

**MEETING SUMMARY**

**COMMITTEE:** Council Meeting

**DATE:** Friday, September 9, 2005

**TIME BEGAN:** 8:05am **TIME ENDED:** 10:10am **FACILITATED BY:** Sarah Fox **SUMMARY BY:** Judy Buswell

**PRESENT:** Andre Paquette, Rich Moed, Alida Millham, Richard Wallace, Sarah Fox, Christie Corrigan, Kevin Washburn, Ruth Castonguay, Nancy Porosky, Gil Schohan, Mary Alice Warner **ABSENT:** Jim Carroll, Steve Fountain, Katy Kannaly-DeCarteret, Peter Michaud, Jim Pilliod, Leo Sanfacon, Susan Smith, **STAFF:** Alan Robichaud, Judy Buswell **GUESTS:** Diane Zawacki

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1. **Introductions** Diane Zawacki, Director of The Teen Center of the Lakes Region and the host of this month's meeting of the Belknap County Citizens Council, was introduced to Council members.
  2. **Additions/Amendments to Agenda** No changes
  3. **Workgroup Reports**
    - ♦ **BARJ (Balanced and Restorative Justice)** Andre Paquette reporting. They have not met since the last meeting of the Council; however, the Report Card to the community project is proceeding as planned.
    - ♦ **ABCD (Asset-Based Community Development)** Christie Corrigan reporting. No official report. Christie said she has just been matched with a mentee through the Belknap County Mentoring Initiative and that she has been a panelist for the Belknap County Restorative Justice Program. The need for panelists to be trained appropriately was stressed by members of the BARJ committee, raising the issue of developing an overall education plan on Community Justice principles for the service providers and other community networks.
    - ♦ **Prevention** Ruth Castonguay reporting. While the regular Prevention Workgroup did not meet, Ruth had a full report on this month's County observance of National Addiction and Recovery Month. About 70 people attended the Media Briefing at the County Complex on Sept 1. The agenda included a presentation by the County Commissioners of a Proclamation naming September as National Recovery Month in Belknap County; the unveiling of the *Voices of Recovery* project by Horizons Counseling Center; the launching of a Lakes Region Chapter of Friends of Recovery NH; presentation of Partner/Appreciation Awards; including one to Ernie Hunt, Nancy Porosky's father; an explanation of a petition urging NH legislative support for treatment and recovery; and finally comments from three members of the recovery community. Following this Media Briefing, about 40 participants walked to the Laconia Post Office where these petitions, signed by 220 people from 35 different communities in Belknap County and NH, were mailed to NH legislators and others.

Ruth described the *Voices of Recovery* CD that was just released. The Citizens Council supported and assisted Horizons Counseling Center in developing this CD that contains statements from 11 Lakes Region residents who are in recovery. Council members suggested that all Council members, County Commissioners, and members of the County Delegation should listen to this CD.

**ACTION: Alan will arrange with Jacqui Abikoff to access additional copies of this Voices CD for distribution to Council members and others in Council networks.**

The Council is also supporting and assisting in the development of the new Lakes Region Chapter of Friends of Recovery NH whose purpose is to promote advocacy for recovery and to provide a supportive network for people in recovery and their friends and families. The Council is eager to be involved with this new group as it brings a direct link to consumers.

Judy Buswell explained the Teen Recovery Statement project, a collaborative effort between the LHS Drama Club and Nassau Broadcasting. It was suggested that youth from Youth Services, Bureau,

Youth Assistance Program, and Juvenile Restorative Justice be expected to listen to this CD as part of their reparative contracts.

Judy noted that 6 churches throughout Belknap County will be highlighting Recovery and Addictions from the pulpit as part of their regular Sunday services, showing the support of the faith community for the recovery movement.

- ♦ ***Parenting Education/ Expectation*** This Recovery Month discussion segued into an energetic conversation about resources and expectations for parents, especially those whose children are involved in the Court system. Should diversion and Restorative Justice panelists recommend family mediation as part of reparative contracts? Alan noted that he will be organizing a meeting for providers (perhaps through JJAC) where - among other topics - referral needs and processes will be discussed. While it may not be possible to incorporate requirements for parents into diversion contracts, Alan hopes these connections will encourage providers to refer youth and families to the County's newest programs such as Family Mediation and Mentoring.

Agencies and organizations that currently offer parenting classes and trainings include Headstart, Lakes Region Community Services Council, Belknap County Cooperative Extension, and UpStream. Mary Alice Warner, who has a professional background in family systems therapy, noted that most families require a multi-faceted approach in order to address the numerous issues facing many families.

Judy Buswell noted that UNH President Hart will be visiting Belknap County on September 26 as part of her effort to understand the environment that supports each of the County's UNH Cooperative Extension offices so that resources can be placed and used wisely. As a member of the Belknap County Cooperative Extension Advisory Council, Judy provided the Durham office with all Council members names and addresses so that invitations to meet President Hart can be sent to them. There will be an opportunity during her visit for community input, a perfect time for Council members and others to cite the need in Belknap County for skilled parent educators such as those supported through Cooperative Extension. Anyone interested in attending (4-6:30pm at the Top of the Town Restaurant in Belmont) should RSVP as a Citizens Council member to Judy at 528-3185 or directly to the Belknap County Extension office, 527-5475.

The second PALS (Parents as Leaders in Society) will begin on October 15<sup>th</sup>, offering another rich opportunity to build a corps of trained and knowledgeable parents.

- ♦ ***Executive Committee*** Sarah Fox reporting.  
***Staff Job Descriptions*** As part of assessing staffing needs, the job descriptions for Council staff are being revised. Alan and Judy have been asked to identify their major job functions as the first step of this process.  
**ACTION: Alan and Judy will identify their major job functions for review by the Council's Executive Committee.**

***Council membership*** A Council member application from Rasim Gusinac, a Gilford resident, was reviewed. Rasim and his wife Umija, are refugees from Bosnia and have been very active with the refugee community in the Lakes Region. Mary Alice Warner, Ruth Castonguay, and Judy Buswell, all who know and have worked with Rasim, spoke highly of his qualifications and the assets he will bring to the Council. Sarah Fox made a motion to accept his application which was seconded by Andre Paquette. Motion carried.

Council members are urged to identify and encourage other appropriate people in their communities to consider Council membership. Alan will follow-up with any contacts that Council members provide.

***Annette Schmitt UnSung Hero Award*** Judy has updated application materials and is beginning the process for nominating candidates and selecting the 2006 winner of this award. Gil Schohan and Rich

Moed will serve as Council representatives on the selection committee, along with former Schmitt winner, Deb Williams, and Kathy Calvin, administrator of the Schmitt Trust Fund.

#### 4. Director's Report

- ◆ **Center for Civic Engagement** *The Underage Drinking and Impact on Education* forum is scheduled for Sept 20 and will include a panel discussion with Meg Jenkins, Gilford school nurse; Art Abelmann, Ass't Principal at Prospect Mountain High School; Mark Dotter, School psychologist, Winnisquam Regional High School; Sue Caldon, Nathan Brody Program; Ralph Dixon, Director of Guidance, Belmont High School; and an inmate from the LR Facility in Laconia. The forum will be held at Laconia High School at 6pm and will air over LRPA TV later. A second forum, *Underage Drinking: Societal Pressures*, is scheduled for October 25<sup>th</sup> at Prospect Mountain HS at 6:30pm. Panelists include Karen Blass, UNH Cooperative Extension; Tori O'Hara, sibling of someone addicted to drugs and alcohol; Jennifer Gagnon, Guidance Counselor and Challenge Course instructor; and two youth who are members of the Prospect Mountain youth group, C.O.O.L. C.O.O.L. will host a spaghetti dinner at 5pm before the panel discussion begins. Information on these two educational opportunities will be given to schools to share with their students and parents.
- ◆ **Presentations on the Council** Alan asked Council members to give him the names and contact information of PTA/PTO leaders, K-12. He would like to make presentations on the Citizens Council to these parent groups.  
**ACTION: Council members will provide Alan with the names and contact information for the leaders of PTA/PTO organizations in the K-12 schools in their communities by September 30<sup>th</sup>.**
- ◆ **2006 County Budget** is in motion. A preliminary budget will be submitted by September 19<sup>th</sup>. Currently the Council budget has several under-expended line items but Alan cautioned that we are heading into our busiest events season and we should end the year pretty close to targeted budget. Alan will append his budget with a list of encumbrances for these line items and asks Council members to provide him with any budget-related information they have by September 16<sup>th</sup>. Alan does not expect an increase in the Council budget for 2006.
- ◆ **Parents As Leaders in Society Program (P.A.L.S.)** The second PALS program begins on Saturday, October 15<sup>th</sup> with an UpStream-organized parenting conference in the morning. Keynote speaker, Julie Wilson, is a professor Alan met at the Harvard Leadership Seminar he attended this past summer. Ms Wilson, a faculty member at Harvard University's Kennedy School of Government will discuss issues confronting today's children and families along with community-based strategies used to address these issues. She will introduce the "Pathways Mapping Initiative Model", a program that examines school readiness and family economic structures. Alan is encouraging Council members and members of the LR United Way Board to attend the morning seminar and to assist in recruiting PALS participants.
- ◆ **Annual Convocation** Plans are well underway for the January 24<sup>th</sup> event at the Expo Center. Titled "Soup-A-Bowl: A Recipe for Families", this year's unique twist will be the involvement of schools around Belknap County who are making soup bowls that attendees will use during the meal time. Judge Edwin Kelley will be the keynote speaker. Council members received flyers on this event.
- ◆ **Mediation Grant** Alan is working with NH DJJS to use the balance of unspent grant funds for provider and citizen training opportunities. They hope to create CD/DVD disks with program information from providers around the County that can be used to update staff and clients.
- ◆ **Provider Forum** Alan would like to discuss the referral process and other provider needs with those who offer services to children and families, such as family mediation, and the new mentor program.

5. **Other Business** Council member Alida Millham, a NH State Representative, said that she has talked with the Chair and Vice Chair of the Children and Family Law Legislative Committee about developing a legislative study committee on the impact of Community Justice, a prelude to developing some legislation around promoting Community Justice principles in all counties in the state. Council members would like to discuss this opportunity further at the next Council meeting, on October 14<sup>th</sup>.

**ACTION: The Council's BARJ committee (Gil, Rich Moed, Peter Michaud, and Leo Sanfacon) should meet with Alida prior to Council meeting**

6. **Presentation and Tour of the Teen Center of the Lakes Region** Dianne Zawacki, Director of the Teen Center, provided a brief overview of the Teen Center and then conducted a tour throughout the two-story facility. The Teen Center began in 1999 through the efforts of Jim Carroll and PACT, UpStream, and Barbara Hunter of Belknap County Cooperative Extension as a response to the murder of local teenager, Bobby Mills. The program was first housed in the bottom of the Laconia Community Center but recently moved (March 2005) to the Education facility in the Sacred Heart Parish off Gilford Avenue. Initially the program was heavily grant-funded through county, state, and NH Charitable Foundation resources. In 2003, the Laconia School District managed the program through Project Extra, Laconia's after-school program. Currently Project Extra funds are only part of the revenue for the Center. Under Dianne's leadership, the average daily attendance has grown to about 40 teens. The Teen Center is staffed by five, including an Assistant Director. The Teen Center also has a receptionist and two tutors who offer homework assistance three afternoons a week.

The Center is open Monday through Friday beginning after school until 6:30pm and is open on Saturday evenings for movies and popcorn. The Center is also open on many Friday nights for specific activities such as "Girl Talk" with Laurie Dunleavy from New Beginnings and "Boy Talk" with John Egan and Brian Loanes from the Belknap County Juvenile Restorative Justice Program.

The Center's attendees are primarily middle school students. Efforts are now underway to expand outside Laconia. The Center just received a grant through the Belknap County Incentive Funds to purchase a bus that will be used to transport teens from Gilford and Belmont

The Teen Center is working to become the "Boys and Girls Club of the Lakes Region". This affiliation will provide a well known brand name, focused training for the staff; and credibility that will attract additional funding.

In addition to providing a safe haven for teens to "hang out", the Teen Center offers programs such as:

- ◆ ***Daniel Webster Adventure Program*** for about 12 primarily at-risk teens who participate in focused activities with Adventure staff. This program functions in Lakes Region schools and operates out of the Teen Center.
- ◆ ***NH Food Bank Operation Frontline***, a cooking and nutrition class, involves youth in making specific food items at the Teen Center. These teens are given ingredients to make the same food item at home for their families.
- ◆ ***Health Rocks*** is an alcohol and drug prevention program.
- ◆ ***New Hampton Media Enrichment Program*** ran for 5 full days this past summer and involved 12 teens who learned a variety of media skills at the New Hampton Prep School. The youth created a Public Service Announcement and a short documentary. Two participants were offered full scholarships to participate in next year's Performance Plus program on the New Hampton campus.

**NEXT MEETING**

**WHEN: Friday, October 14<sup>th</sup> 8-10am**

**WHERE: Prospect Mountain High School in Alton**  
**Directions were provided with the September Council's Agenda**  
**Please call the office if you need a new copy.**