

MEETING SUMMARY

COMMITTEE: Citizens Council

DATE: Friday, October 20, 2006

TIME BEGAN: 8:00am **TIME ENDED:** 10:00am **FACILITATED BY:** Sue Smith **SUMMARY BY:** Judy Buswell

PRESENT: Laurie Belanger, Sandy Webber, Mary Alice Warner, Sarah Fox, Dick Wallace, Micheline Roy, Ruth Castonguay, Sue Smith, Emily Clement, Richard Moed *It was noted that Council members: Christie Corrigan, Nancy Porosky, and Jim Pilliod are absent today as they are attending a statewide substance abuse treatment and prevention conference.*

GUESTS: Rev Jim Morel, New Covenant Christian Church, Ken Peters, Exec Dir – Open Arms Outreach, Andre Paquette, JJAC Chair **STAFF:** Alan Robichaud, Judy Buswell

1. **Welcoming and Introductions** Greetings were extended to today's guests: Andre Paquette, citizen volunteer and Chair of the Juvenile Justice Advisory Committee and the Balanced and Restorative Justice workgroup; Rev Jim Morel, pastor of the New Covenant Christian Church in Laconia; and Ken Peters, an Elder in the New Covenant Christian Church and the Executive Director of Open Arms Outreach. Rev Morel explained that he became acquainted with the Citizens Council through Council member Ruth Castonguay. As Rev Morel pastors a church that has many young families who would like to become involved in their communities, he is hoping to identify compatible places and outlets in the community for church members to volunteer. Ken Peters explained that Open Arms Outreach is currently assisting with the current refugee resettlement in the Laconia area.

2. **Additions/Amendments to the Agenda** No additions or amendments

3. **Director's Report – Alan Robichaud**
Alan distributed a one-page summary of his report.
 - ***Convocation on Children and Families*** This annual event is scheduled for Tuesday, January 23, 2007 from 3:30-7:30pm at the Expo Center in Lakeport. Judy Buswell is chairing a large committee with representatives from about a dozen other agencies and organizations who are co-sponsoring this event. This year's theme is "Once Upon A Time: Everyone Has A Story" and features inter-generational storytelling where elementary age students interview senior citizens. Information from each interview is crafted into a story that is illustrated by other students and then reproduced as bound books. The Convocation committee is working with Lois Plimpton of Laconia, a retired educator and the originator of this inter-generational project. Other partners include Delta Kappa Gamma (retired teachers), the Friends Foster Grandparent Program, and a number of elementary and middle schools in Belknap County. Lois Plimpton will also be the keynote speaker during the dinner hour of this four hour event. This year's event also features inter-active displays, student performances, a catered buffet dinner, and awards presentations. This year there will not be any concurrent business meetings as in the past.
 - ***Community Leadership Initiative*** An advocacy and leadership training is scheduled for Thursday, November 9 from 4-8pm at the Community Technical College, Laconia Campus. Sponsored by the Citizens Council and the CoRe Coalition, this training will be facilitated by professionals from New Futures and will discuss introducing environmental changes into communities to reduce underage drinking. Break-out groups will allow attendees to develop specific action steps for their communities. In order to be effective, representatives from numerous sectors in the community should participate, such as law enforcement, education, churches, business, etc. New Futures has provided a \$500 grant to cover meal costs and other associated costs; the CTC is providing free meeting space. This event will be promoted via the print and broadcast media, through identified newsletters, the UpStream email network, and 1-1 conversations.
ACTION: Council members are urged to register to attend and to bring at least one other person with them.
 - ***Schmitt UnSung Hero Award*** Nominations are needed for this award designed to honor someone who has worked quietly behind-the-scenes on behalf of children and families. It will be presented at the January Convocation. There was some discussion about honoring all of the appropriate nominees as in 2006.
ACTION: Council members will assist in securing nominations for this award.

- **UpStream Community Forums** One of the outcomes from the recent merger of UpStream with Lakes Region United Way (LRUW) is to offer a new outlet for community dialogue and input. The UpStream Leadership Team is developing a concept for public forums that will also inform and support the three priorities of LRUW: stable families, successful children, and community engagement. The idea includes “getting the LRUW donors in the same room with the providers of the services they fund” with the expectation that funding goals will be clarified. The concept will be introduced at an expanded UpStream meeting on Thursday, November 30. Attendees are encouraged to bring their lunch, with beverages provided. The meeting includes an introduction of the concept and a facilitated discussion of the themes for the four anticipated Forums during 2007. The Council will continue to attend and participate in all UpStream meetings.
- **Victims’ Rights Committee** Gil Schohan is chairing this new committee that includes Chief Tom Oetinger, Sheriff Dan Collis, Kelly Prescott, Peter Michaud, Kathy Keller and Council member, Laurie Belanger. The committee goal is to advance public awareness and support of victims of juvenile crime. Members have already surveyed a number of law enforcement personnel, school resource officers, and police departments to better assess current practices and identify needs. They will develop and distribute additional informational resources.
- **The Friends Program** Following the departure of Jim Doremus, Executive Director of the Friends Program, Bob Larson has been appointed the Interim Director. They are looking at restructuring the organization, including reducing the administrative costs to free-up more resources for direct services. Brook Noonan has been appointed to oversee the Belknap County Mentor Program and will work with Amy Howe and Seth Perdue who are the coordinators of the grant-funded mentor program in Belknap County. Friends is exploring strategies for developing a trust fund dedicated to mentoring in Belknap County. Currently the mentor program has generated 27 matches. As the program is now in the last year of a 3-year grant, sustainability is a paramount concern.
- **SAG Grant** The State Juvenile Justice State Advisory Group (SAG) has awarded a \$47,710 grant to the Citizens Council. Grant funds will hire a consultant who will lead an effort to develop the county’s capacity in collecting, interpreting, and sharing data with a goal of increasing our understanding of the delinquency prevention and intervention efforts in the County. These funds will support 90 days of consultant services that will include interactions with the JJAC Data Committee and service providers in the county.
- **CoRe Coalition** The recent resignation of Renee Rockwell, Director, has advanced a discussion among coalition members and the Coalition’s Executive Committee, on how to expand the organizational structure to accommodate the coalition’s growth throughout the County. Alan is now a member of the Executive Committee; coalition by-laws are being revised and other strategies for blending the current prevention groups with the CoRe structure are being identified. The Director position has been posted.
- **Strategic Prevention Frameworks** NH Alcohol Tobacco and Other Drug Services (ATOD), a department of Public Health Services - NH Division of Health and Human Services, is reorganizing the distribution of federal and state ATOD grant funds. This new approach is called “Strategic Prevention Frameworks”. In preparation for this re-organization, the state has been divided into ten regions; some regions follow county lines, others do not. Some regions conform to the public health network structures, previously organized in various parts of the state to manage disaster planning and other public health issues. Belknap County is included in one of these regional public health networks, the Lakes Region Public Health Network, along with Carroll County which does not have a Public Health Network.

Each Strategic Prevention Framework region will organize itself with a designated fiscal agent, paid administrator, governing body, and a membership group to manage and implement grant funds distributed to them by NH ATOD, based on each region’s specific plans and proposals. All regions must incorporate five key strategies as part of their program and implementation design: (1) Assessment (2) Capacity building (3) Planning (4) Implementation (5) Evaluation The CoRe Coalition, the recipient of a federal Drug-Free Communities 5-year grant, already uses these five strategies.

While NH ATOD Services are working with their federal counterpart (Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration – SAMHSA), there is still substantial confusion as to when this new process will actually begin and the amount of funds to be distributed. NH ATOD is still waiting for formal approval of their State Plan (2004-2010) from SAMHSA. As we are already well into this 6-year period, there are concerns that previously planned time-lines will need to be collapsed, meaning that some of the necessary planning steps will be hurried, with poorer outcomes.

Belknap County has been paired with Carroll County, which will be the first time many of the providers in these two counties have worked together. Currently Alan is participating in joint discussions with others from Belknap and Carroll Counties to determine how best to proceed. Lakes Region Public Health Network has agreed to be the Fiscal Agent for the anticipated Planning Phase. As Carroll County does not have a similar public health infrastructure and as it is a large area divided into two regions, Northern and Southern Carroll County, there is concern that the two counties can work together in an equitable and effective manner. There is also concern that when the grants funds (\$250,000./year x 3 years , a figure mentioned as “ballpark” by NH ATOD staff), is reduced by administrative and other overhead expenses, the amount designated for actual direct service might be less than what it is currently granted in these two counties.

ACTION: Alan will continue to participate in these bi-county discussions and will update the Council on a regular basis.

- **Underage Drinking DVDs** The six-sessions of Underage Drinking Series co-sponsored by the Council and CoRe that were held in various communities throughout the County during 2005-2006, have been converted to a number of 6-disk DVD packets that are now ready for distribution throughout the county. Distribution points include NHCTC, Laconia; town libraries; and school guidance offices, health departments, and media centers.

ACTION: Council members will contact Alan to assist in distributing these DVD packets in their communities.

- **Teen Resource Directory** Judy Buswell, Planning and Resource Coordinator for the Council, shared information about the directory of volunteer and community service opportunities for teens that she is developing. This project began with a request from Inter-Lakes High School for a list of places where teens might volunteer for distribution to students as part of their annual Social Responsibility day. As there is currently no such inventory, Judy contacted more than 40 agencies, organizations, and businesses in the Lakes Region for this information, and in the process she observed the following:

(1) There are a wide number of methods and strategies within Lakes Region organizations on how to involve youth as volunteers e.g.:

- Simple and discrete volunteer tasks such as filing or stuffing envelopes
- Community Service Learning where there are articulated curriculum goals, a mentor, and a period of reflection following the community experience
- Leadership Development, where as a part of their engagement, youth can acquire specific leadership skills

(2) The term “community service” has been co-opted by the court system resulting in a large majority of people equating community service with juvenile offenders

(3) There is no consistency statewide, or even nationally, around graduation requirements for community service or civic engagement

(4) There is a growing wealth of resources, much of it accessible via the internet, on civic engagement and community service learning

Responses from more than 30 agencies/organizations/businesses that are receptive to working with teens are being gathered into a directory that also begins to define the different levels of involvement. This list will be given to Inter-Lakes, but as this information appears to have a greater life than initially planned, Judy wonders if this inventory might be shared with schools and others to generate some type of community interest and investment in working with youth in community settings?

4. Work Group Reports

- **Balanced and Restorative Justice (BARJ)** – *Andre Paquette reporting* The actual BARJ Workgroup has not met for several months, but Andre will soon be scheduling a meeting with BARJ members. In the meantime, much work still is happening via several related committees.
 - The Data Committee continues to gather and interpret data for a second “Report Card” on the County’s Juvenile Justice system. They also would like to gather and understand data relating to CHINS and Abuse and Neglect court petitions.
 - The Juvenile Justice Advisory Council (JJAC) has expressed an interest in better understanding why youth “end up in the juvenile system”. They would like to explore “prevention” issues, such as home environments, school drop-outs, parent accountability and support, in addition to maintaining their ongoing focus on improving the efficiency of the current juvenile justice system.
 - The BARJ workgroup will begin to study how the three strands of Restorative Justice (victim needs, community safety, and offender competencies) can be reflected throughout all aspects of the juvenile justice system. They will continue to monitor ongoing efforts that insure that county youth served by the Franklin District Court continue to have access to the same services offered through the Laconia District Court. At some point, BARJ also needs to look at the adult criminal system, especially recidivism data.

- **Community Development** – *Sarah Fox reporting*
 - *LRPA TV* Emily Clement and Sarah are working on developing a Council show for Lakes Region Public Access TV that highlights specific issues that impact children and families. They would like to incorporate field interviews and film shoots. In response to a request from LRPA TV for a proposal that outlines at least three shows, Emily and Sarah have suggested:
 - *Balanced and Restorative Justice* Interviews with such people as Andre Paquette, Brian Loanes for updates on what is happening.
 - *Youth Involvement in the Community* How are youth actually involved in their communities? What are kids actually doing? They would like to look beyond the traditional student leaders.
 - *Parents As Leaders in Society (PALS)* As this year’s PALS class has been canceled, a replacement topic is needed.

Because LRPA TV has limited resources and a small staff, “field shoots” and scheduling are problematic. Emily and Sarah will continue to work with LRPA TV on this project.

- *Update – “Prime For Life” initiative at Prospect Mountain High School in Alton – Dick Wallace reporting* The grant-funded initiative to bring the evidence-based “Prime For Life” course to all incoming 9th graders at PMHS was a great success! This course that focused on healthy choices and risk behaviors, especially around substance abuse, has generated a number of referrals to the Adolescent Treatment Initiative. As the grant funds for this program were for one year only, the PMHS team has started planning for the 2007 PFL course. The PMHS team has offered to be a research site, sharing data and outcomes for the next 4-5 years, if the Prevention Research Institute would offer the course at no cost to PMHS during this period.

- **Prevention** – *Ruth Castonguay reporting*
 - *“Turbulent Teens” Support Group* This group offers support to parents who have teens engaging in risky behaviors such as substance abuse, and continues every Thursday evening at the Gilmanston Congregational Church. The group is run by Council member, Nancy Porosky, and LADC, Carol Murtaugh. As this group is just getting started, the attendance is still small. Council members are encouraged to help promote this group to other parents.
 - *AA Meeting at the Community Technical College in Laconia* Ruth reports that this new group held at 4pm weekly on a weekday at the school has attracted about 15-20 people each week. Attendees include students and professors. This is an Open AA Meeting; strategies include the “Ask-it Basket” where attendees can place anonymous questions in a basket which are then answered throughout the session.

- *Seniors in Sobriety* group will begin soon. The venue is changing to better meet accessibility needs of seniors.
- **Executive Committee – Sue Smith reporting**
 - *Follow-up from the New Hampton meeting* As suggested during September’s Council meeting in New Hampton, Christie Corrigan will facilitate a discussion with identified New Hampton residents on how the Citizens Council might be helpful in addressing some of the community’s concerns as raised at the September meeting.
 - *Andre Paquette Governor’s Citation* Andre was not able to attend award presentation earlier this fall where he was cited by Governor Lynch for his volunteer work so this recognition was formally presented to Andre by Sue Smith. Andre was recognized for his work with JJAC and the publication of the County’s first Report Card on its juvenile justice system.
 - *Annual Meeting* As Annual Meetings will not be a part of the annual Convocation in January, another date for the Council’s Annual Meeting is needed. Wednesday, December 13th at 5pm in the River Room of the Busiel Mill was suggested. This meeting will include food and be more celebratory. Agenda items include: (1) Ratification of updated By-Laws (2) Election of Council officers (Nominations need to be made at the November Council meeting) (3) Re-affirmation of the Council Vision and Mission Statements (4) The Year in Review ~ Review of 2007 budget and 2006 Financial Report and (5) review of Workgroup goals for 2007

ACTION:

1. Council members will submit nominations for 2007 Council officers to Alan by November 10.
2. Christie Corrigan will meet with Alan and Executive Committee to shape plans for follow-up discussion in New Hampton
3. Council members will update their calendars by changing December’s Council meeting from Friday, December 15th (8-10am) to Wednesday, December 13th at 5pm. This will be a regular Council meeting and all Council members should attend. Any conflicts with this changed date should be reported to Alan by November 1.

5. **Approve Minutes of September 15, 2006 Council Meeting** Motion to accept made by Rich Moed and seconded by Micheline Roy. Motion carried.

6. **Public Comment** Today’s guests were invited to comment.

- Jim Morel said his church with a large number of young families is committed to “be engaged in their communities”. His job is to find a way to “digest and communicate appropriately” the content of today’s meeting to the members of his congregation. The goal is to link interested people with the Council.
- Ken Peters who is the Director of Open Arms Outreach said this organization partners with the New Covenant Church. The Open Arms office is located at 756 Union Avenue and their telephone number is 524-4580. In response to a question regarding outreach and solutions for people “who cannot for one reason or another be in traditional homeless shelters”, Ken suggested calling Mike Bernier at the CAP Program and/or the NH Help Line at 1-800-852-3388.

NEXT COUNCIL MEETING

WHEN: Friday, November 17, 2006 (8-10am)

**WHERE: River Level Conference Room, Busiel Mill in
Downtown Laconia**