

**CITIZENS COUNCIL
MEETING OF APRIL 21, 2006**

SUMMARY

Council Members: Sue Smith, Ruth Castonguay Kevin Washburn, Christie Corrigan, Nancy Porosky, Emily Clement, Sarah Fox, Rasim Gusinac, Rich Moed, Micheline Roy, Mary Alice Warner, Jim Pilliod.
Council Associate: Andre Paquette **Guests:** Laurie Belanger, Rick Keller, Sandra Webber, and Susan Cagle, Joy Armstrong, Gary Hammond and 6 members of the LHS Drama Club. **Staff:** Judy Buswell, Alan Robichaud.

Sue Smith convened the meeting at 8:05 AM. Welcome and introductions were made of guests. There were no changes or additions to the agenda.

Executive Director's Report

Alan Robichaud spoke on several activities and initiatives in which the Council is engaged.

State Advisory Group (SAG) meeting on 4/13/06 – Andre Paquette, Rich Moed and Alan met with the SAG here at the Council. The conversation was invited by the SAG as there is interest in having the Council submit a proposal to the state for the use of Title V (of the Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention Act). Rather than applying for program funding at this time, the Council's greatest need is to develop a data system. Because of the multiple players in the juvenile justice system, the Council has no other way to report data than to request reports from providers. The state has no way of giving the Council, or its providers data to determine effectiveness of state and federal resources. We discussed our needs in this area and the SAG requested that we submit a concept paper to that end. They indicated that no one had submitted a proposal for Title V dollars in the latest round of grants.

Strategic Prevention Frameworks (SPF) – Alan updated the Council from the last meeting. The Council, in conjunction with the Lakes Region Partnership for Public Health (LRPPH), will be hosting a Belknap and Carroll County planning discussion for how to approach future prevention grants as proposed by the Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration (SAMHSA). With funding becoming increasingly strained, the federal government and state are demanding more coalition collaboration to access resources. Susan Laverack, new staff person with the LRPPH, will serve as convenor of this forum. This is a chance to align substance abuse and addiction issues with public health planning as it is one of the major healthcare issues confronting our youth today.

Drug Awareness Forum – Northfield (4/13/06) – Alan moderated a panel of local experts on Drug Awareness held at the Pines Community Center in Northfield. Sponsored by UpStream, the panel consisted of Judge Ned Gordon (Franklin district Court), Rep. Joy Tilton, Jeff (a person in recovery), Chief Scott Hilliard (Northfield Police Department), Lisa Remick (DEA), Susan Venus (Assistant Merrimack County Attorney), Jacqui Abikoff (Horizons Counseling), and Carolee Longley (Winnisquam School District). While the session was sparsely attended, a couple of parents indicated interest in becoming involved in the development of Family Support Groups in the area. **Action If Council members would like to have the Council host similar forums in each of our communities, please let Alan know. He will work with UpStream to develop these throughout the county.**

National Crime Victims Rights Week (NCVRW) – Judy discussed the numbers of activities and events scheduled for NCVRW observance the week of April 23. She referenced the silhouettes of "silent victims" standing in the room and how they, along with ample collaterals, will be used to promote the week-long efforts. Judy had written, and the Council received, a \$5,000 public awareness campaign grant which has been matched with other resources. A large, ambitious planning committee has put together a remarkable series of events and materials for this observance. A Media Briefing will take place on Monday, April 24 at 11:00 AM in the Busiel Mill to kick-off the week's activities. Council members were encouraged to attend. Special thanks to Gil Schohan who is chairing this committee, as well as to Judy and the entire committee. David Stamps has put together a fantastic DVD which will be used for presentations throughout the week.

Voices of Youth and Families ~ New Hampshire is an organization which the Council is supporting through initial organizing resources in that Alan is assisting in setting up a statewide structure through which the organization may coordinate its activities with other youth and families across the state. Attendance at monthly meetings is gradually increasing and Jen Gagnon, a Belmont parent who attended a national organizing meeting for this affiliated group of the Reclaiming Futures Community Fellowship is co-facilitator.

Legislative and Budgeting Issues impacting youth, families, and services were discussed. There is growing threat to the funding needed by our service providers. Recent local news articles as well as alerts from Washington and from our own State House, speak the increased challenges from a future funding perspective. This is an important reason for the Council to pursue its data project and for us to become more vocal and aggressive in reaching out to our elected officials to promote the necessity for services for children, youth and families.

Parenting From the Inside Out – Mary Alice Warner spoke about a recent meeting with officials of the New Hampshire Corrections Lakes Region Facility and our diversion programs. The aim is to develop a parenting exchange between inmates who have completed a parenting course through the Family Connections program at the prison facility and parents of youth attending our community diversion programs. Mary Alice is leading this effort between the prison, our providers and the Council. This initiative will be affiliated with the Council’s Prevention Work Group.

Viewpoints

Joy Armstrong and Gary Hammond were accompanied by six members of the Laconia High School Drama Club. These young people were the voices of the Council-produced CD titled – Viewpoints, young people narrating real young person’s personal stories of addiction and recovery. Segments of their work were listened to by the Council and they were each presented with certificates of thanks for they terrific work and contribution to the issue of adolescent addiction. **Action Council members were given a copy of the CD for listening and passing along to others. They were challenged to see if the CD could be passed along to as many as five other people. That would reach 100 people if everyone was successful!**

Work Group Reports

Balanced and Restorative Justice (BARJ) - Andre Paquette reported on the status of the Juvenile Justice Report Card project. Patti Moed is working with Andre and Rich Moed to prepare the written copy that will be given to the publisher. It is hoped that the report card will be completed by the end of May. Andre also distributed the Victims’ Right brochure developed by our providers, designed by Lisa Maria Sposta of Youth Services Bureau and produced by the Council. A distribution plan is being worked out and input was given by meeting participants. **Action Council members are asked to send ideas on distributing these brochures throughout the county to Alan. Public release will debut at the media briefing on Monday, April 23.**

Community Development – Christie Corrigan indicated that the work group will move its meeting time to the first Wednesday of the month at 4:00 PM instead of 8:00 AM to allow more members to attend. The listing of ideas on “How to be an Effective Council Member” is being reviewed for future dissemination to Council members and perhaps be converted into a promotional piece for the Council to encourage others to engage in community activities for children and families.

Prevention – Ruth Castonguay spoke about how the work Mary Alice is doing at the prison contributes to the overall environment in which prevention takes place. It’s all encompassing and relates to many venues. The Prevention Work Group does not relegate itself only to prevention of alcohol, tobacco and other drugs. Ruth then spoke about efforts underway to develop parent support groups throughout the county. She has recruited other families to sign up for facilitator training and is working closely with Friends of Recovery/NH (FOR/NH) to bring more support to families. This initiative relates longer-term to the *Voices* project mentioned above.

Executive Committee – Sue Smith reported that the Executive Committee had reviewed Council member applications for Rick Keller and Laurie Belanger who will be voted on during this meeting and that there is

a pending application from Sandra Webber which the Committee will review at its May meeting.

She asked Emily Clement to report on the status of the Summer Outdoor Theatre project. Emily stated that plans are progressing and she has had conversations with the Main Street program, the Teen Center, and the Laconia Police Department. She also is considering that non-profit agencies would have information tables set up with literature on their services. Her current thinking is that movies would be shown two Saturdays a month in the parking lot adjacent to the Sundial Shop in downtown Laconia. **Action** If Council members are interested in learning more or assisting with this project, contact Emily directly.

Action Sue Smith recommended that future Unified Action Items contain notification of when each work group will conduct it next meetings.

Council Member Applications

The Executive Committee has reviewed and brought forward member applications for Rick Keller (Meredith) and Laurie Belanger (Gilford). On a **motion** made by Rich Moed, seconded by Jim Pilliod, Rick Keller was unanimously elected to the Council. On a **motion** by Nancy Porosky, seconded by Jim Pilliod, Laurie Belanger was unanimously elected to the Council. The decision of the Council to elect these members will be conveyed to the County Commissioners.

There was general discussion regarding orientation of new Council members. Part of the recruitment process now involves candidates' informational sessions with Alan and Judy. It was suggested that new members may wish to attend each of the Work Groups before further orientation is provided so they will have a better understanding of the full operation of the Council. Additional informational sessions can and will be scheduled as requested by individual Council members.

Approval of Minutes of March 17 Council meeting

On a **motion** made by Emily Clement, seconded by Mary Alice Warner, the minutes were unanimously accepted as written.

Other Business and Public Comment

Sarah Fox requested member identification of any respite care resources Council members may know about. She had recently attended a meeting of the Children Care Management Collaborative which is looking at this issue.

Sarah also indicated that the Department of Education will be conducting Individual Education Plan (IEP) facilitation training. IEP's outline what services children with special needs will receive from the school district. Good facilitation of IEP's can establish positive relationships between families and the school district and reduce filings for due process hearings. This training is distinguished as being for facilitators as opposed to the Parent Information Center's IEP advocacy training. For further information, contact Sarah.

Susan Cagle introduced herself again as a Family Educator for the UNH Cooperative Extension in Belknap County. Many of the things Susan will be doing complement the work of the Council. She is pleased to be here and looks forward to working with us all. We will be exploring the potential for the Parents As Leaders in Society (PALS) leadership series to be offered under the auspices of Susan's office.

Jim Pilliod mentioned a recent Belmont High School Career Day and the need to bring Tobacco prevention into discussions of underage drug use. We work closely with CoRe, who does county-wide prevention programs and education. Tobacco is high on their radar and they recently conducted a Kick-Butts campaign and other smoking-related events and promotional activities throughout the year.

Adjournment

By consensus, the Council meeting was adjourned at 10:10 AM.

Respectfully submitted,

Alan Robichaud

NEXT MEETING

DATE: Friday , May 19, 2006

TIME: 8:00 AM to 10:00 AM

LOCATION: Busiel Mill, River Level