

MEETING SUMMARY

COMMITTEE: Citizens Council

DATE: Friday, June 16, 2006

TIME BEGAN: 8:00am **TIME ENDED:** 9:50am **FACILITATED BY:** Sue Smith **SUMMARY BY:** Judy Buswell

PRESENT: Rasim Gusinac, Laurie Belanger, Sandy Webber, Emily Clement, Christie Corrigan, Rich Moed, Dick Wallace, Sarah Fox, Jim Pilliod, Ruth Castonguay, Sue Smith, Nancy Porosky **STAFF:** Alan Robichaud, Judy Buswell

1. **Congratulations to Rasim** Congratulations were extended to Council member Rasim Gusinac who with his wife Umija recently became legal citizens of the United States. A colorful bouquet of balloons was given to Rasim and a coffee cake was shared by all present.
2. **Additions/Amendments to the Agenda** The order of agenda items was rearranged to accommodate several Council members who needed to leave early.
3. **By-Law Revisions** Proposed updates to the By-Laws were reviewed: (1) Article V (Membership)- Section 5e was changed to add new Council members at any point during the year, but with their official terms beginning at the next Annual Meeting of the Council. (2) Article IX (Meetings) The Annual Meeting was moved back one month from January to December, the last month of the preceding year (3) Grammatical changes were made to Article V, Section 5 d and Article IX, Sections 1, 4, and 6.

There was some discussion and clarification around the rationale for term limits of Council members and the composition of "Ex-Officio" members. Term limits allow Council membership to be refreshed with new energy on a regular basis. After a minimum of a 1-year rotation off the Board, Council members may re-apply for Council membership.

A preliminary motion to accept By-Law revisions was made by Rich Moed with a second by Dick Wallace. Motion carried. Final approval will occur at the July 21st Council meeting.

3. **Work Group Reports**
 - ***Community Development*** – Sarah Fox, reporting
The Community Development Work Group had a lengthy and thoughtful discussion on the burial needs of refugees, a topic raised at the May 19, 2006 Council meeting. Alan facilitated this discussion using a "Decision Tree model". This "Decision Tree" framework was an excellent tool to guide this Work Group discussion. According to Sarah, this model should be replicated for future use by other Council workgroups who need to decide whether a particular issue is most appropriately handled by the Citizens Council. This Decision Tree asks the following questions:
 - (1) What is the issue?
 - (2) What is the key question?
 - (3) Who is responsible?
 - (4) How do the principles of Community Justice (Prevention, Balanced and Restorative Justice, and Asset-Based Community Development) relate to and influence this issue?
 - (5) Can this particular issue be resolved by: this Workgroup? the Citizens Council? an existing agency or organization? Belknap County? the state of New Hampshire? any of the above entities? all of the above?
 - (6) Does the resolution of this issue require: community consensus? modification of any organizational practices? statutory changes? cultural changes?
 - (7) What are the next steps? Who? What? When?

Following this Community Development Work Group meeting, it was clear that this refugee burial issue could not be resolved by Council resources alone. However, Work Group members generated a list of resources and contacts that were then given to Rasim.

In response to a question, Rasim explained that refugees do not have a choice as to where they will be resettled, meaning they usually do not have the opportunity to make culturally appropriate burial plans before they are relocated. He also indicated that it is never possible for refugees or immigrants to “assimilate 100%” and that there will always be a need for cultural sensitivity and awareness. Alan added that there is a palpable lack of understanding at the deepest level in the Lakes Region around many issues like these. This lack of understanding is a core ingredient of hate and hate crimes, also a growing concern in Belknap County. Community dialogue on such topics could be organized through the Center for Civic Engagement.

- ***Balanced and Restorative Justice (BARJ)*** - Rich Moed reporting
BARJ is continuing its work around identifying and gathering specific data sets that describe the juvenile justice system in Belknap County and some of the risk factors that drive youth and families into the system. John Cook is assisting the Workgroup to collect and analyze this information.

The BARJ Workgroup is also working with Citizen Publishing to print the County’s first Report Card on its juvenile justice system. This 4-page tab will run as an insert in the Citizen, the Laconia Sun, and appropriate Salmon Press weeklies, hopefully within the next several weeks.

- ***Prevention Work Group*** – Ruth Castonguay reporting
Parent Support Group Facilitator Training The first of a 4-session training of those wishing to begin and facilitate support groups for parents who are coping with substance abuse issues in their families is scheduled to begin in Concord on June 25th. Nancy Porosky plans to attend. Developing appropriate and relevant supports for parents who are managing these challenges is an ongoing project of the Prevention Work Group.

NH Task Force on Women and Recovery (NHTFWR) held a successful fundraiser at Awakenings Café in downtown Laconia on June 15th.

Summer Movie Theatre Project Emily Clement and Sandy Webber are working on developing a venue in downtown Laconia that will sponsor free, outdoor, family-oriented films during the summer months. While all the contacts made thus far think this is a worthwhile activity, Emily and Sandy still have not been able to identify a lead sponsor or secure the necessary licenses; however, they still hope to organize at least one event during this summer.

Meth Forum in Belknap County A number of Council members attended a recent presentation by state and county officials on the growing Meth problem in New Hampshire. While the Prevention Work Group agrees that the use of Meth brings serious consequences, it is still imperative to keep the energy and focus squarely on the overall problem of substance abuse, addictions, and recovery.

Recovery Support and Training Initiative NHTFWR will be sponsoring advocacy and leadership training for those people who are more than 1 year into recovery and who also wish to learn more about recovery advocacy and policy development.

ACTION: Anyone wanting more information and/or wishing to participate in this training should contact Ruth for further details.

- ***Executive Committee*** - Sue Smith reporting
Council Recruitment and Orientation Policy This written policy was presented to the Council for approval. Alan explained that while the County Commissioners have left the identification and selection of Council members up to the Council itself, the Commissioners would like to return to their practice of “swearing in” all new Council members. A motion to accept this new Council Member Policy was made by Rich Moed with a second by Nancy Porosky. Motion carried.

Sue encouraged Council members to stay active and involved in recruiting new Council members. One suggestion is to invite at least one guest to every Council meeting.

ACTION: Alan will schedule time/s for a “swearing in” of the newer Council members.

Rick Keller Rick Keller, as the new President of the Lakes Region Child Care Center and as the Chair of the Child Care Center construction project now underway in the renovated Scott & Williams building, has scheduling conflicts and will not be able to attend Council meetings on a regular basis from now into the fall. As Rick is a new Council member and brings a wealth of experience and knowledge to the Council, the Executive Committee recommends that Rick be granted a temporary status change to that of a Council Associate until his schedule clears. A Council Associate doesn't have the same meeting attendance requirements. Nancy Porosky made a motion to name Rick as a Council Associate until further notice; second provided by Sandy Webber. Motion carried.

ACTION: Council staff will notify Rick of his status change.

4. Director's Report - Alan Robichaud reporting

- *SAG Grant* There has been no word regarding this grant that was submitted to the NH Division of Juvenile Justice a month ago. Grant funds were requested to expand the BARJ data collection and analyses project.
- *Annual Convocation* A Planning Team has begun Convocation 2007 planning. This annual event is scheduled for Tuesday, January 23, 2007 at the Winnepesaukee Expo Center (Snow date: Thursday, January 25) This year's focus will showcase and strengthen intergenerational relationships through the art of story-telling. Retired Laconia school teacher, Lois Plimpton, is working with the Convocation Team to expand her award-winning storybook project, “Everyone Has a Story To Tell”, that generates and prints stories told by senior citizens to younger students. Seniors participating in the Foster Grandparent program in local schools will be the targeted story tellers. They will share experiences and memories from their lives with students who will then write and illustrate these memories as stories. These featured Foster Grandparents will be special guests at the Convocation and Lois Plimpton will be the Convocation keynote speaker. Judy Buswell is the Chair of the Planning Team that includes a dozen or more representatives from other agencies/organizations in Belknap County. Anyone interested in working on this event is encouraged to join the Planning Team.
- *Website Updates* Judy has provided Council's webmaster with updates to the Council's website (www.bccj.org). **ACTION: Council members are encouraged to visit the website and review their biographical sketches for any further changes. Contact Judy B with these changes.**
- *“Viewpoints” Recognition* The LHS Theatre Arts teens who participated in the Council-sponsored *Viewpoints* CD project and their Director, Joy Armstrong, received certificates of appreciation from the Laconia School Board at a recent Board meeting.
- *Parent Support Group Training* (See item 1 under the Prevention Work Group report) The intent is to secure State resources to fund this training.
- *Voices Project* This is a more comprehensive state and national effort to give those families who are involved with substance abuse issue a “voice” in any advocacy and policy change initiatives that address substance abuse. *State Level:* The ten national Robert Wood Johnson sites have been invited to submit proposals that address these particular advocacy needs to the US Substance Abuse Mental Health Services Administration (SAMHSA). New Hampshire, as one of the ten RWJ sites, is submitting a proposal requesting \$35,000. New Hampshire's plan involves hiring a part time coordinator to build a comprehensive network of support and advocacy for NH families coping with substance abuse issues. Greg Galuzzo, Director of the Gamaliel Foundation in Chicago will provide training and technical assistance. Match funds for this proposal will be sought from other statewide sources. *National Level:* The NH “Voices” group has also been working right along with Randy Muck, Center for Substance Abuse Treatment (SAMHSA), for additional funds that will send statewide leaders in parent advocacy and support around the country to Chicago for additional training.

- *Mary Francoeur* Alan and Judy met with Ms Francoeur who is the Clerk of the newly created Family Division to introduce her to the Council and its goals and activities. Family Court is temporarily housed in the Superior Court building and will move to the District Court, once building renovations are complete. Mary was invited to attend Council or Council workgroups meetings. She will begin by attending JJAC whenever she can.
- *New Futures Community Leadership Initiative* New Futures is expanding its currently successful and ongoing one-day community leadership seminar by organizing separate specific workshops on advocacy and policy development. Two regions, Manchester and Belknap County, will be the pilot sites for these comprehensive advocacy workshops.
- *CoRe Brochures* Council members were encouraged to help distribute the latest CoRe newsletters. A number of Council members took newsletters.
- *Community-Centered Care: Challenges and Opportunities* Interested Council members are encouraged to attend the daylong meeting of Health-oriented Councils in Councilor Ray Burton's district. This seminar at the Glencliff Home for the Elderly on Friday, June 23rd from 9:30-3:30pm includes several panel presentations on the needs, challenges, and opportunities in community-centered care. Pre-registrations are required.

5. **Approve Minutes of May 19th, 2006 Council Meeting** No changes to summary. Minutes were accepted by consensus of Council members present.

6. **Other Business**

- *Successful Grant Application* Dick Wallace reported that Mt Prospect High School in Alton was awarded \$5,000. from the latest round of Belknap County Incentive Funds. These funds will be used to begin a drug and alcohol prevention training for all entering high school freshmen. Dick says this grant is intended as the match for another proposal submitted to the Lakes Region Charitable Foundation. They should hear soon regarding this LRCF request.
- *NHCTC Recovery Support Group* Ruth Castonguay said that she has been asked by administrators at the Community Technical College – Laconia campus to begin a support group for students who are in recovery. This group will run between 4 and 5pm so it can reach both day and evening students.
- *Impact on County Budget from County Nursing Home* In response to a question, Alan indicated the mandated changes at the Nursing Home would either likely be paid through a supplemental request to the taxpayers or by rolling these added costs into next year's budget. There will be a need for concentrated advocacy around the work of the Council so that the Council won't be at risk of oversight in future County budgets.
- *Domestic Violence in the Workplace* Today's presentation on the Belknap County Family Violence Prevention Task Force "DV in the Workplace" initiative was postponed as the speakers were not able to attend. This presentation will be rescheduled for a future Council meeting.

NEXT COUNCIL MEETING

WHEN: Friday, July 21st - 8-10am

WHERE: River Level Conference Room, Busiel Mill, Laconia