

**MEETING SUMMARY**

**DATE:** Friday, May 15, 2009

**TIME BEGAN:** 8:05am

**TIME ENDED:** 10am

**FACILITATEDBY:** Andre Paquette & Betty Anson

**SUMMARY BY:** Judy Buswell

**PRESENT:** Betty Anson, Rich Moed, Andre Paquette, Emily Clement, Deb Rosato, Micheline Roy, Laurie Belanger, Gil Schohan, Jim Pilliod, Nancy Porosky, Rasim Gusinac **COUNCIL ASSOCIATES:** Leo Sanfacon, Dick Wallace

**STAFF:** Alan Robichaud, Judy Buswell

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1. **Introduction** Andre noted the purpose of this meeting is to continue the discussion on the future of the Citizens Council now that it will not be a County Department beyond the end of this year. Andre referenced information from Council organizational documents summarized on sheets and posted on the wall of the meeting area. This information included:
  - **Council Mission Statement** “The mission of the Citizens Council is to promote Community Justice in Belknap County so that children and families can live safely with dignity and respect.” We do this by:
    - Active citizen participation
    - Comprehensive Planning
    - Advocacy and Collaboration
    - Stewardship through governance, funding, and advisory roles within the County
  - **Proclamation**
    - Promote the well-being of children and families within each community of Belknap County
    - Develop and implement a county-wide comprehensive plan for children and families
    - Advocate for services and supports that protect and preserve the safety of the community, strengthen the integrity of the family, and foster responsibility in youth
    - Serve as a recipient of local, county, state, and federal funds acquired and applied to county programs for such services and supports
    - Provide public information, education and opportunities that foster broad citizen involvement
  - **Community Justice**
    - Prevention
    - Balanced and Restorative Justice
    - Community Development
    - These are usually represented visually as a Venn Diagram of three overlapping circles

Rich Moed also provided a brief update of progress on the Systems Integration Initiative, especially as it pertains to this discussion around maintaining Council viability.

Betty Anson was asked by the Executive Committee to facilitate today’s discussion.

2. **The Discussion** Discussion points were recorded on flip chart sheets and posted on the wall. Information on these sheets follows:
  - ***What offerings/activities of the Prevention Work Group should continue?***
    - Education and Awareness
    - Make the community aware of need for prevention services e.g. Restorative Justice
    - What are the issues that lead to problems; what are we trying to prevent e.g. substance abuse?

- Ongoing prevention work with community members such as Early Childhood awareness and building community support for the Follow The Child and other school-based, personalized education practices.
- Follow The Child report-out meeting and introduction of Issue Brief: “Helping Kids To Hope” which is a summary of year-long focus groups about how to foster youth aspirations in community settings including: Faith-based, pre-school settings, Agricultural/Forestry, and Financial/Insurance/Real Estate
- Work with Appalachian Mountain Teen Project
- System Change initiatives (SII) with role of Council as shepherding the system change process
- Early intervention: birth to death
- ***What offerings/activities of the JJAC and BARJ Workgroups should continue?***
  - Regular and consistent meetings with stakeholders in the juvenile justice system
  - Expanding and incorporating the principles of Balanced and Restorative Justice in the schools
  - Efforts towards a unified juvenile justice system in Belknap County
  - Regular reporting to the community on outcomes of juvenile justice programs etc via Report Cards, Issues Briefs, and the website
- ***What community development offerings should continue?***
  - The Systems Integration Initiative could be considered “community development”. The Council needs to keep this project intact.
- ***In addition to Prevention, JJAC, and SII, what else that the Council does should continue?***
  - Support for the rejuvenation of NH Friends of Recovery. This is where the *Turbulent Teens* support group started by Council member, Nancy Porosky, now resides.
  - Ongoing marketing and promotion of prevention efforts is vital to the overall health of Belknap County
- ***What does the Prevention Work Group need to continue its efforts?***
  - Paid administrative support. This should be a part of someone’s job description. It averages about 5 hours/month, except during the time of special projects such as events coordination and creating special publications such as “Helping Kids To Hope”.
  - The Council should look to either be, or identify another larger overarching umbrella organization that can maintain prevention and/or other community activities.
  - Someone/s with leadership abilities, vision, and access to community contacts
- ***What are the current options available to sustain the work of the Council?***
  - Continued search for “outside funding” that can support current efforts e.g. JJAC/BARJ and Prevention. We could “cobble together” funds from different sources for all key Council initiatives. Research needed to see if current office space might be available as an in-kind donation from the County. It is important to know that the very earliest projected date for the State to issue RFPs to locals to create ASOs (Administrative Services Organizations) for local management of social service funds is not until July 2010. Then there would be an extended processing time with funds not arriving locally until possibly late 2010, or into 2011. These time lines do not mesh nicely with the changes in the Citizens Council. Therefore, some type of “Bridge Support” for the Council would be needed during this period.
  - Use another agency’s 501(c)(3) status. This is *only* possible when projected new activity is directly related to the mission statement of the existing organization whose 501(c)(3) would be used. Identify organizations with parallel or similar mission statements. (*Refer to “Mission Statement” handout distributed during meeting*)
  - File for our own 501(c)(3) status. This would cost about \$1,000., including NH Incorporation, 501(c)(3) application fees (\$750.), and other filing fees. Some pro-bono work might be possible. However, this process also requires that “all ducks are in a row”, with a complete and coherent mission statement, proposed goals, full board of directors, and three years of projected budgets. It could take 6-12 months to go through this process. Are we ready for this level of detail right now? Can we use current Council funds for this process?

The Executive Committee needs a vote of support from the Council to begin exploring the details of a 501(c)(3) process.

**RELATED ACTION:** Rich Moed made a motion that the Executive Committee should begin to explore potential and known pros/cons for (1) using the non-profit 501(c)(3) status of another related organization in Belknap County and (2) applying for its own 501(c)(3) status. Motion seconded by Gil Schohan. Motion carried.

- ***ACTION STEPS:*** *What are the NEXT STEPS for the Council and the Council Executive Committee?*
  1. The BARJ/JJAC and Prevention Work Groups will identify what specific resources they need to continue with their work when County funding ends on December 31, 2009
  2. Alan and the SII Steering Committee will begin a similar discussion with the participants in the Systems Integration Initiative: specifically, to inventory interest and confidence levels for the Citizens Council to pursue a facilitative and leading role in forming and managing an ASO (Administrative Services Organization).
  3. Council members will identify what resources they can each continue to provide after December 31, 2009 e.g. volunteer time, passion for specific issue, advocacy, interest etc.
  4. The Executive Committee will do further research etc on the potential for 501(c)(3) status, (1) collaborating with another organization to use their 501(c)(3) for a period of time or establishing a 501(c)(3) specifically for the Council. As part of this process, the Executive Committee will develop some type of updated “Organization Chart” so that Council members can understand and explain the anticipated direction for the Council to others.
  5. The Executive Committee will provide a progress update on the above at the June 19<sup>th</sup> Council meeting.

**NEXT MEETING**

**DATE:** Friday, June 19, 2009 8-10am

**PLACE:** Cooperative Extension Conference Room, County Complex