

MEETING SUMMARY

COMMITTEE: Citizens Council

DATE: Friday, November 17, 2006

TIME BEGAN: 8:03am **TIME ENDED:** 9:50am **FACILITATED BY:** Sue Smith **SUMMARY BY:** Judy Buswell

PRESENT: Laurie Belanger, Sandy Webber, Rick Keller, Kevin Washburn, Ruth Castonguay, Nancy Porosky, Rasim Gusinac, Dick Wallace, Christie Corrigan, Sue Smith, Sarah Fox, Jim Pilliod Micheline Roy **STAFF:** Alan Robichaud, Judy Buswell
GUESTS: Rev Dena McPhetres, Unitarian Universalist Society of Laconia; Bob Larsen (Interim Director, The Friends Program)

1. **Director's Report – Alan Robichaud reporting** Alan distributed a one-page summary of his report.
 - ***Convocation*** Planning well underway by a committee of representatives from more than a dozen agencies. Date set for Tuesday, January 23, 2007 at the Expo Center. Theme is around inter-generational storytelling and will feature book with illustrated stories from the lives of about 25 senior citizens from around Belknap County, created by students and youth in Belknap County. Lois Plimpton, who runs this program through the local Theta Chapter of Delta Kappa Gamma (retired teachers) will be the keynote speaker during the dinner hour. Meal will be catered by NH CTC and meal costs will be \$15.00/ adult and \$10.00 / 12 & under.
ACTION: Council members will plan to attend this event and will bring family and friends.
 - ***Community Leadership Initiative*** More than 40 people attended this Forum on November 9th at the NH CTC-Laconia. The goal of this Forum was to encourage people to think about how they might individually and collectively change the environment in Belknap County that encourages young people to drink alcohol. One attendee has already sent a letter to the Editor asking that people recognize the severity of under-age drinking in the Lakes Region.
 - ***Schmitt UnSung Hero Award*** Four nominations have been received. The deadline was extended to Wednesday, November 22.
 - ***UpStream Community Forums*** The merger of UpStream with LR United Way offers opportunities for LRUW to use UpStream networks to discuss United Way funding priorities and investment strategies with residents in the Lakes Region. The first public forum is scheduled for noon on Thursday, November 30 at the Laconia Congregational Church downstairs hall. Bob Champlin, Superintendent of the Laconia School District, will facilitate the discussion designed to lead to a consensus on topics and potential presenters for future Forums. The goal is to attract a wide variety of attendees. Council members are encouraged to attend.
 - ***Victims' Rights Committee*** This committee is planning to offer a seminar in mid April of 2007 on resources and management strategies and practices for juvenile victims of crime, such as DV, date violence, bullying, cyber-crime etc. The targeted audience will be approximately 50-70 members of school-community crisis teams who will be invited to attend a day-long workshop on this topic. This training will qualify for Staff Development credits. Laurie Belanger is the Council "point person" for this project. Other planning members include Gil Schohan, Kathy Keller, and Sheriff Dan Collis.
 - ***CoRe Coalition*** Alan is a member of the Interview and Selection Committee for the Director position. They will be interviewing three candidates on the 17th of November.
 - ***Strategic Prevention Frameworks*** Under direction and mandate from NH DHHS, Belknap and Carroll Counties have combined to form one of ten community prevention coalitions. All state prevention and treatment funds will be sub-granted through these ten coalitions. Lakes Region Partnership for Public Health may be willing to serve as the bi-County Fiscal Agent for the RFP that will be issued on November 22, 2006. The first tasks with the granted funds will be to hire a Coalition Coordinator and a part-time evaluator, and to organize a governing body.
 - ***Families Advocating for Substance Treatment, Education and Recovery (F.A.S.T.E.R.)*** This statewide group recently met with Commissioner Stephen where the concept for a statewide family support and advocacy organization was presented. Ultimately, FASTER will ask the Commissioner to include this new organization and its work in the DHHS budget.
 - ***Council Annual Meeting*** The Council's Annual Meeting (and December's Council meeting) is scheduled for Wednesday, December 13th from 5-7pm in the Community Dining Room at the Taylor Community in

Laconia. The meeting will include a potluck supper. Bylaws, vision and mission, and policies will be reviewed and ratified and 2007 Council officers will be elected.

- **Legislative Outreach** Alan recently talked with newly elected Belknap County Attorney Jim Carroll who pledges to stay very connected to communities and responsive to families and communities. Alan encouraged Council members to be in touch with elected county and state officials.

ACTION: Council members will contact their elected representative to congratulate them and to invite them to Council meetings and activities.

- **Council Officer Nominations** Only two Council members submitted names for 2007 officers. Two nominations for Chair and two for Vice-Chair were made. Only one nominee for Vice-Chair will go forward on the ballot.

2. **The Friends' Program** – *Bob Larsen, Interim Director reporting* Jim Doremus, the previous Executive Director, has retired after 20 years with Friends. Bob is filling in until they can hire a replacement. The job will be posted in December. Bob explained the Friends Program has statewide reach and influence. It began in the 1970's with a mentor program. Currently Friends manages two federal programs, RSVP and Foster Grandparents, programs that mobilize senior volunteers; the Interfaith Caregiver Program that coordinates volunteers from about 15 faith organizations; the Family Emergency Shelter that operates in Concord; and the Junior-Senior Mentor Program, intervention model mentoring for youth. A federal Dep't of Education grant allowed for this program to expand to Belknap County 2 ½ years ago. The Friends Junior-Senior Program has made more than 100 matches with 21 of them coming from Belknap County. He said the progress in developing this program throughout Belknap County "has been slow" with some challenges in recruiting enough Senior Partners, acknowledging that a weekly commitment can be difficult for many people. An average match lasts about 18 months. The program has inventoried the stakeholders (parents, teachers, and Junior-Senior Friends) for their observations on changes resulting from this program. Comments have been positive. Amy Howe and Seth Perdue are the two staff members coordinating the Belknap County component.

As the Federal DOE grant expires in September 2007, Bob has concerns about how to replace close to \$200,000. in funds. Unfortunately this funding lapse might mean Friends would need to "reconsider their involvement here in Belknap County". Bob has talked with the DOE rep who says the latest trend in federal funding for mentor programs is around children of incarcerated parents. Friends will be looking for local funds to continue this mentor program and will welcome any assistance in this effort from the Citizens Council.

3. **Review Vision, Mission and By-laws** – *Sue Smith reporting* Sue asked Council members if they recommend any changes from their review of the Council mission, Vision, and by-Laws. As there were none, Sue said all three of these documents will be ratified at the Annual Meeting on December 13th.

4. **Work Group Reports**

- ♦ **BALANCED AND RESTORATIVE JUSTICE (BARJ)** – *Sarah Fox reporting* In the absence of any BARJ members and as Sarah attended a recent BARJ meeting, she reported that they are discussing directions for their next steps. They are interested in better understanding how necessary changes in Family Court might occur.
- ♦ **COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT** – *Christie Corrigan reporting* The last meeting of the Prevention Workgroup involved a comprehensive discussion with a guidance counselor from the Winnisquam Regional School District about the existing roadblocks to the efficient implementation of the Adolescent Treatment Initiative in the Winnisquam Schools. Kevin Washburn, a member of this Workgroup, has not been able to meet yet with WRSD new Superintendent, Tammy Davis. Christie will meet with Newfound Schools Superintendent, Marie Ross, soon.

Christie said that the follow-up discussion meeting on New Hampton issues as raised at the September Council meeting will be scheduled by Town Manager, Barbara Lucas.

- ♦ **PREVENTION** – *Ruth Castonguay reporting* Ruth quickly reviewed the current projects that are involving the Prevention Workgroup, two of which were explained earlier in this meeting by Alan in his Director's Report: F.A.S.T.E.R and the Community Leadership Initiative The others include:

- *Adolescent Treatment Initiative* Ryan Barrieau, the project coordinator, says that 20 youth from Belknap County have been “seen” by this program
 - *Turbulent Teens Parent Support Group* Nancy Porosky, Council member and the co-facilitator of this new group, says she “is encouraged” even though attendance has been slow. This weekly support group meets in Gilmanton Iron Works. Nancy said the recent publicity for this program on the front page of the Union Leader attracted inquiries from Good Morning America who is interested in covering this activity.
 - *Alton Meeting* Dick Wallace, Council member, was an organizer of a recent meeting at Prospect Mountain High School for parents interested in specific information to help them manage alcohol and other drug issues with their teens. Charlotte Hassett from Genesis; the School Resource Officer from Prospect Mountain High School; Cecile Beaupre, a youth; and Nancy Porosky participated in a panel discussion. Nancy said that “all schools should consider offering a similar seminar for parents”.
 - *Next Meeting* has been changed to Monday, December 4th from 8:30-11am to allow for a comprehensive discussion of goals and activities for 2007.
- ◆ **EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE** – Sue Smith reporting
- ***Officer Nominations*** The three candidates for Council offices in 2007 shared their thoughts for 2007. Christie Corrigan, candidate for Council Chair, quoted from Goethe that “knowing is not enough, we must also apply (or be willing to do)”. This is her 4th year and the experience has been a gradual learning process. She does not have “an agenda” for next year as she feels “you learn more” and are “more receptive” that way. However, she will be very involved and would like to be considered for this position. Sarah Fox, candidate for Council Chair, said that this is also her 4th year as a Council member. She senses “a sea change” and thinks we “have a great opportunity” to start promoting and pushing programs that benefit children and families. She would like to be part of that opportunity. Ruth Castonguay, candidate for Vice Chair, is “honored to be a part of this group; it has been a great learning experience”. She says her special interest and expertise is in “reaching out to all the towns” and her “strength is bringing people to the table”.
 - ***Annual Meeting*** The Executive Committee recommends an informal setting with just Council members invited, a more relaxed agenda, a time to ratify Council policies, and an opportunity to recognize the contributions of several key people. However there was also some interest in expanding the invitation list to include members of the County Delegation and former Council members. Following a brief discussion, Council members selected the smaller invitation list. The meeting will be potluck and a sign-up sheet for food was circulated. Kevin Washburn and Rasim Gusinac cannot attend because of work and other commitments.

Council members are reminded of the meeting attendance requirements: three consecutive or four total absences in a year is part of the Attendance Policies for Council members. Anyone who is not certain of their attendance history should contact either Alan or Judy for this information.

Jim Pilliod recommends that the Council sponsor a Breakfast information sharing meeting in January for the Delegation.

ACTION:

- ◆ **All Council members should sign up with Judy to bring a food item.**
- ◆ **The new Council Chair and Council staff and others will work on organizing a Information Breakfast for the County Delegation**

5. **Approval of Minutes of October 20, 2006** Motion to accept minutes of the October 20, 2006 meeting was made by Christie Corrigan; second by Jim Pilliod. Motion carried.
6. **Public Comment** Rev Dena McPhetres said that she has been a member of the Juvenile Justice Advisory Committee for several years but is now exploring a different relationship with the Council. She is attending this morning to learn more about Council activity.

7. **Other**

- Laurie Belanger who is associated with the National Alliance for the Mentally Ill (NAMI) said that it has been over a year since a youth in New Hampshire has committed suicide. She is encouraged that grassroots efforts do work.
- Ruth Castonguay encourages Council members to contact local bookstores to object to their selling the new book by OJ Simpson that describes “how he would have killed his ex wife”. She says there is a national hotline to call as well: 1-800-843-2665. She says this is blatant “exploitism” by a visible sports personality that deserves public comment.

NEXT MEETING

WHEN: Wednesday, December 13th 5-7pm

WHERE: Community Dining Room, The Taylor Community, Union Ave, Laconia