

**MEETING SUMMARY**

**COMMITTEE: Citizens Council**

**DATE:** Friday, November 18, 2005

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

**PRESENT:** Ruth Castonguay, Rich Moed, Andre Paquette, Nancy Porosky, Rasim Gusinac, Dick Wallace, Kevin Washburn, Sue Smith, Sarah Fox, Jim Pilliod **STAFF:** Alan Robichaud, Judy Buswell **GUESTS:** Emily Clement, Dave Tryon, Tom Croteau. **ABSENT:** Jim Carroll, Christie Corrigan, Steve Fountain, Katy Kanally-DeCarteret, Peter Michaud, Alida Millham, Leo Sanfacon, Gil Schohan, Mary Alice Warner

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1. **Dave Tryon, Winnisquam Chem-Free Program** Dave Tryon, the Coordinator of the Winnisquam School District Chem-Free activities (the sponsor of the longest running chem.-free graduation program in NH - 22 years), outlined their program goals and activities.
  - ◆ Original Chem-free graduation program has been expanded to include a Chem-free Prom initiative
  - ◆ Goal of this middle and high school initiative is to prevent youth from using alcohol, drugs, and tobacco
  - ◆ Ongoing impetus comes from a reported proliferation of teens from Tilton, Northfield, and Franklin who are using heroin and the recent teen deaths in NH, 60% of which are directly related to alcohol and drugs.
  - ◆ This WRSD program participates in the CoRe-originated Project Monitor, an anonymous tip line where parents, youth, and community members can alert law enforcement to underage drinking parties. Dave is currently working on recording radio spots with School Principals who will talk about the NH Party Host law
  - ◆ This WRSD program hosted a Drug Information Seminar on November 15 that was attended by 62 people. Local law enforcement showed displays with samples of drugs, explaining each drug and its impact on youth. "Crystal Meth", an ever-growing problem in NH, was discussed.
  - ◆ This Winnisquam youth group is a part of YNOT-NH (Youth Network Opposed to Tobacco) More than 100 middle-school youth are involved and recently created anti-tobacco posters which they gave to downtown businesses to display.
  - ◆ They are just beginning to develop a Teen Council, a vehicle for input by teens and where teens will take an active leadership role. They are planning information-seeking visits to Dover and to the Laconia Teen Center. The goal is not to impose an adult model on the teens, but rather to support youth in making positive decisions. David said, "We need to change the prevailing community norm that "alcohol" is needed to celebrate achievements and success, referencing the negative behaviors following the Red Sox winning the Pennant in 2004."
  - ◆ Their work is about changing the current norms and to reinforce that it is not the school, not the parents, and not the community's problem, but rather it is all three working together to make a difference.
  
2. **Council Nominations and Election Process** Two forms related to Council nominations are in the materials provided Council members. The goldenrod sheet is a form to nominate candidates for the Council Chair and Vice-Chair positions. These forms are to be returned to Council staff by November 30. Alan will then contact each nominee to assure each nominee is willing to be considered. Nominees will have an opportunity to discuss their goals and wishes at the December Council meeting; voting will occur at the January Annual Meeting. Five members, per Council by-laws, will rotate off the Council: Andre Paquette, Gil Schohan, Alida Millham, Jim Carroll, and Leo Sanfacon. These members can remain if they wish as a Council Associate, a non-voting position. Andre will continue with his juvenile justice projects as a Council Associate. There are concerns that as the terms of three members of the very active BARJ Workgroup are ending: Gil, Andre, and Leo, that mechanisms should be in place to assure continuity.

**ACTION: Council members will complete and return the Council Officer Nomination Form to Council staff by Wednesday, November 30.**

### 3. Work Group Reports

- ◆ ***Balanced and Restorative Justice (BARJ)*** Andre Paquette reporting.

Family Mediation Report: John Cook, Council volunteer and a data and evaluation specialist retained by the Youth Services Bureau to evaluate their Family Mediation Program, has finished his final report. Copies were given to each Council member and Council members were urged to read through this material. While this Mediation Program has never generated a huge response, those who have participated have found it useful. The BARJ group is discussing how to promote this program throughout Belknap County.

Juvenile Restitution Fund: This new fund, just recently launched, will provide up to \$250 to those victims of juvenile crime whose cases will take awhile to process through the Courts. Advocates can apply on behalf of victims for these funds. Juvenile offenders will be expected to reimburse this fund. The goal is to meet victim needs and to hold the offender accountable.

Victim Rights Brochure: Preparations are underway to develop an information piece that explains victim rights and resources and to outline the resolution process. It is expected that this form will be ready by the spring of 2006.

National Crime Victim Rights Week: A grant proposal has been submitted to the US Office of Victims of Crime to support a countywide observance of National Crime Victims Rights Week during the last week of April 2006. A sub-committee will plan some type of observance even if grant funds are not awarded.

Report Card Project: Andre commented that this Report Card project “is working and moving other aspects of Restorative Justice forward.....things are starting to gel”. The first case closing forms of court-involved youth they have received show an excellent record of victim restitution. These Case Closing forms are now being used with Pre-Court, Court Diversion, and Court-involved youth. The goal is to help families understand how to restore kids to productive citizenship. Changes of this scope take a lot of time.
- ◆ ***Asset-Based Community Development (ABCD)*** Sarah Fox reporting for Christie Corrigan. This workgroup, like some of the others, needs some modifications in structure and process. The Executive Committee has begun discussing how to modify this Work Group.

Refugee Re-Settlement: Rasim Gusinac said that he is assisting the Laconia Human Relations Committee, Carol Pierce, and Lutheran Social Services to assist six Russian families (13 adults and 8 children), who have recently moved to apartments in Laconia. Their needs are many and include finding employment, enrolling the children in school, and learning English and American customs. Some of them have health needs and finding interpreters to accompany them to healthcare appointments has been difficult. As healthcare providers are mandated by federal law to provide interpreters, it was suggested that this barrier be addressed through focused communication with healthcare providers and Lutheran Social Services facilitated by the Laconia Human Relations Committee. The Council needs to determine what – if any - role they can play in assisting refugees with re-settlement issues.

**ACTION: Rasim will continue to work with the Laconia Human Relations Committee and update the Council.**
- ◆ ***Prevention*** Ruth Castonguay reporting This Work Group, expanded to more than 15 members, met on November 1<sup>st</sup>. Work Group members are assisting with several on-going projects such as the Women’s Leadership Training Initiative and the Annual Meeting of Friends of Recovery – NH. They are promoting attendance at the New Futures-sponsored Community Leadership Initiative on February 14 and are exploring developing a Teen Recovery Support Group, similar to the one in Wolfeboro. Group members are now discussing the Prevention Work Plan.
- ◆ ***Executive Committee*** Sarah Fox reporting The job descriptions for Council staff have been completed. The committee discussed the process for nominating and electing Council officers. Discussions of the structure and mandate for the ABCD Workgroup will continue.

### 4. Executive Director’s Report

- ◆ ***Underage Drinking Seminars*** The 4<sup>th</sup> session is scheduled for 6pm on Tuesday, November 29<sup>th</sup> at Belmont High School. The topic for this session is Public Safety, and will include a panel discussion.

- ◆ **C.O.O.L** group in Alton received a \$1,000 Youth Ventures grant to promote the growth of C.O.O.L. at Prospect Mountain High School.
- ◆ **Governor’s Commission on Alcohol and Drug Abuse Prevention, Intervention and Treatment** : Alan has been appointed to this Commission. Joe Diament of New Futures is the new Chair. Meetings will be quarterly. The NH legislature has given \$1.5 million to promote substance abuse treatment and prevention programs in NH each year of the current biennium.
- ◆ **Federal Budget Cuts** Alan shared information from news broadcasts heard this morning. *Complete information follows as reported in the Connect For Kids list serve received in Council offices on 11/18:*

“After heated arguments late in the night and a highly partisan vote the House approved its budget plan with cutbacks in federal funding for Medicaid, Food Stamps, child support, foster care, student loans and other programs that serve children and families. The vote was 217 to 215, with 14 Republicans, one Independent and 200 Democrats opposing the budget bill. The House budget plan cuts education funding for the first time in a decade, freezes Pell grants for lower-income college students for the fourth year in a row, and flat funds the Low Income Home Energy Assistance Program, which subsidizes heating bills for low-wage families.

<http://www.washingtonpost.com/wp-dyn/content/article/2005/11/17/AR2005111700931.html> Voices for America’s Children estimates that one in every five dollars of the House cuts would be from programs serving vulnerable children – a full 19.5 percent of the total cuts in the House bill.

[http://www.voicesforamericaschildren.org/Content/NavigationMenu/Childrens\\_Policy/KandC2005/Kids\\_andCongress.htm](http://www.voicesforamericaschildren.org/Content/NavigationMenu/Childrens_Policy/KandC2005/Kids_andCongress.htm) The next step? The House and Senate will try to negotiate a common budget bill – a tall order given the specific differences, and the politics, behind each of the bills.”
- ◆ **County Budget Hearing** There will be a public hearing on the 2006 budget at 7pm on December 5<sup>th</sup> . Following this hearing each County department reviews their budgets with specific sub-committees. This year, if approved, the Schmitt Fund will pay 25% with the County picking up 75%. Alan did not request an increase in the 2006 budget, just permission to shift resources between existing line items to allow such additions as professional consulting funds for program evaluation.
- ◆ **Adolescent Treatment Initiative** Council staff will meet with Dr. Rick Wilson, Tom Clairmont, Sue Caldon, and Shari Landry to discuss strategies for incorporating primary health care into the screening and treatment of adolescents who have substance abuse problems.
- ◆ **Juvenile Justice Directory** Youth Services Bureau has permission to use remainder Mediation grant funds to develop a Resource Directory of programs and services available for youth and families. Completed directories will be given to public libraries, schools, Laconia District Court, Juvenile Probation and Parole Officers, and faith-based communities. The long-term effort to develop an electronic version of HealthWorks2, by a local coalition, “is a dead issue” because of state plans to have a 211 Resource Directory. Some of it will be salvaged through ServiceLink information and referral structures.
- ◆ **Council Recruitment** Alan introduced Emily Clement, the Council’s newest applicant. Her application is included in the Council packet. The formal acceptance vote is scheduled for the December Council meeting. Additional members are needed to replace those who are leaving. Currently there are two others who are interested.

**5. Other Business**

- ◆ **Public Forum in Gilford** to discuss changes in the rules for Special Education is scheduled in two sessions, 3:30 and 5:30pm on December 8<sup>th</sup> at Gilford High School. Sarah Fox will email further details.
- ◆ **NH Early Learning Guidelines** This publication was just released by the NH Dept of Education and the Division of Children, Youth and Families. Sarah Fox will provide copies for the Council.

**NEXT MEETING**

**WHEN:**        **Friday, December 9 at 8am**

**WHERE:**       **River Level Meeting Room, Busiel Mill, downtown Laconia**

**HAPPY THANKSGIVING TO YOU AND YOUR FAMILIES!**