

Belknap County Citizens Council on Children and Families

MEETING SUMMARY

COMMITTEE: Citizens Council

DATE: Friday, May 18, 2007

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

PRESENT: Mary Alice Warner, Betty Anson, Micheline Roy, Sarah Fox, Emily Clement, Gil Schohan, Laurie Belanger, Rasim Gusinac, Sue Smith **STAFF:** Alan Robichaud, Judy Buswell **GUESTS:** Jeff St Cyr, Alton School Board member and student at Prospect Mountain High School; Phyllis MacDonald, Laconia; Steve Fay, Laconia; Cindy Davis, Manager of the Carroll County Juvenile Justice Initiative; Rep Beth Arsenault and member of Laconia School Board; Judge Willard Martin; Katie Brandt, Barnstead & Council applicant; Amy Hall, Belmont & Council applicant

1. **Welcome and Introductions** Introductions were offered by all present. Welcome extended to numerous guests. No additions or changes to the Agenda.
2. **Council Business** Sarah noted the recent resignations of three Council members, each for different but legitimate reasons: Sandra Webber, Laconia; Richard Keller, Meredith; and Ruth Castonguay, Laconia. A motion to accept these resignations with regret was made by Gil Schohan with second by Sue Smith. Motion carried. Ruth's resignation leaves the Vice Chair position vacant. At this point there are no By-law provisions for replacing mid-term vacancies in Council office positions. Sarah asked that nominations, including self-nominations from Council members, for this vacant Vice Chair position be given to Alan.
ACTION: Council members who are interested in this Vice Chair position or who wish to nominate another Council member should contact Sarah or Alan Robichaud by June 8.
3. **Special Presentation** – *Jeff St Cyr* St Cyr, a Senior at Prospect Mountain High School (PMHS) in Alton, was asked to share his experience as the only elected school board member in Belknap County who is also a high school student. Jeff who is also President of his senior class at PMHS, an athlete, and a Boy Scout, is “very committed to community service and to his hometown of Alton.” While Jeff has been interested in school board membership for awhile, he needed to wait until he turned 18 and could become a registered voter, which he did on the morning of his birthday in December 2006. He began attending school board meetings prior to the election and started an initiative to place a large road sign for PMHS at the end of the entrance. Jeff announced his candidacy in January 2007 and following an active campaign, including appearances at the Alton Land Fill, he was elected to the School Board in March 2007. Throughout his campaign, Jeff, along with five or so other youth, continued to attend school board meetings. His campaign platform included five areas - the need: (1) for open and transparent governing/management of Alton schools (2) to build strong identity for Alton Central School (3) to better align the curriculum for Alton and Barnstead so that all students come equally prepared to PMHS (4) to hire a school Superintendent (5) to design a process for effective feedback from the community, including distributing a “report card” on the two schools. He said that the management and oversight of school facilities is a large and ongoing concern.

As a member of the Alton School Board, he is a designated member of the PMHS school board that also includes representatives from the Barnstead School Board. Although Jeff will graduate in June from PMHS, he plans to attend St Anselm College (Manchester, NH) in the fall and commute back to Alton to attend school board meetings. After college graduation, Jeff plans to live in Alton.

As Jeff feels that students “can help improve Board” functions and outcomes, he encourages other school districts to take advantage of the NH RSA that allows non-voting student representatives on school boards. Gilford is the only district in this area that has a student member on their school board. He says adults can develop “meaningful student involvement” by listening to youth, validating their opinions, authorizing student participation in community functions, guiding critical analyses of their community involvement; and

mobilizing resources that allow students to take active leadership and participatory roles in their communities.

When asked why he thinks he was motivated to be actively engaged in his community, he points to his parents who are both educators and who set good examples for him and supporting him along the way. He added that “connections with peers” who are community minded is also a big motivating factor for other youth.

When asked if there were one “civic issue” that affects families and kids, he quickly responded by saying that kids need a “safe, constructive, and supervised place to go during non-school hours”. Many Alton youth now travel to Concord “to hang out at the malls, etc.” on weekends, citing that their new association with Barnstead youth who live close to Concord as part of the reason Alton youth are now driving to Concord. He noted that an Alton church had started a “teen center” but because of a lack of adult volunteers, it has been difficult to keep this initiative alive.

4. **Director’s Report** - *Alan Robichaud* Alan reviewed the one-page Director’s Report (*see last page*) given to all Council members, highlighting several items:

- ◆ ***Follow The Child***. Alan says that the emerging collaboration with the “*Follow The Child*” initiative now underway in many schools, including Laconia as a Pilot Site, “is very exciting” and holds great potential for aligning community activities with school goals. Currently he is working with Laconia Schools Superintendent Bob Champlin, UpStream, and Lakes Region United Way to steer community activities in a direction that is compatible with the 8 defining student aspirations that Laconia is beginning to use as part of educating the “whole child”. The “*Follow The Child*” program, promoted by Lyonel Tracey, NH Commissioner of Education, is supported by the Quaglia Institute in incorporating the 8 student aspirations within school planning. www.qisa.org
- ◆ ***The CoRe Coalition*** Jena Vincent, formerly with Child and Family Services of NH has been hired as the Assistant Director to work with Karen Morton-Clark; Lisa Mure, will assist with grantwriting. The CoRe Executive Committee is revamping the By-Laws to incorporate a countywide presence for CoRe.
- ◆ ***Strategic Prevention Frameworks*** The first meeting of the newly appointed “Oversight Board” that includes, Mike Green, Judge Martin, Elaine de Mello, Lisa Morris, and Alan will be on May 29th. SPF funding comes through the State and will be used to develop a bi-county (Belknap and Carroll Counties) prevention effort.
- ◆ ***Rachel’s Challenge*** This program includes presentations by student survivors from the Columbine Shootings who talk about the aspirations of Rachel, the first student killed in this school tragedy several years ago in Colorado. As this program is very powerful and has been appearing in several schools in Belknap County, Council members are encouraged to attend future presentations. Mary Alice Warner noted the very excellent presentation given to Inter-Lakes teens by tri-athlete Todd Crandall who is also a former addict. She encourages other community and school groups to attend any of his future presentations.
- ◆ ***Council Award*** The Citizens Council was awarded the Presidents’ Community Partner Award by he NH Community Technical College at the recent Campus Compact Annual Awards luncheon.

5. **Work Group Reports**

- ◆ **BALANCED AND RESTORATIVE JUSTICE (BARJ)** – *Gil Schohan & Alan Robichaud reporting*
The BARJ workgroup has added new community members and is now reviewing the juvenile justice system in Belknap County to develop a sharper focus for the direction it should pursue in 2007 and beyond.

Work continues in the Victim sub-committee in support of victims of Juvenile Crime. Victim Surveys are ready for distribution and a Seminar is planned on October 18th for School Crisis Teams. The collateral materials, including guidelines for using the Victims Rights DVD and life-size cutouts

developed during a countywide observance of National Crime Victims Awareness Week in April 2006, are available to the community by contacting New Beginnings.

The Data sub-committee is analyzing the statistics generated by the four providers of juvenile justice services during 2006 in preparation for writing the 2006 Report Card to the Community that will be distributed in September 2007. They are also working with Project P.R.O.V.E.IT! consultants to train the four providers in using the computerized uniform data entry program designed by the consultants. This Data group is also working with Rep Alida Millham to develop some possible legislation allowing inter-agency sharing of juvenile data so that recidivism can be better tracked.

The JJAC (Juvenile Justice Advisory Council) is meeting monthly and is exploring how to better focus on the prevention of juvenile delinquency.

- ◆ **PREVENTION** – *Micheline Roy reporting* This group continues to focus on life skills training throughout the community. They are using a *Follow The Child “Aspirations Matrix”* to identify current community resources that address any of the student aspirations at different age levels. Ultimately they would like to be involved in preparing written resources to assist the many different community sectors to better align their work with the eight student aspirations. This workgroup will also learn more about the approach to prevention used by the Appalachian Mountain Teen Project.

Beth Arsenault suggests that the Council and its networks should consider inviting Bob Champlin to discuss the *Follow The Child* movement at upcoming Council meetings.

ACTION: Alan will invite Bob Champlin to speak at an upcoming Citizens Council and/or other Council-related meetings.

- ◆ **COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT** - For the time being, Community Development reports will come from Council members who will talk about what is happening in their communities.
 - Sarah noted the very excellent article on Dianne Zawacki and the new Boys and Girls Club that appeared in the May 17th issue of the Laconia Sun.
 - Judge Martin said the a first time presentation of the Robert Woods Johnson curriculum for judges will be offered to NH Family Division judges across the State in Meredith on October 1, 2007.
 - The excellent article in the Concord Monitor describing the work with refugees that Council member, Rasim Gusinac and his wife Umija, are doing in the Laconia area was acknowledged.
 - Emily Clement spoke about the *Alternatives to Violence* curriculum that she and Mary Alice Warner offer for two full days every seven weeks at the Lakes Region (Correctional) Facility. There are opportunities for other interested people to be trained in presenting this program.
- ◆ **EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE** – *Sarah Fox reporting*
 - Sarah introduced Katie Brandt from Center Barnstead and Amy Hall from Belmont as applicants for Council membership. Katie works for NH Children’s Trust Fund and Amy for NH Health Kids, both statewide organizations located in Concord. Both are interested in “connecting their current professional skills and knowledge within their home communities” in a manner that promotes the goals and mission of the Belknap County Citizens Council. A motion to accept Ms Brandt and Hall as members of the Belknap County Citizens Council on Children and Families was made by Sue Smith with a second by Mary Alice Warner. Motion carried.
 - The Council Member Development committee met recently and decided that 1-1 discussions with targeted community leaders to ask them to recommend specific people as potential Council members. Several “tools” were distributed to Council members to guide Council member involvement in this recruitment process: (1) A Recruitment Chart that lists community sectors where potential Council members might be found (2) A “short list” of organizations in the Lakes Region with contact information (3) A list of “areas of expertise”

provided by current Council members. Alan and Judy are happy to meet personally with anyone interested in Council membership.

ACTION Council members were asked to complete the “Recruitment chart and return it to Alan as soon as possible. [Please, no later than June 8, 2007].

4. Public Comment

- ◆ Rep Beth Arsenault from Laconia who sits on the NH House Child and Family Law Committee talked about HB 584, that proposes raising the age of delinquency back to age 18, allowing 18 year-olds to be managed in the juvenile, rather than adult criminal system. While many from the law enforcement are formally opposed to this legislation, Beth noted that it better aligns with voting privileges and the proposed school drop-out provisions, both at age 18. Beth encouraged those interested to testify at a committee hearing, scheduled for Thursday, May 24th at 1:30pm in Concord. Written testimonies are also requested. Council members noted that this is an important issue and one that the Council should study further to determine if the Council should adopt a formal stand on this legislation. Further discussions with individual Police Chiefs are needed to better understand their concerns.

ACTION: The Council Executive Committee will discuss HB 584 to determine any next steps appropriate for the Council.

- ◆ Cindy Davis, the Manager of the Carroll County Juvenile Justice Initiative, asked for clarification around the choice of name for the Citizens Council, wondering how it reflected the principles of Community Justice. She said she is “very impressed with the quality and amount of volunteer commitment to the Belknap County Citizens Council and its networks.

- 6. Approve Minutes of April 20, 2007** Motion to accept made by Emily Clement; second provided by Micheline Roy. Motion carried.

NEXT MEETING

WHEN: Friday, June 15, 2007 – 8-10am

WHERE: River Level Conference Room, Busiel Mill in Laconia

Director's Report

Citizens Council Meeting

May 18, 2007

CATEGORY	TOPIC & SPONSOR	STATUS
Community Forums	Children of Trauma –	Held on Saturday morning, May 12 th at the NH Community Technical College-Laconia. 25 participants and presenters.
	United Way – 50 th Anniversary	Nice event (May 7 th) and good representation by Council members (Sarah Fox, Christie Corrigan, Mary Alice Warner, Gil Schohan), and guests (Andre and Margaret Paquette and David Stamps) and Alan Robichaud.
	Convocation - 2008	Plans are moving forward for the 2008 Convocation on Children and Families. Contact Judy Buswell for more information and involvement. Dates are January 22 with a snow date of January 24, 2008
Initiatives	Victims Rights Committee	Developing a Victims' Satisfaction Survey. Currently going through a committee vetting process and then on to providers and law enforcement for further review. Seminar scheduled for October 18 th .
	Follow the Children	Discussions with Quaglia Institute and SAU 30 and Upstream to develop community indicators that complement student aspirations.
	Center for Civic Engagement	Discussions regarding melding the community forum functions of CCE with Upstream Advisory Team. May lead to discontinuation of CCE.
Coalitions	CoRe Coalition	A. Jena Vincent of Child and Family Services/NH has been hired as Assistant Director position. Lisa Mire will be consulting as grant writer. B. Coalition is continuing to regain strength
	Strategic Prevention Frameworks	First meeting of initial Oversight Board is May 29th
	Safe Schools Coalition (WRSD)	Rachel's Challenge presentation – May 2. This event was well-attended. Gilford will be having a Rachel's Challenge event in September. Highly encourage Council attendance. Open Space Forum being planned for September 29th.
	Juvenile Justice Advisory Council (JJAC)	William Fenniman Jr., Director of the Division of Juvenile Justice Services will attend the May 25th JJAC meeting starting at 7:30 AM. Council members who wish to attend are most welcome.
Council Business	Council Recruitment and Community Outreach	Received applications for Council consideration: Katie Brandt (Center Barnstead) and Amy Hall (Belmont) Other interested parties introduced at Council meeting Resignations: Rick Keller, Sandy Webber, Ruth Castonguay
	Council Recognition	On April 17, 2007, the Citizens Council was awarded the Presidents' Community Partner Award at the Annual Campus Compact luncheon in Bedford. Nominated by Dr. Mark Edelstein, President of the New Hampshire Community Technical College of Laconia.
	Council tribute to Sheriff Collis	The Citizens Council wishes to express its deepest appreciation to retiring Sheriff Dan Collis through the presentation of an engraved glass plague for his years of dedication and tireless leadership to Belknap County.