

COMMUNITY ALLIANCE OF SARASOTA COUNTY

“Partnering Assets Together for Human Services”

Sarasota School Board Chambers, 1980 Landings Blvd.

August 17, 2009

Meeting Summary

STEERING COMMITTEE MEMBERS PRESENT:

Humberto Alvia	St. Jude’s Hispanic Center
Dave Beesley	First Step of Sarasota
Judi Bell	Nonprofit Resource Center
Karen Bogues	Community Youth Development
P. J. Brooks	Juvenile Justice Council
Rose Chapman	Jewish Federation of Sarasota and Manatee Counties
Carolyn Eagen	Mental Health Community Centers
Keliy Fordham	STAR Representative
Kay Glasser	Community Planning
Stanley Godleski	Seniors Advisory Council
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
Bill Little	Sarasota County Health Department
Dale Lux	National Alliance for the Mentally Ill
Richard Martin	Suncoast Partnership to End Homelessness
Laura McIntyre	Family Safety Alliance
Erin McLeod	Senior Friendship Centers (for Bob Carter)
Janice Mee	SCOPE
Sarah Pappas	Selby Foundation
Steve Queior	Sarasota Chamber of Commerce
Sherri Reynolds	School Health Advisory Council
Tammy Short	City of Venice (for Chief John Reed)
Stewart Stearns	Community Foundation of Sarasota County
Ryan Stoyles	Community Haven (for Susan Magers)
Jessica Ventimiglia	Manasota 2-1-1
Benny Weaver	Loveland Center
Alex Young	United Way of Sarasota County

STEERING COMMITTEE MEMBERS NOT PRESENT:

Ken Alexander	Sarasota Memorial Hospital
Ginny Donovan	Department of Juvenile Justice
Larry Eger	Public Defender - Twelfth Judicial Circuit
Kirstin Fulkerson	Gulf Coast Community Foundation of Venice
Sarah Hickey	Vocational Interagency Council
Jennifer Highland	Healthy Start Coalition of Sarasota County

Leslie Loveless	SunCoast Workforce Board
Alana Monge	Twelfth Judicial Circuit
Capt. Richard Montemagno	Sarasota County Sheriff's Office
Tom Pfaff	Sarasota United for Responsibility and Equity (SURE)
Bryan Pope	The Salvation Army
Bill Russell	Sarasota Housing Authority
Kathryn Shea	Florida Center for Child and Family Development
Dr. Tam Sicard	Catholic Charities
Dennis Stover	Friendship Volunteer Center
Capt. Paul Sutton	City of Sarasota
Jerry Thompson	Coastal Behavioral Healthcare
Karen Wilkinson	CHIP
Caroline Zucker	School Board of Sarasota County

OTHERS PRESENT:

Andrea Kenzig	Sarasota County Library System
Ed McBride	Safe Children Coalition
Kevin McKenney	Safe Children Coalition
Amy Paulishak	United Way of Sarasota County
Susan Scott	Sarasota County Administration
Dorothy Zech	Nonprofit Resource Center

STAFF PRESENT:

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 August 17, 2009 at the Sarasota County School Board Chambers, 1980 Landings Blvd. at 1:30 p.m.

Financial Stability Partnership Update

Alex Young presented an [update](#) on the Financial Stability Partnership which included the steps in the framework, the purpose, roles, and goals, the core members of the Planning Committee, the action steps, the possible outcomes, and best practices. Alex explained that the Partnership is in a draft planning phase with the initial areas of focus on the Volunteer Income Tax Assistance (VITA) program, financial education, and workforce development. It was pointed out that in 2008 [VITA](#) assisted in 380 returns that generated over \$578,000 in income tax refunds with over \$230,000 that came through the Earned Income Tax Credit (EITC) program. The goal for this coming year will be to process over 1,000 returns.

Alex explained that the Partnership plans to be in alignment with the region and state through shared resources, systems, and markets along with sharing their progress. The Partnership believes that by staying in alignment locally and on a statewide basis the community will be in a much better position for the future. The Partnership is currently reviewing short and long-term resources in terms of securing grant, donations, and sponsorships. Their next steps will be to

build community support by communicating with and involving key stakeholders, engaging in resource development, and continuing to develop, modify, and implement the plan.

A discussion ensued on how to attract the workforce population including the senior population in the workforce, cross marketing, the various models in place, and the current average hourly wage. Members thanked the United Way for stepping up to the plate in this collaborative effort. Alex stated that this presentation will be posted on the United Way's website (<http://www.uwsrq.com>) soon.

Budget Impact Survey Results

Judi Bell and Dorothy Zech gave a report on the [findings](#) of the recent Budget Impact Survey. Judi stated that the Nonprofit Resource Center was asked to analyze the results from the survey to search for patterns and themes, human interest stories, and to write an executive summary. Twenty-six agencies completed the survey, which consisted of three general areas: organizational economic impact, community economic impact, and the advocacy role of the Community Alliance. The results showed a significant reduction in revenues, an overwhelming majority of program closures including critical service programs, the creation of waitlists, and forced downsizing. Overall the agencies experienced approximately \$29+ million in budget reductions over a three-year period, with 21 of the 26 agencies anticipating additional reductions in the coming year. In looking at efficiencies, the agencies felt that they have been efficient for many years by competitively bidding costs of insurance and reviewing payroll along with other operational expenses. Some of the other efficiencies included working harder and accepting reduced benefits along with reassigning staff to cover additional duties. As far as mitigation efforts, agencies shared real life stories through their clients' hardships, the anticipated budget reductions to come, the use of operating reserves to make ends meet and reduction in staff--but at the same time making their best effort to keep the same level of service to their clients. Several stated that they were looking at new sources of revenue, redesigning programs, and moving into shared space.

Dorothy pointed out that during times of crisis, agencies typically utilize three common strategies to achieve their mission:

- Financial strategies – cutting costs and looking for ways to increase revenues.
- Structural strategies – changing the way the agency does business; whether in the mission, organizational, or cultural standpoint.
- Engagement strategies -- reaching out to other nonprofit organizations, members of the community, volunteers, and business organizations.

The survey questions involving the role of the Community Alliance showed that 76% used the word “advocacy”, but it was difficult to find a unified message or a clear pattern to promote messaging and advocacy actions for the Alliance. It was mentioned that there is a need to look at their audience. It was suggested that the Alliance explore moving forward with the local structural and engagement changes for strategic collaborations and partnerships. Dorothy pointed out that there was a story but it is yet to be told. It was suggested to title the story “Tough times bring us together and result in better service.” The executive summary was not completed by the Center as it should be written by the Alliance. Judi mentioned that if any agency disagrees with any of the findings, to please forward corrections to Judi@CFSarasota.org. It was noted that several excellent human interest stories were recently depicted by Zac Anderson on the front page of the *Sarasota Herald-Tribune*.

A discussion ensued on initiating an “Awareness and Advocacy” campaign, unifying proactive advocacy with a defensive strategy, the future level of service, identifying the tears in the Health and Human Services fabric, the successful collaborative programs (VIPER, CART, etc.), the FRAN initiative, extracting the big picture, enforcing agency assistance and partnership opportunities, being the mediator, creating a support system, the available foundation operational grants, educating the community on Health and Human Services and the Alliance, identifying the interconnections, focusing on the current work group activity, and next steps.

Susan Scott stated that the Community Alliance has an opportunity to engage the community in a conversation to influence and transform business policy in the community. This is not about the agencies or organizations. It is about the need to collaborate to serve the clients in the community. Susan suggested that the Alliance hold a workshop with the Board of County Commissioners as part of their “Awareness” campaign. It was mentioned that specific examples should be presented at the workshop on partnerships, coalitions, efficiencies, and better ways of doing business. Sherri Reynolds stated that an announcement will be sent out in request for volunteers to assist with planning the workshop and a follow-up discussion will be presented at the next Executive Committee meeting. Members thanked Judi and Dorothy for an excellent and objective report.

“Hope for Homeowners” Community Seminar Update

Pauline Tracy stated that a [report](#) on the August 1 Hope for Homeowners seminar was in the member’s packets for review.

New Business

None

Public Comment

None

The next Community Alliance Steering Committee meeting will be held on Monday, September 21 at 1:30 pm, Sarasota County School Board Chambers, 1980 Landings Blvd.