

MEETING SUMMARY

COMMITTEE: Citizens Council

DATE: Friday, March 17, 2006

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

PRESENT: Kevin Washburn, Emily Clement, Christie Corrigan, Rich Moed, Dick Wallace, Mary Alice Warner, Sarah Fox, Jim Pilliod, Ruth Castonguay, Sue Smith, Nancy Porosky **COUNCIL ASSOCIATES:** Andre Paquette, Alida Millham
STAFF: Alan Robichaud, Judy Buswell **GUESTS:** Rick Keller (Council member applicant); Amy Flynn (NH Healthy Kids), Sandy Webber (Gilford Drug and Alcohol Task Force); Shannon Swett (CoRe Coalition); Linda Clairmont (Belknap-Merrimack Community Action Program); Mark Thompson (NH Juvenile Justice State Advisory Council).

1. **Welcome & Introductions** Welcomes extended to Council members and guests.
2. **Additions/Amendments to the Agenda** No changes
3. **Director's Report** *Alan Robichaud, Executive Director reporting*
 - ◆ ***Council Member application*** Rick Keller has submitted an application for Council membership. **ACTION: Alan will email summary of Rick's application to all Council members. Council members will review information in preparation for formal vote at the April 21st Council meeting.**
 - ◆ ***National Crime Victims' Rights Week (April 23-29, 2006)*** Attention called to the yellow handout that summarizes week's activities and offers specific Action Steps for Council members, including contacting local town libraries, distributing materials, attending and encouraging others to join them at a press briefing and a public presentation. This week is a collaborative effort of more than a dozen partners throughout Belknap County and is funded through a grant from the Office of Victims of Crime, US Department of Justice. **ACTION: Council members will review suggested Action Steps, identifying where they can assist, and communicate this information to Judy Buswell (528-3185) or Gil Schohan.**
 - ◆ ***Council Work Group Structure*** While the Council must remain flexible enough to accommodate unanticipated opportunities, its ongoing work must be organized in an appropriate manner around the principles of Community Justice. The current Workgroup structure: (1) Balanced and Restorative Justice, Prevention Workgroup, Community Development, and the Executive Committee reflect this goal. Individual Council members are not mandated to participate in Work Groups but they are expected to attend the monthly Council meetings. This current structure will be re-evaluated at a later date and any needed changes will be made.
 - ◆ ***Strategic Prevention Framework*** Regional and statewide changes in priorities bring added resources and focus to the Council's work. The NH Division of Public Health Services is beginning a "Strategic Prevention Framework" program to enhance statewide prevention infrastructure and service delivery. Developed by the federal agency SAMHSA, this framework follows a five-step process that will strengthen assessment, capacity building, planning, implementation, and evaluation processes. Currently the NH Division of Public Health Services is proposing "Prevention Districts" that should encourage greater collaboration and communication between Belknap and Carroll Counties. It is expected that a call for Request for Proposals (RFP) for these Prevention Districts will go out this coming fall, meaning we should begin conversations with Carroll County as soon as possible.
 - ◆ ***NH Public Health Network*** Agencies in the Lakes Region have been cooperating over the past few years to meet their non-profit requirements for Community Benefits Planning. This group of agencies and organizations is part of a statewide network of 14 public health partnerships. The Lakes Region network includes Belknap County and has Alan as a Board member. This group's mandate is responding to public health issues. Alan hopes their focus will also include substance abuse prevention, a significant public health issue. Of special concern is the current "Meth" problem. The

group has developed a mission statement and goals around Public Health, Disaster Readiness, and developing logical connections to the Strategic Prevention Frameworks initiative. Alan notes that both the NH Public Health Network and the Strategic Prevention Framework offer new ways for people to be involved. This group is still working on the “system” to receive and distribute grant funds. Ruth Castonguay would like a representative from the LR Public Health Network to join the Council’s Prevention Work Group.

ACTION: Alan will ask that a representative from the LR Public Health Network attend the Council’s Prevention Work Group meetings.

- ◆ **Chief Justice Broderick** Judge Martin and Alan recently met with Chief Justice Broderick of the NH Supreme Court to share outcomes from the national “Reclaiming Futures” project that included Belknap County and New Hampshire. Judge Martin is a member of the Reclaiming Futures Judicial Fellowship that over the past 5 years has developed a monograph on developing local judges as community conveners. One goal of the meeting with Judge Broderick was to encourage him to promote the development of problem-solving courts and to encourage other judges to develop community solutions to the problems they identify in their jurisdictions.
- ◆ **Judge Pamela Albee, Carroll County District Court** Now that the Belknap County Citizens Council is ending its funding agreement with the Annette Schmitt Fund, Judge Martin who is the trustee of these funds would like to replicate this model elsewhere in NH, beginning perhaps in Carroll County with Judge Albee as the convener.
- ◆ **Family Court in Belknap County** Because of an unanticipated jump in the initial timeline, Belknap County will begin Family Court in May 2006, several years ahead of the planned start date. A new Marital Master, Michael Garner, has been hired to replace Judge Martha Copithorne. Because of the advanced timeline, Family Court organizers in Belknap County are still looking for an appropriate facility.
- ◆ **Children and Family Law Committee, NH Legislature** Rep Alida Millham, also a Council Associate, and Alan recently met with about 7 members of the NH Legislative Children and Family Law Committee to share information about the Citizens Council and its project and accomplishments over the past 5 ½ years. It was emphasized that the Council is still at the beginning of “systems change” in Belknap County.
- ◆ **Data Needs in Belknap County** The Citizens Council has a small contract with John Cook, a formally trained program evaluator who has been volunteering with the Council for the past several years. Mr Cook will analyze the data needs in the juvenile justice system, including the costs of CHINS and Juvenile Delinquency cases. He will closely examine the disposition of funds and the rationale for these expenses. It is hoped this information will inform future decisions on optimal allocation of resources. John is working with the Data Committee, a sub-group of the Balanced and Restorative Justice Work group that will next meet on April 6th.

4. Work Group Reports

- ◆ **Balanced and Restorative Justice (BARJ)** Andre Paquette reporting. BARJ has several sub-groups that are working on specific tasks. The *National Crime Victims Rights Week* and the *Juvenile Justice Report Card to the Community* are two examples. The current goal of the Report Card committee is to establish a process for measuring the successes of the County’s juvenile justice system against the principles of Balanced and Restorative Justice. A Case Closing form has been developed and the County Restorative Justice, Youth Service Bureau, and Juvenile Probation and Parole are tracking their case closings using this form. 101 cases closed in 2005. Each Case Closing form has about 50-60 different pieces of information, such as the type of offense, residence and age of offender, type of rehabilitative program used, amount and type of victim restitution, and type and amount of community service. The committee is now analyzing this data and the results will be vetted through the Data Committee in preparation for preparing a Report that will be shared with County citizens.

The Report Card project plans to also track drug testing, indicating which interventions are effective. Andre said they are lacking the specific software but hope to access these tools through a national

source. Another goal is to more clearly understand how to develop “offender competencies”. This committee is currently looking to bring in a nationally recognized “training team” to help providers develop skills in building offender competencies. A third area of interest is exploring how to improve services and connections to teen crime victims, an under-reported constituency.

In response to a Council member question about a teen who appears to have fallen outside of the current juvenile system, it was suggested that if these cases are complicated by re-offenses during the assessment period, that the usual process may not be followed. Specific questions and comments can be directed to Program Administrators or Police Chiefs in these communities.

- ◆ **Community Development** Christie Corrigan reporting. This group has been recently reorganized and renamed from “Asset-Based Community Development (ABCD) to the Community Development Work Group. They are now meeting on the first Wednesday of the month and new members are welcomed. Alan Robichaud will provide an overview at the next meeting on initiatives connected to the Council that incorporate community development principles. His report will lead the group to establish priorities, goals and objectives. “Community Development” is an amorphous concept, part of the reason for the somewhat blurry focus that this group has had in the past. One suggested activity involves organizing community conversations throughout the County, either through Forums as in the past, or through other strategies.

- ◆ **Prevention** Ruth Castonguay reporting. The recent Parent Support Training Session attracted 20 people from Belknap County and elsewhere. Five of these are interested in beginning Parent Support Groups in Belknap County and four will attend Train-the-Trainer sessions.

The 2006 observance of National Recovery Month will be managed by the local chapter of Friends of Recovery, the Nathan Brody Program, and Horizons Counseling. Sue Flanders will chair this effort.

Recovery meetings include those that focus on young people: Sunday afternoon at 3pm at LRG Hospital and Thursday at noon at the Laconia Congregational Church. These groups are open to anyone and attendance slips for those who require them will be available.

Al Schneider, Public Information Chair for AA will speak at an upcoming meeting of the Juvenile Justice Advisory Council.

The Prevention Work Group is interested in promoting and expanding the “Project 7th Grade” initiative, directed by Dave Tryon at Winnisquam Regional Middle School and designed to help kids resist peer pressure to use drugs and alcohol.

The Prevention Work Group is open to all and meets on the first Tuesday of the month at 9am.

- ◆ **Executive Committee** Sue Smith reporting.
 - **Unified Action Items** This compilation of Action Items drawn from Work Group summaries will be emailed to Council members each month with the goal of keeping Council members up to date on Work Group activities.
 - **Council Member Meeting Attendance** Sue has followed up with those Council members with unexpired terms who have not been able to meet Council meeting attendance requirements. Her conversations resulted in resignations from two Council members. Sue read the resignation letters, both indicating that unexpected circumstances prevent full Council participation. The Council agreed to accept with regret the resignations of Peter Michaud and Katy DeCarteret.
ACTION: Sue will work with Alan to send formal acknowledgment on behalf of the Council to both Katy and Peter.
 - **Compliance with Public Meeting Law** Notices of all Council meetings are given to Angela Bell in the County Commissioner’s Office who posts them as mandated by public law.
 - **BARJ Work Group Rep on Executive Committee** Sue asked the BARJ workgroup to identify someone who will attend Executive Committee meetings.
 - **Council Meeting Agenda Template** The Executive Committee developed a template for Council meetings that includes the Executive Director Report at the beginning of each meeting.

5. **Guests**

♦ ***Shannon Swett – Outreach Coordinator, CoRe Coalition***

Alcohol Awareness Month The CoRe Coalition receives federal and state grant funds to reduce alcohol, tobacco, and other drug use by youth in Belknap County. Shannon invited Council assistance in support of Alcohol Awareness Month in April. This year's observance will promote Project Monitor, the countywide tip line that receives anonymous reports of underage drinking parties. This tip line is run through the Belknap County Sheriff's Office. Shannon also urges Council members to write "letters to the Editors of local papers" regarding underage drinking. Fact sheets outlining the underage drinking problem were distributed. The discussion also included information on the national advocacy effort opposing the advertising campaign of popular sports drinks. A portion of this advertising implies sports drinks/vitamin waters will reduce the hangovers young people experience after drinking. Council members were also encouraged to write letters challenging this type of marketing that so obviously targets young people.

Underage Drinking Forum CoRe is helping to organize the last in the Underage Drinking Series, scheduled for Tuesday, March 28th, 6:30-8pm, in the Gilford Middle School Library/Media Center.

Other There was a brief discussion on school policies related to reporting underage drinking and its effect on the confidentiality and anonymity of students. Where school personnel are involved in situations that appear to be in conflict with protecting the identity of youth who report ATOD problems, the first step is always to review current school policies with school administration, moving up as needed through the supervisory "chain-of-command". The CoRe Coalition is developing solid relationships with schools and is collaborating with them in prevention and assessment strategies; these relationships are being used to promote best practices.

- ♦ ***Council presentation*** Ed Engler, Editor of the Laconia Daily Sun received both the Council's Partnership and Associate Awards for publishing a series of columns that featured the nine winners of the Belknap County Champion for Children and Families Award, given at the County Convocation on January 24th. These Champion Awards were presented to County citizens who have devoted their energy and resources on behalf of Children and Families. Ed was thanked for his extra effort and collaboration on this, and other projects.

6. **Approval of Minutes of the Council (February 17, 2006)** Motion to accept as written made by Emily Clement; second by Nancy Porosky. Motion passed.

7. **Other Business**

By-Laws A motion to accept the membership guideline updates to the Council By-laws, presented and discussed at the February 17th Council meeting, was made by Rich Moed; second by Emily Clement. Motion carried.

8. **Public Comment** Mark Thompson, Chair of the NH Juvenile Justice State Advisory Group and a former administrator in the NH Attorney General's office, is interested in replicating the Citizens Council model and its emphasis on promoting Community Justice within Carroll and Coos Counties. As these two counties do not have adequate local capacity they are using "deeper end", out-of-county, and therefore more expensive options to rehabilitate juvenile offenders. Planning RFPs from the NH Div of Juvenile Justice Services to develop similar citizen participation models have been distributed. Mark will be discussing this replication initiative further with Alan and others.

NEXT COUNCIL MEETING

WHEN: Friday, April 21, 2006 8-10am

WHERE: River Level Room, Busiel Mill, Laconia