

*Belknap County Citizens Council on Children and Families*

**MEETING SUMMARY**

**Belknap County Citizens Council on Children and Families**

**DATE:** Friday, November 16, 2007

**TIME BEGAN:** 8:05am **TIME ENDED:** 10:00am **FACILITATED BY:** Sarah Fox **SUMMARY BY:** Judy Buswell

**PRESENT:** Micheline Roy, Nancy Porosky, Amy Hall, Rich Moed, Christie Corrigan, Rasim Gusinac, Emily Clement, Sue Smith, Gil Schohan, Sarah Fox, Laurie Belanger, Katie Brandt **GUESTS:** Tom Oetinger, Chelsea Gleeson, Amy Myers, Barbara Myers, Judge Martin, Kate Miller **COUNCIL ASSOCIATES:** Jim Pilliod, **STAFF:** Alan Robichaud, Judy Buswell

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1. **Welcome and Introductions:** Welcome extended to those guests who were present at beginning of this meeting: Chelsea Gleeson, Amy and Barbara Myers from Gilford, Kate Miller from Meredith, and Tom Oetinger, former Police Chief in Laconia.
2. **Additions/Amendments to the Agenda** No amendments or additions to the Agenda
3. **Special Recognition to Tom Oetinger** - *Christie Corrigan* Christie presented Tom Oetinger with a glass desk plaque inscribed with a quotation as a token of appreciation for the “very effective relationship” that the Citizens Council has enjoyed with him and the Laconia Police Department while he was Chief. In this role, Tom “significantly raised the bar on how community policing can be conducted”. Tom was always a consistent, creative, and productive partner with all Citizens Council initiatives. The Council will miss his leadership and wishes him well in his new position with Granite State College. In accepting the award, Tom said he “will continue to be interested in Council activities”.
4. **Discussion with Gilford High School students** – *Laurie Belanger* Laurie, who is a Guidance Counselor at Gilford High School, has been looking for strategies to involve students in community-oriented activities. Gilford, like other schools across the Lakes Region, is involved with the Rachel’s Challenge Program, begun in memory of Rachel Scott, the first student killed in the Columbine shootings in April, 1999. Gilford students were completely captivated by the first assembly offered students and they quickly enrolled in the follow-up component, Friends of Rachel (F.O.R.) F.O.R. invites students to pledge to do “random acts of kindness in their schools and communities”. The Gilford F.O.R. Group is very active with four student groups, each group led by students and mentored by members of the GHS faculty. As one of the F.O.R. faculty advisors, Laurie Belanger encouraged two GHS student leaders to explain this program to Council members. Students Chelsea Gleeson and Amy Myers clearly and enthusiastically explained the various activities that the GHS F.O.R. Group is now doing. Both girls, and Amy’s mother, Barbara, said that this program has made a very powerful impression on many, many students who are now actively trying to emulate and spread some of Rachel’s kindnesses.  
  
Amy and Chelsea are also interested in bringing together students from other area schools who are also involved with F.O.R. programs. Student leaders should emerge from these gatherings who can provide a youth voice for a variety of entities such as the Belknap County Citizens Council, School Boards, and other municipal committees.
6. **Director’s Report** – *Alan Robichaud reporting (Written report is included at the end of these minutes)*  
Alan commented on several items in his report:
  - ***2008 Convocation*** After some special negotiations with the owners, this annual event will be held again at the Opechee Inn (formerly the Expo) on Jan 22<sup>nd</sup>. Meal tickets are \$15.00/adults and \$10.00 for youth <= 12 years. Close to 300 attendees are expected.

- **Victims Rights** Committee members are developing a process so that victims of juvenile crime can complete and return the newly designed Satisfaction Surveys to the Council. The Council Victims Rights Committee will study these surveys as part of developing further improvements in addressing victim needs.
- **Policy Summit** Hopefully this gathering of identified stakeholders can create future partnerships with the Citizens Council to work on CHINS, Abuse and Neglect, and Delinquency issues. Some type of Summit is planned for early 2008.
- **The Friends Program** Because of lack of funds, The Belknap Mentoring Initiative, run by the Friends Program and funded through a federal grant, will be reduced via attrition. They will not be able to make additional matches but will maintain one staff member to support the current matches. These ongoing sustainability challenges require us to look carefully before starting any new programs. Instead we need to use existing resources. Examples cited included offering adult companionship for youth through such programs as the Boys & Girls Club of the Lakes Region, Belknap County 4-H, the Follow The Child Initiative, and church youth groups.
- **Community Prevention Coalition (CPC)** This coalition, organized to include both Belknap and Carroll Counties in prevention-oriented assessments and programs, has just hired Colleen McDermott from Sandwich as the Director. She is finishing up a Master's Degree in Public Health from Johns Hopkins University. CPC will share a program Evaluator with the Concord Substance Abuse Coalition. Concord, and Carroll and Belknap Counties are part of ten separate districts in NH organized by the State to carry out community assessments and deliver substance abuse prevention and treatment programs.
- **Program Integration** Youth Services Bureau and the County Restorative Justice Programs are continuing discussions around a potential merger of services. They recently made a presentation to the County Commissioners who, while they did not discourage this initiative, did indicate that the onus for promoting this concept to county taxpayers would be on these two programs and the Citizens Council. There are some current misperceptions around the current funding of these two programs. There are also ongoing needs to promote restorative, rather than punitive approaches to juvenile crime.
- **County Budget Hearing** The first step in the 2008 budgeting process will be a public hearing on Dec 10<sup>th</sup> with Delegation members present. Review sub-committees will then be appointed to do a close budget review with each of the County departments etc.

## 7. Work Group Reports –

- **Balanced and Restorative Justice (BARJ)** No report
- **Prevention** – *Micheline Roy reporting* This group is continuing to focus on developing a community response to the Follow The Child Initiative and other similar, individualized educational programs now being offered in most Lakes Region schools. The Appalachian Mountain Teen Project will facilitate a series of community Focus Group discussions.
- **Executive Committee** – *Sarah Fox reporting*  
 (1) *Annual Meeting* It was agreed to hold the Council Annual Meeting as part of the regular Council meeting on Friday, December 21<sup>st</sup>. The meeting will include some form of breakfast and will include election of Council officers.  
**ACTION: Micheline Roy will organize food preparation for the breakfast.**  
 (2) *Council Retreat* This event will be a full-day meeting on Friday, January 18<sup>th</sup>, the regular Council meeting date. Retreat goals are to:
  - Identify three primary goals for the Council in 2008,
  - Form stronger connections among Council members, and
  - Inspire and motivate Council members to participate in Council projects.

Sue Smith offered the use of the Woodside facility at The Taylor community for this Retreat. Sarah indicated that full participation by all Council members, including all participants staying for the duration of the Retreat, is needed in order to accomplish Retreat goals. It was agreed that this day-long event should be facilitated by an outside professional. Laurie Belanger reported on the research she had done on several potential facilitators. We should expect to pay up to \$2,500 to \$3,000 for this project which will include some preliminary work by the Facilitator with Council members and a wrap-up summary. It was agreed that the County Commissioners should be invited to the “working lunch” portion of this Retreat.

**ACTION:**

- **Laurie will continue her preparations in selecting a professional facilitator.**
- **The Retreat Committee will continue to plan this event.**
- **Sarah Fox will contact all Council members, asking for commitments to attend for the entire day.**

*(3) New Council Members* The applications of Kate Miller from Meredith, Sandy McLaughlin from Gilford, and Rep Jim Pilliod of Belmont for Council membership were reviewed. Jim, currently a Council Associate, will return as a Council member. He has remained very active in Council activities throughout this past year as an Associate. Ms. Miller has a background in community organizing and advocacy and Ms. McLaughlin is a retired school administrator. A motion to accept all three as Council members, with terms beginning in January 2008, was made by Rich Moed; second provided by Emily Clement. Motion carried. Welcome Kate, and Sandy and welcome back, Jim!

*(4) Council Elections* Nomination forms for 2008 Council officers (Chair and Vice Chair) are due by Nov 26<sup>th</sup>. Alan will contact each nominee and elections will be held at the December 21<sup>st</sup> meeting.

**ACTION: Alan will prepare a slate of officers in preparation for Council elections on December 21<sup>st</sup>.**

8. **Approve Minutes of August 17, 2007 meeting of the Citizens Council** A motion to approve these minutes as written was made by Rich Moed with a second offered by Micheline Roy. Motion carried.
9. **Public Comment** No member of the general public attended this Council meeting.
10. **Other Business** Katie Brandt from the NH Children’s Trust Fund is working with Deb Rosato of the Born Learning Initiative to distribute parent education materials to five libraries in Belknap County. These resources were prepared through the NHCTF and will be a wonderful resource for this area.

**NEXT COUNCIL MEETING (ANNUAL MEETING)**

**DATE: December 21, 2007**

**TIME: 8am-10am**

**LOCATION: River Level Conference Room, Busiel Mill, Laconia**

*Director's Report*

*Citizens Council Meeting*

*November 16, 2007*

CATEGORY	TOPIC & SPONSOR	STATUS
<b>Community Forums</b>	Convocation - 2008	Save the date: January 22 <sup>nd</sup> and 23 <sup>rd</sup> . <b>Will be held at the Expo Center again.</b>
<b>Initiatives</b>	Victims Rights Committee	Developing a Victims' Satisfaction Survey. <b>Checking on best way to return mail</b>
	Legislative Initiative	<b>Awaiting a bill number to be assigned. Alida has acquired sponsors. Thanks Alida!</b>
	Policy Summit	To identify needs of children and families in Belknap County and plan future collaboration among state, county and local partners. <b>Laying the seeds</b>
	The Friends Program (Mentoring)	<b>Notification of cut-back and attrition.</b>
<b>Coalitions</b>	Community Prevention Coalition (CPC)	<b>Coalition Coordinator has been hired and Evaluator interviews have been concluded. Decision pending.</b>
	Safe Schools Coalition (WRSD)	<b>School is planning a follow-up youth forum.</b>
	Program Integration Committee	Youth Services Bureau and Restorative Justice examining potential consolidation scenarios. <b>Meeting with County Commissioners went well. Work continues to develop stable funding source for Juvenile Justice.</b>
	Community Assessment	Discussions continue with United Way and Lakes Region Partners for Public Health – Development of a comprehensive community assessment and plan
<b>Council Business</b>	Council Recruitment and Community Outreach	Membership Committee to activate recruitment initiatives. <b>Three candidates brought before you today.</b>
	Chapter 263 – Funding for youth services	Monitoring Commission progress on legislation. Ongoing to June 30, 2008
	CFY '08 Budget	<b>County Budget Public Hearing scheduled for December 10th at 7:00 PM at the County Complex.</b>
	Council Retreat	<b>In the works – Laurie Belanger has been scouting out facilitator options.</b>