

Community Alliance of Sarasota County

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Developmental Disabilities Committee

December 8, 2008

Meeting Summary

Members present:

Carol Burmeister Prichard	Community Member – Special Education Professional
Joann Gepfert	Agency for Persons with Disabilities
Irania Graterol	Goodwill Industries - Manasota
Theresa Johnson	Parent
Andrea King	Sarasota County Parks and Recreation
Susan Magers	Sarasota County School Board Parent Liaison
Richard Montemagno	Sarasota County Sheriff's Department
Kameron Partridge	Easter Seals
Mary Smith	Family Network on Disabilities
Ryan Stoyles	Community Haven
Laurel White	Vocational Rehabilitation
Kim Williams	The Florida Center

Guests:

Martha Bohn	Sarasota Police Department – Project Lifesaver Program
Carole Solomon	Sarasota Police Department – Project Lifesaver Program

Staff:

Kathleen Marie Hall	Sarasota County Health and Human Services
Chip Taylor	Sarasota County Health and Human Services
Pauline Tracy	Sarasota County Health and Human Services

Welcome and Introductions

Chair Susan Magers welcomed members and guests to the meeting.

Sarasota Project Lifesaver

Carol Solomon and Martha Bohn distributed a Sarasota Project Lifesaver Program [pamphlet](#) to the members for review. Carol explained that a program volunteer meets with the family and/or client, fits the client with a bracelet, takes their photograph, and provides instructions to the family if and when the client should disappear. Once a month, a volunteer goes back out to the home to replace the armband. Martha gave a demonstration to the members on the instrument that is used to locate a client. It was noted that the instrument tracks up to a one-mile radius, with a 100% recovery rate thus far. The bracelets are waterproof and can be worn 24 hours a day. The initial cost of the program is \$275, with a \$7 per month fee to replace the bracelet and battery. It was mentioned that if a family is under a financial burden, their only requirement is to make a nominal donation to the program. The Sarasota Police Department has made it very

clear that no one should be denied the use of the system. Currently the program has registered three children and several adults. Their mission is to get the word out to the community for anyone in need. Tampa Police Department will be implementing the program shortly. For further information, please contact 954-7056.

Old Business

Bylaws Committee Report

Ryan Stoyles reported that there was a [draft of the Bylaws](#) in the members' packets for review.

Ryan Stoyles moved, Teresa Johnson seconded to adopt the Bylaws as written. *The motion passed unanimously.*

Joann Gepfert questioned whether the definition of the "Developmental Disabilities" in the Bylaws is specific enough. The use of the word "condition" leaves the definition wide open for any condition to be included as a developmental disability throughout ones developmental years. Susan Magers explained that this was the original definition that was created by Ann McArdle and approved by the Developmental Disabilities Strategic Planning Work Group. Susan noted that if anyone has any suggestions or comments on the definition they should forward them to staff.

Ryan Stoyles requested that an active list of members be emailed to the members for review. Ryan asked Pauline Tracy to forward the list to the members and asked Kathleen Hall to begin tracking attendance for all future meetings. It was also suggested that a title be placed next to each name on all future meeting summaries. Susan asked members to review the categories that have two consumers and make suggestions on who might be willing to attend the meetings.

SCAT discussion

Susan Magers gave an update on the recent SCAT discussion that was very productive and facilitated by Paula Dumas. Paula guided the group through the process of understanding what SCAT is trying to accomplish, SCAT's concern with future capacity of service, the impact on the agencies, and how to identify a collaborative future direction for transportation for persons with developmental disabilities.

A discussion ensued on the various contracted services that SCAT provides for the agencies, the future capacity, and the increase of persons with disabilities who could possibly ride the fixed route system rather than the subscription service through SCAT Plus. Susan stated that the next steps are for the agencies to review their clients' eligibility for the SCAT premium fare and to identify the most cost-effective system for Sarasota County. Susan asked members to send any additional comments or questions to staff to be incorporated into their future SCAT discussions.

18-30 Age Group Discussion

Susan Magers asked members for any new updates on this age group. It was mentioned that staff has not received information from Sarah Hickey or Diane Weiner. Ryan Stoyles stated that the United Cerebral Palsy and the Suncoast Center for

Independent Living, Inc. (Keith Kitchens) should be contacted for their data. Susan asked Joann Gepfert to identify the number of persons in Sarasota County who are waiting for services through APD. Joann stated that information could be gathered on new clients that apply for APD by county, but could not limit the age to 30. The information will consist of different age ranges (up to 22 and 22 and older). Joann also stated that APD does not have a breakdown on its waiting lists.

Additional discussion was held on gathering data from the private schools, transitional planning, reviewing current census information, and identifying the client needs and the barriers to their needs.

Priority Updates (brief reports)

- Aftercare – Susan Magers reported that there was a delay in the process of distributing the survey flyer to the parents, but that it would be distributed shortly. The results will be discussed at the next meeting.
- Advocacy – Kameron Partridge reported that Easter Seals partnered with Mass Mutual Financial Group to create a national study on “Living with Autism” that surveyed over 20,000 families and will be released on December 16. A discussion ensued on appointing a member to report on legislative issues to the Developmental Disabilities Committee and to the Community Alliance Steering Committee. Ryan Stoyles noted that he will forward reports from the Florida Association for Rehabilitation Facilities (FARF) to staff on current legislative issues.
- Respite – Susan Magers noted that there was a recent positive article in a local paper explaining why respite is so important. Joann Gepfert noted that at the November meeting there was a discussion on the difficulty of getting approval from APD on respite bed placement. Joann explained that she has spoken with several staff members who stated that the only requirement of APD is a courtesy call to the group homes to make sure the placement is appropriate and that the home has a vacancy. APD can be contacted 24 hours a day in order to take the information. Mary Smith reported that the Family Network is at capacity and has a waiting list. Kameron Partridge mentioned that Easter Seals is almost at capacity, but there would be some flexibility over the holidays.

New Business

Announcements

Joann Gepfert announced that APD’s new director, Jim Devershman, is intent on making sure that all their consumers are given the full attention of their services, rights, due process, etc. His vision is that staff is there to serve the consumer.

Mary Smith announced that the next Family Network Annual Disability Conference will be held on Saturday, April 18 at Braden River High School. Mary also noted that the Family Network is collaborating with CARE on a special needs wills, trusts, and guardianship event.

Susan Magers reported several announcements:

- December 16 is *National Autism Twitter Day* (Twitter is a social media networking).
- On March 28, 2009, the Sarasota County School Board will host a *Parent Institute* on a series of classes that will be offered to school age families to receive parent education.
- Tentatively on April 30, 2009, the Sarasota County School Board will be hosting an *Agency Fair* at Oak Park School in the evening.

Next Meeting

The next meeting will be held on Monday, January 13 at Health and Human Services in Room 226.

Susan Magers adjourned the meeting at 2:09 p.m.