

**COMMUNITY ALLIANCE OF SARASOTA COUNTY**

**EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE**

**Community Foundation of Sarasota, 2635 Fruitville Road**

**MEETING SUMMARY**

**March 12, 2008**

Members Present: Ken Alexander  
Karen Bogues  
Bob Carter  
Mary Crowley (for Jerry Thompson)  
Kay Glasser  
Peter Howard  
Bill Little  
Elliott Metcalfe  
Tom Pfaff  
Steve Quieor  
Stewart Stearns

Guests Present: Carolyn Eagan  
Kari Ellingstad  
Richard Martin  
Bryan Pope  
Sherri Reynolds  
Capt. Paul Sutton

Staff Present: Chip Taylor  
Pauline Tracy

Elliott Metcalfe welcomed everyone to the meeting.

**Community Information Exchange (CIE) Update**

Chip Taylor reported that Manatee County staff made a request to the Manatee County Board of County Commissioners on March 11 requesting an allocation of \$15,000 toward the CIE project. As of the time of the Executive Committee meeting, the result of that request was not known. Sarasota County staff made a presentation to the Suncoast Partnership to End Homelessness (SPEH) Board of Directors and, while some members of the Board were receptive to the idea of using the Tapestry system as the software platform for their Homeless

Management Information System (HMIS), there were other members who still had questions. The Board appointed a work group to look at the issue and to make a recommendation to the Board. Sarasota County will move forward with the CIE project using the Tapestry software platform to support Manasota 2-1-1 and the disaster module, with the target date for both to be operational by July 1, 2008. There is also discussion about requiring all agencies which receive Sarasota County Contracted Human Services funding to use the Tapestry system. The majority of the funding for the system has been secured for Year 1 and staff are working to secure funding for subsequent years. Demonstrations are being scheduled for both the 2-1-1 module and the volunteers and donations module.

### **Emergency Assistance Fund Update**

Stewart Stearns provided an update on a recent meeting held to discuss the feasibility of establishing a \$5 million emergency assistance fund. It was decided that what is really needed in today's budget climate is a systems change. The community needs to bring agencies together to make them stronger by looking at infrastructure issues and managing the flow of information. The Tapestry software will allow agencies to use a single data entry system which will improve the sharing of information and help avoid duplication of services.

It was agreed that more work needs to be done to vet the issue and to bring in the experts who work in the system every day to find the solutions to building a better system. For-profit organizations such as banking institutions and realtors also need to be included in the conversation. Strategies need to be developed to collectively support people who are in a financial crisis and losing their homes. There are already individual groups which are trying to provide relief on their own. It was suggested that the Economic Self Sufficiency Strategic Planning Work Group reconvene to bring some of these groups together to identify what is already being done and how these efforts can be coordinated.

### **Strategic Planning Work Groups—Next Steps**

Steve Quieor recently met with Alex Young and Richard Martin to discuss their next steps towards a Prosperity Campaign. They developed a three step approach:

1. Develop a compelling white paper that tells the real story.
2. Meet with key people to share the story and get their buy-in.
3. Identify champions and create a task force which will build a 6 - 12 month plan to put the Prosperity Campaign in action.

Steve reported that Alex Young had prepared a report to his Board which outlined a Financial Stability Partnership approach which would include a broad partnership similar to the Jacksonville model. Alex proposed the following 2008-09 objectives:

- establish 4 VITA sites for the 2009 tax season
- increase the number of volunteer tax preparers
- double the Earned Income Tax Credit dollars received in the community
- develop financial educational materials to reach 5,000 households
- open a prosperity center in a low-income area to assist people to gain financial stability
- meet with key community members to embrace the idea

The Executive Committee discussed common themes heard throughout all of the work group presentations. Dr. Glasser reviewed all of the material and identified the following themes:

- communication/information
- funding
- collaboration
- transportation
- mental health
- accessibility

A concern was raised that although the human services infrastructure is currently working well, budget reductions will have an adverse impact on the systems. Non-profit agencies will need to look at doing business differently through mergers, developing a single intake system, improving communication and information sharing, and/or avoiding duplication of services. The Tapestry software system can be used to assist with many of these issues.

The members agreed that the work groups will be asked to continue meeting to address the issues they identified as priorities. Champions for each will need to be identified.

Tying outcomes to funding will be critical. The Planning and Outcomes Work Group has worked hard to develop and track outcomes, but it is not clear whether any of the work groups used the outcomes to develop their strategic priorities or whether funders actually use the information when allocating dollars. There is much solid information contained in the Community Outcome document that needs to be shared and used by the community.

Lt. Paul Sutton suggested the Alliance should begin to celebrate its successes such as with the Community Alternative Residential Treatment (CART) initiative. The CART monthly report contains all types of positive outcomes that the community is not aware of. Tapestry is another initiative that should be promoted

as well as the community outcome indicators that have been achieved. Paul suggested that one way to help the economy is to promote spending money.

Elliott offered to write a guest editorial promoting the Alliance's successes and sharing information about its initiatives such as CART and Tapestry.

Sherry suggested not using so many acronyms in the CART report so that she could easily share the document with others. The suggestion was made to develop a one-page information sheet that can be distributed throughout the community.

***Next Meeting: The next Community Alliance Executive Committee meeting will be held on Wednesday, April 16 at 1:30 p.m. at the Community Foundation.***