

COMMUNITY ALLIANCE OF SARASOTA COUNTY

“Partnering Assets Together for Human Services”

Health and Human Services, 2200 Ringling Blvd., Suite 226

May 18, 2009

Meeting Summary

STEERING COMMITTEE MEMBERS PRESENT:

Ken Alexander	Sarasota Memorial Hospital
Dave Beesley	First Step of Sarasota
Karen Bogues	Community Youth Development
Larry Eger	Public Defender - Twelfth Judicial Circuit
Kay Glasser	Community Planning
Lynne Johnston	Department of Children and Families – SunCoast Region (for Brena Slater)
Janet Kahn	Early Learning Coalition of Sarasota County
Curtis Lavarello	Sarasota Coalition on Substance Abuse (SCOSA)
Chief Terry Lewis	City of North Port
Dale Lux	National Alliance for the Mentally Ill
Laura McIntyre	Family Safety Alliance
Pam Meunier	Sarasota County Health Department (for Bill Little)
Capt. Richard Montemagno	Sarasota County Sheriff’s Office
Tom Pfaff	Sarasota United for Responsibility and Equity (SURE)
Bryan Pope	The Salvation Army
Mark Porter	Sarasota Family YMCA
Sherri Reynolds	School Health Advisory Council
Bill Russell	Sarasota Housing Authority
Kathryn Shea	Florida Center for Child and Family Development
Dennis Stover	Friendship Volunteer Center
Ryan Stoyles	Parent Liaison (for Susan Magers)
Capt. Paul Sutton	City of Sarasota
Benny Weaver	Loveland Center

STEERING COMMITTEE MEMBERS NOT PRESENT:

Diane Andrews	Economic Development Corporation of Sarasota County
Humberto Alvia	St. Jude’s Hispanic Center
Steve Brett	United Way of South Sarasota County
Dorothy Carlin	Young Professionals Group
Bob Carter	Senior Friendship Centers
Rose Chapman	Jewish Federation of Sarasota and Manatee Counties
Ginny Donovan	Department of Juvenile Justice
Carolyn Eagen	Mental Health Community Centers
Kirstin Fulkerson	Gulf Coast Community Foundation of Venice
Sandy Gallagher	Catholic Charities
Stanley Godleski	Seniors Advisory Council

Sarah Hickey	Vocational Interagency Council
Jennifer Highland	Healthy Start Coalition of Sarasota County
Leslie Loveless	SunCoast Workforce Board
Ben Kunkel	Manasota 2-1-1
Richard Martin	Suncoast Partnership to End Homelessness
Janice Mee	SCOPE
Alana Monge	Twelfth Judicial Circuit
Sarah Pappas	Selby Foundation
Steve Queior	Sarasota Chamber of Commerce
Chief John Reed	City of Venice
Stewart Stearns	Community Foundation of Sarasota County
Jerry Thompson	Coastal Behavioral Healthcare
Karen Wilkinson	CHIP
Alex Young	United Way of Sarasota County
Caroline Zucker	School Board of Sarasota County

OTHERS PRESENT:

P. J. Brooks	First Step of Sarasota
Rev. Alan Jefferson	UMC – District Superintendent
Edwina Jones	Community Haven
Thomas Marer	Safe Children Coalition
Ed McBride	Safe Children Coalition
James McCloud	Genesis Health Services, Inc.
Ed McBride	Safe Children Coalition
Kevin McKenney	Safe Children Coalition
Kim Ross	Whole Child Project, Community Haven

STAFF PRESENT:

Wayne Applebee	Sarasota County Health and Human Services
Nancy DeLoach	Sarasota County Health and Human Services
Kathleen Marie Hall	Sarasota County Health and Human Services
Pam Meunier	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

The Community Alliance of Sarasota County met on May 18, 2009 at the Sarasota Health and Human Services, 2200 Ringling Blvd., Suite 226 at 1:30 p.m.

Sarasota County Veteran Services Presentation

Jerry Derrick gave an overview of the Sarasota County Veteran Services. The role of Veteran Services is to advocate for and assist veterans in obtaining all available benefits through the Veterans Administration (VA) and the state. Several of the main benefits are: compensation for service-connected disabilities, pensions for low-income veterans with non-service related conditions, dependency indemnity compensation, death pension for low-income widows/widowers, and burial benefits. Other benefits include home loan guarantees, vocational

rehabilitation, medical, and special non-service related pension benefits for veterans needing nursing home or assisted living care.

Sarasota County has approximately 50,000 veterans (15% of the total population) and there are 400,000 veterans within a 75-mile radius of Sarasota. The VA pays out over \$200 million to Sarasota County veterans in benefits and military retirement each year. The VA clinic is located on Bee Ridge Road in Sarasota and the nearest full service VA hospital is in St. Petersburg (Bay Pines VA Healthcare System). Sarasota County provides bus service to Bay Pines for the low-income veteran population every weekday morning for a minimal cost. The County also provides free bus vouchers to homeless veterans.

The maximum pension per month for a single veteran is \$1,650, \$1,900 for a married veteran, and up to \$1,056 for an unmarried widow. Homeless wartime veterans can receive up to \$985 per month. If a veteran dies on active duty, his/her spouse is entitled to the dependency indemnity compensation of \$1,200 per month. A spouse will receive this benefit tax-free if the death is due to a service-related condition. A spouse and their children are also eligible to receive college benefits through the GI Bill. Jerry pointed out that services are available in Sarasota, Venice, and North Port and distributed his business cards to the members.

Chip Taylor commented that Veteran Services has been the only department within County government that has expanded in staffing over the last several years, because they do such a great job. Last year, \$8 million came through in new claims for veterans that would not have happened without the assistance of these officers. Sarasota County's Veteran Services was selected as the outstanding veterans unit in the State of Florida this past year.

Budget Impact Survey Results and Next Steps

Chip Taylor reported that twenty-one agencies completed the survey but a number of agencies did not respond. A follow-up email was sent out to the agencies who did respond to request updates after the close of the Legislature session; however, only a few agencies sent in an update. Chip pointed out that this survey has been opened up one final time for those who have not responded. Chip noted that the Nonprofit Resource Center has volunteered to write the executive summary and it is imperative that the Alliance has up-to-date, thorough, and accurate information for this summary. The deadline to complete the survey and submit updates is Friday, May 29.

Legislative Issues

Sherri Reynolds stated that there was a handout in the members' packets on the [2009 Legislative Session – Preliminary Summary](#). Sherri asked members for any additional updates on legislative issues:

- The Department of Health's rate exemption bill did not pass.
- There is a provision in the Appropriations Act for all state employees who are making over \$45,000 to receive a 2% reduction in pay and up to 14 days of furloughs. (This was subsequently vetoed by the governor).
- The Department of Corrections has reduced the number of community treatment beds (jail diversion beds) by approximately 20-25%. This will be another contributing factor to the overcrowding of the jail and a casualty in the budgeting process. There is stimulus funding available but it will not account for the revenue that will be lost. Hillsborough County is contemplating the idea of buying some of these beds for their jail-overcrowding situation.

Brainstorming for Youth Update

Karen Bogues reported that the Brainstorming for Youth began in November 2008 as a countywide plan for all young people under the age of 18. The group had their second meeting and is continuing to move forward.

FRAN Update

Nancy DeLoach gave a brief presentation on the [Foreclosure Resource Assistance Network](#) (FRAN). Bob Stuckey gave this same presentation to the Board of County Commissioners on May 13. The County's role is to convene, facilitate, and support the building of an integrated network of community resources to address the critical foreclosure issue. The Board was encouraged and pleased with the coordinated efforts of the community. Their efforts are beginning to gain momentum with referrals being made and clients being seen to assist through this very difficult time.

A discussion ensued regarding homeowners associations dealing with vacant houses, banks taking over the ownership of vacant homes, the obligation to keep the homes maintained, and paying the back taxes and the past due homeowner association fees prior to selling the homes.

Standing Committee and Work Group Updates

Developmental Disabilities Committee

Ryan Stoyles reported that the Developmental Disabilities Transportation Subcommittee will be meeting with SCAT soon to finalize the plan for the local agencies who serve persons with developmental disabilities in the community. The full Committee is working on identifying additional family representatives for the group. The next meeting will focus on the future priorities of the Committee.

Nominating and Membership Committee

Janet Kahn reported that there was a draft report of the [Steering Committee members](#) in the members' packets for review. Janet went over the report and recommendations:

- Change Local Foundations to Local "Funders":
 - Combine the two United Ways into one under the local funders category
- Local Government:
 - Move the law enforcement representatives to the Criminal Justice category in order to provide an opportunity to bring in three additional local government representatives under Local Government
- Criminal Justice:
 - Expand this category to five seats by moving the three law enforcement representatives to this category from the Local Government category
- Housing:
 - Delete the Office of Housing and Community Development
 - Add the Sarasota Housing Authority and Habitat for Humanity
- Business/Economic Development:
 - Delete the Economic Development Corporation of Sarasota County
- Community Planning and Resources:
 - Add the Nonprofit Resource Center

Janet explained that there will be revisions to the Community Alliance bylaws due to the membership modifications. The final recommendations will be presented to the members of the Steering Committee at the June 15 meeting. Chip Taylor mentioned that there is a waiting period of 14 days prior to voting. Therefore, the bylaw revisions should be sent out to the members within the next 10 days for the members to review prior to the June 15 meeting.

Planning and Outcomes Committee

Karen Bogues reported that there was a [revised work plan](#) for the Planning and Outcome Committee (POC) in the members' packets for review. The revisions contain strong language in terms of the role of the committee. Karen pointed out that the major change in the plan is that the Community Alliance will designate this committee to take the leadership role in establishing outcomes and priority issues. This would be a huge change in the way the Committee currently operates. Ken Alexander noted that the revisions are a way to sharpen the plan and to clean up the language in the document. Karen mentioned that the Committee is excited to have more of an impact and an active role on the Alliance and asked members to vote on the changes.

A discussion ensued on the revised work plan, including how the group will solicit input from the community, the existence of the original work plan, and the need for coordination with SCOPE and HSAC in redefining the successes. The members requested further discussions on the revised work plan. Sherri Reynolds asked members to review the revised work plan and an additional discussion will be placed on the agenda for the June 15 meeting. It was suggested that Karen send out an email to the full Alliance on the next POC meeting date in order for members to participate.

Sarasota COAD

Chip Taylor reported that the last meeting focused on Swine Flu along with a clearer understanding of what was occurring in the community. Sherri Reynolds stated that there was a recent collaboration between the communication directors of the Sarasota County's Emergency Management System, the Emergency Operations Center, the School Board, and the Department of Health to discuss the flu epidemic and how to disseminate the information swiftly to the community. It was announced that there will be a mock hurricane drill at the Health Department for the COAD on June 2.

Substance Abuse and Mental Health Stakeholders' Consortium

Pam Meunier reported that there was a [summary report](#) in the members' packets for review. Pam pointed out that the Crisis Intervention Team (CIT) Training is going very well and many around the table are involved in the training. It is a great community effort.

Dale Lux announced that May is Mental Health month. Due to the economic downturn, NAMI will not hold their traditional event. Dale stated that if any organization has a scheduled program event during the month of May that NAMI would support their event. Dale suggested holding an annual collaborative Mental Health event in the community next May. This could include the criminal justice system, mental health providers, psychiatrists, and others. Dale noted that he is very committed to this cause and in making a difference in the mental health community.

P.J. Brooks announced that the Substance Abuse and Mental Health Strategic Planning Work Group is in the process of studying prevention planning that encompasses mental health issues from the perspective of the Stakeholders' Consortium and Community Alliance. At the last

meeting, the work group presented the Juvenile Justice Council's plan that captured three priorities and how the council was moving forward.

Kathryn Shea pointed out that Sarasota County will no longer receive the "Families and Schools Together" (FAST) funding due to the prevention plan not being submitted on time for approval. Sarasota County has lost over \$270,000 in funding over the next three years to provide this program which over the last seven years had outstanding outcomes.

New Business

Karen Bogues noted that this is Mark Porter's last meeting on the Alliance and asked to recognize him for his work and contribution to the Community Alliance over the years. Mark received an ovation from the Steering Committee members.

Public Comment

None

The next Community Alliance Steering Committee meeting will be held on Monday, June 15 at 1:30 pm, at the Sarasota County Health and Human Services Building, 2200 Ringling Blvd. In Room 226.