

Belknap County Citizens Council on Children and Families

MEETING SUMMARY

Belknap County Citizens Council on Children and Families

DATE: Friday, June 15, 2007

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

PRESENT: Gil Schohan, Sarah Fox, Sue Smith, Emily Clement, Laurie Belanger, Micheline Roy, Christie Corrigan, Mary Alice Warner, Amy Hall **GUESTS:** Bob Champlin, Laconia School District Superintendent, Steven Beals, newly appointed Principal at Laconia High School **STAFF:** Alan Robichaud, Judy Buswell

1. **Welcome and Introductions:** All present introduced themselves to newest Council member, Amy Hall from Belmont. Today's meeting is held at the SAU office of the Laconia School District to facilitate a presentation on the Follow The Child initiative by School Superintendent Champlin and to avoid the parking deficits in downtown Laconia because of the annual Motorcycle Week events.
2. **Additions/Amendments to the Agenda** Two items from last month's Council meeting Agenda that were mistakenly carried forward to this month's Agenda (Council Member Resignations and Vice-Chair vacancy) were dropped.

Alan distributed a sign-up sheet to attend the launching event of the Greater Laconia Boys and Girls Club (formerly The Teen Center) on Saturday evening, June 30th. The event includes dinner, a tour of the facility, and entertainment.

3. **Director's Report** – *Alan Robichaud reporting* Alan distributed and reviewed a written summary of the Director's Report (*see last page of minutes*). He added and/or highlighted the following information:
 - *Annual Convocation on Children and Families* Plans for involving schools around the County in the January 2008 Convocation are underway with good positive response from teachers and administrators. The 2008 theme is "Community Sense Makes Common Sense", allowing for a broad range of participation by children and youth. While the event is scheduled for the Opechee Inn and Conference Center in Lakeport, their Events Manager is now negotiating with the newly designated in-house caterer for reduced rates for meals for non profits. If this does not happen, the added charges will make the meal fees too expensive for many in the targeted audiences.
 - *Legislative Initiative* A Council resolution of support is needed for the effort led by Rep Alida Millham that will amend existing statutes to allow limited data sharing among the four providers of juvenile justice services in Belknap County (Youth Assistance Program Youth Services Bureau, Belknap County Restorative Justice Program, and the Laconia District Juvenile Probation and Parole Officers). Without this ability it has been difficult and even impossible to track recidivism and outcomes in the County's system of juvenile justice.

Following a brief discussion of the process for legislative reform, **Sarah Fox offered a motion "to support the current legislative initiative now underway in Belknap County allowing greater freedom in data sharing among the county's providers of juvenile justice services". A second was provided by Gil Schohan; motion carried.**
 - *Follow The Child Initiative* The Citizens Council is working with UpStream and Lakes Region United Way to develop a community component for the Follow The Child initiative that is explained below in greater detail by Laconia School Superintendent, Bob Champlin.

- *Community Prevention Coalition (a.k.a. Strategic Prevention Framework State Incentives Grant)* Alan is one of five members of the Oversight Board for this newly formed prevention-oriented coalition that embraces both Belknap and Carroll Counties. The Belknap/Carroll County Coalition is one of ten Community Prevention Coalition districts in NH. The other four members of the Oversight Committee are Elaine de Mello, Lisa Morris, Mike Green, and Judge Willard Martin. They are now in the process of organizing this coalition so they are able to accept and manage federal monies targeted for substance abuse and other prevention programs.
- *Other items in Council member packets* *The Accountability Chart* visualizes the supervisory and oversight responsibilities for the numerous Council initiatives now underway. The updated *Council Contact Sheet* for Council members should be edited to correct the home address for Laurie Belanger from 30 to 39 Sand Hill Rd. *The Community Open Space Forum* fact sheet describes the Open Space Forum planned by the Winnisquam School District for Saturday, Sept 29, 2007. *The Recruitment Chart* will be further explained by Sarah Fox. *The "Are You Ending or Beginning?"* article is another way of looking at Asset-based Community Development.

4. Work Group Reports

- ***BARJ – Gil Schohan reporting*** This workgroup is currently working in two areas: Juvenile Justice System Review led by Andre Paquette and Victim's Awareness Committee led by Gil. The *System Review* includes a review of the past five years along with ongoing discussions on how to make best use of available resources among the four providers, thus avoiding overlaps and gaps.

The *Victim Awareness Committee* is looking to raising awareness of the needs of victims of juvenile crime. Their work includes developing a Victims Satisfaction Survey and hosting a day-long conference in October 2007 for school crisis teams from around the County. This conference will focus on developing an environment in schools that is aware of, and addresses the needs of crime victims. It remains "a bit of a challenge" to involve the law enforcement community in meeting victim needs. The committee has decided to distribute the Victim Satisfaction Surveys via the four providers rather than through police departments. One exception to this is Laconia Police chief Tom Oetinger who is involved with national victim awareness committees that are funded and supported through V.O.C.A. funds and resources. Tom has offered to present victim awareness trainings for county law enforcement using these V.O.C.A. materials. School Resource Officers are also usually interested in, and supportive of victim awareness programs. Alan noted that Youth Services Bureau will be offering a Victim Empathy Course for youth involved in their Diversion Programs. Laurie Belanger explained a recent situation involving a former student of hers whose parent was killed in a DV incident. This student came to Laurie for help in managing funeral and burial arrangements because this young woman was not advised by anyone where she could go for guidance. Fortunately the Wilkinson Beane Funeral Home in Laconia volunteered their services to this young woman.

- ***Prevention – Micheline Roy reporting*** Their last meeting was held with the Belknap County Early Learning Council so they could hear a presentation by Maria White from the NH Children's Alliance on 2007 NH Kids Count Data. Micheline noted that while aggregate statistics for NH rate our state at the top in a number of wellness indicators, the picture is less rosy when data for individual towns and communities in NH are examined. The NH 2007 Kids Count Data Book reports on Child Well-Being in each of NH's 233 communities by dividing them into five quintiles, with Quintile 1 having the highest scores and Quintile 5, the lowest. Of the 11 communities in Belknap County none is in the top quintile; Gilford and Gilmanton are in Q 2; 8 county communities are in Q's 3 & 4, and Laconia is in the bottom quintile, # 5. This one chart underscores the wide variance in child well being just in Belknap County. In an effort led by Deb Rosato, the Prevention Work Group is also beginning to analyze how the eight Follow The Child Student Aspirations can be developed in an age-appropriate manner for the Zero to Three-Year Old population. More Kids Count data is available at www.childrennh.org. Amy Hall referenced the color-coded map of NH produced by NH

Healthy Kids that shows the variety in the health care coverage for children in our state. Amy will bring a copy of this map to the next Council meeting.

- **Executive Committee – Sarah Fox reporting** This committee discussed strategies for attracting new members to the Citizens Council. The Council Member Recruitment Committee (Betty Anson, Rich Moed, and Sarah) had suggested that Council members fill in the Recruitment Chart that was provided them in May to identify potential Council members. The Member Development Committee would then contact these referred people.

ACTION: However, as only two Council members have turned in their Recruitment Charts, Sarah asked that the rest of the Council complete and submit this chart to Council staff by June 22.

Sarah said that no names have been submitted to replace Ruth Castonguay as Council Vice Chair. There are currently no By-Law provisions for replacing Council Vice-Chair vacancies.

ACTION: If Sarah does not hear from anyone within the next week, she will approach someone to fill the position.

- **Community Development – Sarah Fox reporting** The intended discussion around Community Development was deferred to the July Council meeting.

ACTION: Council members will come to the July 20 Council meeting prepared to talk in greater depth about Community Development, what it means to each Council member, and how to best incorporate Community Development strategies into Council work.

5. **Follow-The-Child Initiative – Bob Champlin, Laconia School Superintendent, guest.** Before beginning his presentation, Bob introduced the newly selected Laconia High School Principal, Steven Beals who was also a guest at this Council meeting.

Follow the Child (FTC) is an evolving initiative in NH that is aimed at supporting and recognizing the critical importance of teaching and assessing every student in four areas of growth: Personal, Social, Physical, and Academic. FTC was introduced in NH by NH Education Commissioner, Lyonel Tracey, who says, Follow the Child is “NH’s answer to No Child Left Behind.” FTC believes that every community can, and should implement this individualized program in the manner that best suits individual community needs and resources. FTC also says that while academic pursuits are vitally important, academic excellence is better achieved if the other three components of a child (Personal, Social, and Physical) are also supported and fostered. Bob outlined a number of programs in the Laconia School District that already address these four areas, explaining that “while Laconia may have more economic challenges than surrounding communities, this city has numerous resources, including its school staff”. Bob stressed that FTC prefers “fair” rather than “equal” when referring to allocation of resources, *equal* meaning that all children receive the same resources while *fair* means children get what they need.

Laconia Schools are closely affiliated with the Quaglia Institute, internationally recognized education consultants headquartered in Maine. FTC and the eight student aspirations that were developed by the Quaglia Institute provide the framework for designing and implementing education that considers the whole child. The eight Student Aspirations are conditions that if present in the lives of children have positive affects on academic success and the development of the whole child. These eight conditions that should be a part of every child’s education are: A sense of Belonging, the Presence of Heroes, A Sense of Accomplishment, Fun and Excitement, Curiosity and Creativity, A Spirit of Adventure, Leadership and Responsibility, and Confidence to take Action.

The Laconia School District is one of a small group of pilot sites selected by the Quaglia Institute for an intensive partnership with them, including three years of technical assistance. The Laconia FTC project will also be evaluated and monitored closely by Stanford University in California.

Laconia Schools use several tools to assess academic achievements that include more than the annual NECAP assessments that are taken in the fall with results distributed in the spring. Other assessment tools include NWEA, Colorado Writing Prompts, and Terra-Nova that offer immediate feedback to teachers and students. Bob agrees with Commissioner Tracey who says “schools don’t make AYP (Adequate Yearly Progress), students do!”, a statement that underscores the important focus on each child. Bob did say that since 2005, when Laconia schools began this more individualized approach to education, their assessment scores have risen. While they will continue to evaluate their academic progress, this trend “seems to support this individualized, child-centered approach”.

Bob noted that a high school degree can no longer be considered terminal; each high school student needs to have his/her own post-secondary plan. FTC will guide the development of these plans with each student.

Bob is now having conversations with Alan Robichaud of the Citizens Council and the Quaglia Institute about designing a community response and comprehensive partnership with the community, recognizing that a large number of community entities, organizations, and agencies promote the development of the whole child as well. While the language used may differ, the intent is the same.

Laurie Belanger commends this FTC approach as one that “cares about and considers each kid, rather than just masses or test groups of kids. It offers a structure to care for each kid.” Sue Smith noted that the trend in elder care is to also think of each senior citizen as a complete person, rather than just part of a demographic group. It was noted that every person, regardless of his/her age, needs to be thought of in this manner. To be healthy in a holistic view, every person must also have hopes and aspirations. This type of approach is really not new, but somehow it legitimizes this level of thinking and gives everyone permission to talk openly about basic human needs, a topic often considered taboo, and too “touchy-feely” for serious conversation.

6. **Approve Minutes of May 18, 2007 meeting of the Citizens Council** A motion to approve these minutes as written was made by Micheline Roy with a second offered by Emily Clement. Motion carried.
7. **Other Business** Alan encouraged Council members to contact their representative to the County Delegation, telling them what types of characteristics they would like to see in the County Sheriff about to be appointed by the Delegation to the remainder of Dan Collis’ term.
8. **Public Comment** No member of the general public attended this Council meeting.

NEXT MEETING

DATE: July 20, 2007

TIME: 8am-10am

LOCATION: River Level Conference Room, Busiel Mill, Laconia

Director's Report

Citizens Council Meeting

June 15, 2007

CATEGORY	TOPIC & SPONSOR	STATUS
Community Forums	United way/Upstream Health Forum	September 18 th at Woodside Taylor Community – Theme: Chronic Illness
	Convocation - 2008	Save the date: January 22 nd and 24 th .
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 .
	BARJ Work Group	A. JJSR Task Force First meeting held on 6-8-07. This is an initiative of the BARJ Work Group led by Andre Paquette. Summary available on request. B. Legislative Initiative – Needs Council motion to approve.
	Follow the Children	Community indicator exploration is underway and will be followed by the Council Prevention Work Group
	Center for Civic Engagement	Last CCE meeting as it has been known occurred on 6/8/07. CCE members will be invited to participate in Upstream Advisory Team.
	SAG Grant	A. Site visit held on May 25, 2007. Reported that we are in compliance and doing good work. B. Database training on June 20 th (27 Level-I; 18 Level-II)
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	Now referred to as the Community Prevention Coalition (CPC)
	Safe Schools Coalition (WRSD)	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 July 27th JJAC meeting starting at 7:30 AM. Council members who wish to attend are most welcome.
Council Business	Council Recruitment and Community Outreach	Only two Council members responded to request for names by the June 8 th deadline.