusion in the community and with law enforcement on eligibility for, and the process for Emergency Admissions. This is not an option unless a mental health issue is the prevailing problem for the client as documented by a mental health professional. Genesis cannot, nor can law enforcement or family members, commit someone without this person’s permission. Rather, all Involuntary Commitments must go through the Court system. Genesis maintains regular contact with the Lakes Region Police Chiefs Association to keep them current on this and similar issues. Again, both Joe and Mike stressed that Genesis has a defined mandate – to treat and assist the population of people who have severe and persistent mental health challenges. While they help others in all ways they can, they are not able to meet many of the numerous requests that fall outside this specific mandate.

Both Joe and Mike advise others that during this process of change and improvement that we “take everything we hear in the community with a grain of salt” but that we should feel free to share these concerns with Joe directly.

4. Director’s Report Alan shared the following:

- **Asset-Based Conference** Two Council members attended this April meeting, along with others from Belknap County. This group recently reconvened for follow-up activities. It has been suggested that this group be folded into Workgroup # 2 (Community Development). Two youth from Belknap County also attended and should be included wherever possible.
- **DCYF Conference** Alan made a presentation on the Council at the recent statewide DCYF Conference.
- **Moroccan Police Visitors** A group of police personnel from Morocco were in Laconia recently. Chief Tom Oetinger invited Alan to speak to them about the Citizens Council.
- **Domestic Violence Council** Alan and Diane Lane are currently exploring how to revitalize the DV Council so they can accomplish more outcomes than the yearly Conference they sponsor.
- **Grants** Council staff have written and submitted a number of grants this winter and spring. The latest (\$30,000.) is for the last year of a 3-year grant from NH DJJS to continue the Belknap County Mediation Program that is housed and administered by Youth Services Bureau. This grant funds through Sept 2005 and following that time, the program will be completely maintained by Youth Services Bureau. An \$8,000 grant was submitted to the NH Children’s Trust Fund to support the PALS initiative, described earlier in these minutes. The Council is working with the NH Friends Program who will submit a grant to the US Dep’t of Education to expand the Friends Mentor Program into Belknap County. Friends also submitted a smaller grant to NH DJJS to provide mentoring services for about 30 Belknap County youth who are involved in the juvenile justice system.
- **Gordon Bazemore** Dr. Bazemore, a nationally respected researcher and data analyst of juvenile justice practices, will spend 2 ½ days in Belknap County to guide the emerging data collection and integration project, led by Andre Paquette. His first visit will be June 24th. This project is underway through funds from NH DJJS JAIBG funds and will involve juvenile justice administrators and others.
- **Council offices** There is a chance that our offices could move to the lower level of the building.

NEXT MEETING
WHEN: Friday June 11th 8-10am WHERE: Center Harbor Congregational Church