

COMMUNITY ALLIANCE OF SARASOTA COUNTY

“Partnering Assets Together for Human Services”

Sarasota School Board, 1980 Landings Blvd.

MEETING SUMMARY

September 20, 2004

STEERING COMMITTEE MEMBERS PRESENT:

Ken Alexander	Sarasota Memorial Hospital
Luis Baron	<i>Sieté Dias</i>
Karen Bogues	Community Youth Development
P.J. Brooks	Manasota Safe Children Coalition Advisory Council
Sandy Caplan	Vocational Interagency Council
Bob Carter	Senior Friendship Centers
Ginny Donovan	Department of Juvenile Justice
Dr. Kay Glasser	Community Planning
Stanley Godleski	Seniors Advisory Council
Eva Goodwin	STAR
Sally Graham	National Alliance for the Mentally Ill (NAMI) (for Dale Lux)
Nancy Hanshaw	Twelfth Judicial Circuit Court
Marvin Huskey	United Way of South Sarasota County
Alan Johnson	Coastal Behavioral Healthcare (for Christine Cauffield)
Janet Kahn	Sarasota School Readiness Coalition
Katie Knight	United Way of Sarasota County (for Alex Young)
Kim Kutch	Department of Children and Families – SunCoast Region
Bill Little	Sarasota County Health Department
Jim Myers	City of Venice
Bill Newell	Salvation Army--Sarasota Corps (for Bert Tanner)
Carl Penxa	Loveland Center
Tom Pfaff	Sarasota United for Responsibility and Equity (SURE)
Millicent Puleo	Hispanic Latino Coalition
Colleen Reardon	Sarasota County Coalition for the Homeless
Sherri Reynolds	Juvenile Justice Council
Nancy Shoemaker	Diocese of Venice
Shannon Staub	Sarasota Board of County Commissioners
Stewart Stearns	Community Foundation of Sarasota County
Beverly Stockton	Suncoast Workforce Development Board

John Swencki
Bill Wallace

First Step of Sarasota (*for Dave Beesley*)
Mental Health Community Centers (for Jessica Ventimiglia)

STEERING COMMITTEE MEMBERS NOT PRESENT:

Sheriff Bill Balkwill
Vanessa Carusone
Rose Chapman

Sarasota County Sheriff's Office
City of North Port
Jewish Federation of Sarasota and Manatee Counties

Richard Coccaro
David English
Kirstin Fulkerson
Sarah Gorman
Don Hadsell

NAACP
Continuum of Care Leadership Council
Gulf Coast Community Foundation of Venice
Healthy Start Coalition of Sarasota County
Office of Housing and Community Development

Peter Howard

Florida Center for Child and Family Development

Frank Kovach
Elliott Metcalfe
Lisa Phillips

School Board of Sarasota County
Public Defender - Twelfth Judicial Circuit
Sarasota Coalition on Substance Abuse (SCOSA)

Steve Queior
Brett Rees

Sarasota Chamber of Commerce
Northern Trust Bank

OTHERS PRESENT:

Dr. Chrissie Budd
Marylee Bussard
Leslie Clarke
Tim Dutton
Diana French
Doug Kerr
Christie Lewis
Dr. Jerry Osterwell
Pastor Bruce Wismer

Renaissance Manor
SCOPE
Sarasota County Health Department
SCOPE
Volunteer Connections
Boys and Girls Clubs
Nonprofit Resource Center
SCOPE
SCOPE and Pineshores Presbyterian

STAFF PRESENT:

Nancy DeLoach
Becky Oliver
James Schulz
Chip Taylor
Pauline Tracy

Sarasota County Health and Human Services
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The Community Alliance of Sarasota County met on September 20, 2004 at the Sarasota County School Board chambers at 1:30 p.m.

Stewart welcomed the members of the Steering Committee and guests, and introductions were made. Stewart recognized new members Luis Baron and Commissioner Shannon Staub.

Approve Amendments to Bylaws

Stewart Stearns reported that the State of Florida changed the composition of Community Alliances (F.S. 20.19) in the last legislative session and many of the current members of the Steering Committee would not be eligible to continue serving on the Alliance. Stewart noted that a change to the bylaws would allow the Alliance to retain its current membership.

Stewart also reported that the proxy for attendance would be eliminated and members who wish to send a designee to Steering Committee meetings would simply notify staff in advance.

Sherri Reynolds moved, Marvin Huskey seconded, motion passed unanimously to approve the proposed amendments to the Community Alliance By-Laws.

SCOPE Family Violence Report

Mary Lee Bussard, along with Dr. Jerry Osterweil, Pastor Bruce Wismer and Tim Dutton, presented a report on SCOPE's Family Violence Study. A report, flyers, postal cards and CDs were distributed to committee members. The Family Violence Study Group met for 6½ months and heard from 42 different experts on the issue. Some of the highlights from the study are:

- On average, between four and five requests for domestic violence and repeat violence injunctions are filed daily. In Sarasota County 1,641 domestic violence reports to police are reported yearly.
- Every day 15 calls are made to SPARCC's rape and domestic violence hotline.
- About two reports of elder abuse are made in our community each day. The real number of incidents is probably closer to 30 per day, as this is one of the most under-reported forms of family violence.
- 40% of calls (nationally) to the police are for domestic violence.
- 20% of bookings at the local jail were for domestic violence.
- 30% of homeless persons cited family problems, including domestic violence, as the primary cause of their homelessness.
- 70% of children in the child welfare system come from violent homes.
- Domestic violence results in billions of dollars in related health care costs and costs to employers (\$3-5 billion according to the Bureau of Justice; \$5-8 billion according to the Centers for Disease Control).
- Short-term and long-term effects of children witnessing family violence may include: difficulties in school, developmental problems, substance abuse, job loss, arrest, and perpetration of family violence.

- About 40% households where there is domestic violence have children under age 12.
- In a local study of children referred for mental health services, 42% had experienced a family violence-related trauma.
- Florida is at the forefront of this issue in: policy, legislation, funding, sentencing laws, and victim services.
- Sarasota has good services and law enforcement to respond to this issue.
- Challenges include: Long-term services: affordable housing, economic assistance, affordable childcare, and medical and dental care.
- Prevention programs are available, but more programs, offered in wide-ranging settings, would increase impact.
- Florida, like much of the nation, lags in addressing elder family violence. Virtually no emergency service options exist for frail elder victims of family violence.
- Services for non-English speaking populations are lacking.
- Persons charged with domestic violence are often required to attend a 29-week batterers' program. While these programs keep track of batterers and reduce the risk of future domestic violence fatalities, completion rates are low and most participants (up to 90%) do not change their behavior.

An excerpt of the documentary film that SCOPE created was presented to the Committee.

Dr. Osterwell recommended regular meetings between frontline responders in the family violence system to help ensure that the existing system for family violence is as effective as possible. He also suggested the following:

- Routinely reviewing and monitoring family violence cases and developing strategies to address gaps in care, including elder, disabled, and other special needs victims of family violence
- Developing strategies to improve batterer accountability, and making programs more accessible
- Making the court system more user-friendly, in order to help encourage victims to come forward.
- Implementing a domestic violence court and restorative justice, which uses a variety of community-based alternatives to court battles or incarceration.

Family violence is viewed as a problem for the legal system; however, the legal system can't handle the problem alone.

- Many forms of family abuse (non-physical abuse) are non-arrestable.
- Most domestic violence victims do not want to prosecute the abuser.
- Involvement in the legal system can sometimes be inappropriate or exacerbate some situations.
- Broader community involvement is needed, especially in prevention, intervention, and referral.

Some strategies to raise community awareness of family violence:

- Area chambers of commerce could create an organizational guide for workplaces.

- Faith leaders could get involved.
- Preventive and supportive services (violence-prevention programs, survivor groups, male-mentoring, etc.) may be offered throughout the community.
- Organizations could distribute information on family violence, and help with community awareness efforts.

Pastor Wismer noted that the challenge is to find a way to organize and sustain efforts. SCOPE and the Family Violence Advisory Council have begun talking about how to make this happen. SCOPE asked the Community Alliance to:

- Include quarterly reports and updates in their meetings (SCOPE members would present).
- Partner with SCOPE and appoint a representative to join the implementation team.
- Participate by affirming the contents and recommendations from the SCOPE report.
- Help promote and attend the free October 4th Event

Family Violence: Not in My Backyard!

Location: Manatee Community College - Neel Auditorium

Date: October 4, 2004

Time: 6 – 8 pm

Marylee stated that the one consistent cause of domestic violence is exposure at a young age to violence.

Chip Taylor suggested that the Community Alliance's Planning and Outcomes Work Group meet to develop the community outcome measures that might define these issues better.

Stewart thanked the SCOPE presenters and noted that the Steering Committee would welcome a quarterly report and that the various committees would be addressing this issue further.

Hurricane Recovery

Update on "Rebuilding DeSoto County"

Katie Knight reported that the United Way of Sarasota includes DeSoto County and the relief effort in DeSoto County is staffed by a United Way employee with response recovery experience from Albuquerque, New Mexico.

Katie noted that a Voluntary Organizations Active in Disaster (VOAD) group meets on Mondays at 1:30 p.m. in DeSoto County and is attended by health and human Services agencies, faith-based organizations and County government employees. The group is being led by a pastor from Brevard County who is the VOAD chair. Housing is the most critical need in DeSoto County and FEMA is conducting door-to-door surveys of the 13,000 homes. Economic development issues are being led by Derek Dunrankin, publisher of the *Charlotte Sun Herald*.

Katie noted that the economic development group is trying to get funding from the federal government for assistance in rebuilding the community.

Katie noted that FEMA is struggling in their efforts from the effects of three hurricanes.

The DeSoto Steering Committee has created a subcommittee to allocate funds through the United Way and are meeting for the first time on Wednesday, September 22. Adrian H. Cline, DeSoto County School Superintendent, chairs this group.

Bill Little reported that employment is the other critical issue facing residents of DeSoto County.

Katie noted that long-term counseling is needed and that Bert Tanner from the Salvation Army is involved. Katie noted that DeSoto County has a higher incident of child abuse and they expect this number to increase.

Update on "Stay-N-Play" FEMA site

Bill Little reported that the Stay-N-Play site is an RV park used to house displaced persons (350 trailers) from Charlotte County. He noted that FEMA has never worked at a site that wasn't in the disaster county, which has caused problems in their communications. Bill stated that there will be a nurse on-site from 10 a.m. – 2 p.m. for the next two weeks, housed in an on-site trailer. Bill noted that the trailer is also staffed by counselors from Coastal Behavioral Healthcare and First Step of Sarasota to address mental health issues at the site. FEMA has a tent with representatives from DCF, Elder Affairs, JOBS Etc. to address economic issues. Two 15-passenger vans are being used for transportation and JOBS Etc. is employing individuals as interpreters for the health clinic, to gather intake forms from the residents and to work in the laundry room. The Florida Fish and Wildlife Game Commission is trapping alligators and Mosquito Management continues to spray for mosquitoes. Bill noted that the Red Cross, Salvation Army, and Catholic Charities are assisting with food, volunteers, housing supplies, and clothing. A volunteer single contact point has been established and FEMA expects this location to be used as transitional housing for six months. Bill noted that interpreters from the Redlands Migrant Christian Association (RMCA) are onsite.

Beverly Stockton reported that on-site child care is an issue being addressed.

Kim Kutch reported that DCF has implemented their emergency food stamp program in Desoto County and currently have 221 families receiving food stamps.

Pauline Tracy reported that she met with other social services agencies to create a generic intake form that can be used by all agencies.

Sherri Reynolds reported that funding for the YMCA homeless youth program has continued although the contract has expired.

Allan Johnson reported that because of Hurricanes Charley and Frances, two Acute Care in Charlotte County were closed. Coastal's Crisis Stabilization Unit (CSU) is accepting these patients and the overflow from Charlotte and Sarasota counties resulted in seven patients with no available beds.

Nancy Shoemaker stated that a Southwest Florida ten-county meeting was held to recap the effects of the hurricanes and they concluded that there is inadequate affordable housing available.

Pending Medicaid Section 1115 "Global Waiver"

Chip Taylor reported that the pending Medicaid Section 1115 "global waiver" is best explained in the "What Could a Waiver to Restructure Medicaid Mean for Florida" document that was distributed and he encouraged committee members to review the document. The State of Florida has indicated that in the fall, they will submit a request to the federal government to approve a Medicaid Section 1115 Waiver which would block grant Florida's Medicaid dollars. Chip noted that several meetings have been held around the state to inform communities about how the proposed Medicaid Reform will affect their communities. Chip stated that the risks and consequences are that the state could experience serious financial problems if miscalculations are made in the waiver request.

Medicaid Reform Symposium

Christie Lewis distributed flyers announcing the Medicaid Reform Symposium on Wednesday, September 29, 1:30 p.m.-5:00 p.m. at Manatee Community College Center for Innovation Lakewood Ranch, 7131, Professional Parkway East, Sarasota, and invited those present to attend. Christie requested those interested to register by phone at 556-1700 or online at www.suncoastnonprofits.org by Tuesday, September 28th.

New Business

Chip Taylor reported that there are three weeks left for submission (by October 15) of Sarasota County's 2005 legislative priorities to Bill Broughton, the County's lobbyist, who will present the issues to the Board of County Commissioners on October 26. Chip stated that Elliott Metcalfe would be scheduling a meeting of the Legislative Advocacy Work Group to update the Alliance's current legislative priority list and asked Steering Committee members who have ideas or suggestion to complete the form that was distributed so that these items can be brought to the Steering Committee on October 18 for approval.

Public Comment

Allan Johnson reported that on September 10, the Human Services Advisory Council voted to reduce funding for Coastal's CSU by \$60,000, which is in conflict to the Community Alliance's focus. Allan stated that this would result in a \$283,000 annual deficit and eliminate 200 bed-days of care and asked members to contact Dr. Christine Cauffield with ideas on how Coastal could address this issue.

Eva Goodwin announced that on Wednesday, September 22, from 7-9:00 p.m. at Sarasota County School Board, there would be a "Teens Tackle Politics" panel discussion for teens to question candidates for election. Eva noted that any questions should be directed to the CYD at 922-5136 or email info@cydonline.org.

NEXT MEETING:

October 18, 2004, 1:30 p.m. at Sarasota School Board chambers, 1980 Landings Blvd.