

COMMUNITY ALLIANCE OF SARASOTA COUNTY

“Partnering Assets Together for Human Services”

Sarasota School Board chambers, 1980 Landings Blvd.

MEETING SUMMARY

November 21, 2005

STEERING COMMITTEE MEMBERS PRESENT:

Ken Alexander	Sarasota Memorial Hospital
Dave Beesley	First Step of Sarasota
Karen Bogues	Community Youth Development
P.J. Brooks	Manasota Safe Children Coalition Advisory Council
Bob Carter	Senior Friendship Centers
Rose Chapman	Jewish Federation of Sarasota and Manatee Counties
Maria Garcia-Casellas	Hispanic Latino Coalition
Kay Glasser	Community Planning
Stanley Godleski	Seniors Advisory Council
Eva Goodwin	STAR
Sarah Gorman	Healthy Start Coalition of Sarasota County
Nancy Hanshaw	Twelfth Judicial Circuit Court
Peter Howard	Florida Center for Child and Family Development
Janet Kahn	Early Learning Coalition of Sarasota County
Kim Kutch	Department of Children and Families – SunCoast Region
Curtis Lavarello	Sarasota Coalition on Substance Abuse (SCOSA)
Bill Little	Sarasota County Health Department
Renee McQueen	Vocational Interagency Council
Janice Mee	SCOPE
Elliott Metcalfe	Public Defender - Twelfth Judicial Circuit
Scott Moore	Economic Development Corporation of Sarasota County
Tom Pfaff	Sarasota United for Responsibility and Equity (SURE)
Sherri Reynolds	Juvenile Justice Council
Daniel Schmelzinger	Office of Housing and Community Development
Nancy Shoemaker	Diocese of Venice
Beverly Stockton	SunCoast Workforce Development Board
Alberto Suarez	Manasota 2-1-1
Bert Tanner	Salvation Army--Sarasota Corps
Jerry Thompson	Coastal Behavioral Healthcare
Alex Young	United Way of Sarasota County

STEERING COMMITTEE MEMBERS NOT PRESENT:

Steve Brett	United Way of South Sarasota County
Vanessa Carusone	City of North Port
Tony Cornish, Jr.	NAACP
Lynore Dickinson	Loveland Center
Ginny Donovan	Department of Juvenile Justice
Kirstin Fulkerson	Gulf Coast Community Foundation of Venice
Frank Kovach	School Board of Sarasota County
Capt. Richard Montemagno	Sarasota County Sheriff's Office
Steve Queior	Sarasota Chamber of Commerce
Mike Schneiderman	Suncoast Partnership to End Homelessness
Shannon Staub	Sarasota Board of County Commissioners
Stewart Stearns	Community Foundation of Sarasota County
Vicki Taylor	City of Venice
Jessica Ventimiglia	Mental Health Community Centers
Tammy Zappa	National Alliance for the Mentally Ill

OTHERS PRESENT:

Stacey Laidlaw	Grassroots Leadership Initiative
Christie Lewis	Non-Profit Resource Center
Kathryn Shea	Florida Center for Child and Family Development
Dennis Stover	Friendship Volunteer Center
Carl Weinrich	Sarasota Family YMCA, Inc.

STAFF PRESENT:

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

The Community Alliance of Sarasota County met on November 21, 2005 at the Sarasota School Board chambers, 1980 Landings Blvd. at 1:30 p.m.

Vice-Chair Elliott Metcalfe welcomed the members of the Steering Committee and guests and introductions were made.

Grassroots Leadership Initiative

Stacey Laidlaw gave a presentation on the Grassroots Leadership Initiative (GLI). She explained that there is a significant part of the community that is not benefiting from the growing economic prosperity, including those who are disadvantaged, disenfranchised, and unrepresented. This initiative will create and support emerging leaders in Sarasota and Manatee counties. It is a community-based program that will be the tool for

connecting people to act on behalf of themselves and others and a key to community cohesion and mobilization. Participants in the GLI program, known as “fellows” will have access to appropriate programs to develop their leadership skills and encourage their growth and success. The programs will give the fellows a front-line perspective which will encourage a passionate commitment to create positive change. Each fellow will have a mentor to guide their progress and will have the opportunity to network with local decision-makers in our area. Participants must be at least 18 years of age and have a high school diploma. The fellowship is offered at no fee to the participant.

The first 13-month program will begin in January 2006 with a class of 15 – 20 GLI fellows. Applicants in the initial class were identified through community-based organizations or self-nomination. Each participant will have an individualized and professional development plan developed by assessing their individual skills, knowledge and goals through workshops, mentoring and networking. This is an opportunity to build bridges, to share ideas and to learn from experienced leaders from business, non-profits and other organizations. There are many partners within this program including the “Sarasota Herald-Tribune,” The United Way of Sarasota County, the University of South Florida, SCOPE, and the Community Foundation of Sarasota County. There will be a continuing need for additional community support, mentors, and contributors in Manatee and Sarasota counties. Within the Community Alliance of Sarasota County, there are many members who could assist in providing the right skills and opportunities for the fellows through their passion to improve the quality of life for all and a willingness to speak up for the community. By broadening the community’s course with a diverse group of community-based leaders, the entire community will realize its economic and creative potential.

COMMITTEE AND WORK GROUP UPDATES

Health Coverage for Uninsured Children Subcommittee (HCUC)

Sarah Gorman reported on the November 10 forum, “Community Solutions to the Challenge of the Uninsured.” Sarah mentioned that they used the SCOPE model for the community conversation at the forum. The committee appreciates the support and attendance of the event. Sarah presented a preliminary report showing:

- The satisfaction survey with a summary of those responses.
- The commitment cards returned by 39 individuals, including all the presenters and the Deputy Secretary of Health for the State of Florida.
- Responses to the small group questions/and additional comments.

Sarah thanked everyone who was involved in the forum, including Pauline Tracy, Jamie Mahadeo, Janet Kahn, Nancy Shoemaker, Kim Kutch and Christie Lewis.

Sarah mentioned that the next step was to receive direction from the Community Alliance on how it will remain involved in a partnership that will take this issue forward in the community. At the present time, there is the right financial support with partners such as USF, the Center for Healthcare Policy Analysis, the Greater Sarasota Chamber of Commerce, the CHIP Project, the Community Foundation and substantial in-kind

support from SCOPE. Sarah mentioned that specific needs were identified during the forum, such as dental care for children in foster care that affect a large number of people in the community. One piece of feedback that stood out during the forum was the fact that affordable health care is just as critical a need in our community as affordable housing.

Sarah mentioned that she received a thank you from Dr. Cynthia Chestnut, Chair of the Board of County Commissioners in Alachua County and a speech pathologist at Shands University Hospital. Dr. Chestnut stated that the forum was instrumental in a successful referendum in her community and that Sarasota County was very fortunate to have citizens with the wherewithal to address health care for the uninsured.

Sarah distributed a handout showing the details of the next meeting, "Continue the Conversation" on January 10 from 3:30pm – 5pm at the Nokomis Community Center, 234 East Nippino Trail, Nokomis.

Legislative Advocacy Committee

Elliott Metcalfe reported that he presented the Community Alliance's 2006 legislative priorities at the local legislation delegation's public hearing on November 3. Bill Little presented on the Medicaid Reform issue and his input was very well received.

Substance Abuse and Mental Health Stakeholders' Consortium (SAMHSC)

SAMHSA Grant

Kathryn Shea reported that the County has begun the process of establishing the 8 key positions which will be part of the administrative team for the Early Childhood Mental Health Partnership project. She stated that they have been involved on a weekly basis with the SAMHSA "webinar" trainings since approval of the grant in October, 2005. The degree of technical assistance we have been receiving from Washington and Tampa by having our own Technical Assistant (TA) representative to assist in getting the program up and going has been wonderful.

Chip Taylor reported that the posting of the of the Administrative Team positions will be completed in the next few weeks, including the Project Director, Finance Specialist, Administrative Assistant, Communication Coordinator, Family Involvement Specialist, Training Specialist, and Information Technologies Specialist. All positions will be state Career Service positions at the Health Department with the exception for the Project Director which will be a Select Exempt Service (SES) position. When the positions are finalized and posted to the People First state website: <https://peoplefirst.myflorida.com/logon.htm>, the Community Alliance members will be notified. The first position that will be filled will be the Project Director so this person can assist in selecting the other positions. The goal is to have all positions filled by the end of January.

Community Alternatives Residential Treatment (CART) Initiative

Bill Little reported that the Community Alternatives Residential Treatment (CART) Initiative has made a lot of progress in the last few weeks.

David Beesley reported on Phase 1. The Board of County Commissioners approved the construction contract for the renovation of the adult addictions receiving facility on November 15. This has enabled First Step to engage contractors to initiate the project, which is now in legal review and hopefully will be finalized by Wednesday, November 23.

Phase 2, the expanded VIP-ER program at the Salvation Army, will graduate its first class on December 8 with 100% of the initial group still in place. This is a remarkable testament to the collaboration efforts of the five partnering agencies.

Major Bert Tanner reported that the program is going very well. They have had a few minor logistical issues and are sorting them out day-by-day. There was a concern of channeling that many people through the building along with those who stayed in the building all day, but it has worked out very well. The program is at the point of adding two additional staff, who should be in place within the next two weeks.

Dr. Jerry Thompson reported that Coastal Behavioral Healthcare's part is going well. They have the psychiatrist on board and many are seeing how vital this part of the program is.

Rose Chapman reported that Jewish Family and Children Services has the family reunification process underway. The initial thinking on this process was that there would be a very slow progression in rebuilding relationships with the families, but it is going very well and they actually have several successful cases already.

Beverly Stockton reported that the JOBS, Etc. mobile van has traveled everywhere from Panama City to Key West to assist those effected by the hurricanes in the past 10 weeks. It is scheduled to return next week and the plan is to place 13 of the 15 participants in jobs by Thursday, December 1. The two other graduates are planning to be reunified with their family after the graduation.

Daniel Schmelzinger reported on Phase 3, the transitional housing component. OCHD has issued an RFP for \$750,000 in federal and state funding to create transitional housing for those graduating from Phase 2 who have no place to live. Applications are due November 30 and an award will likely be made within a couple of weeks.

Bill Little reported that the CART Initiative was presented to the Sarasota City Commission. They were willing to get engaged in a conversation about homelessness and its connections to mental health and substance abuse issues. The same conversation will be presented on Monday, November 28 to the North Port City Commission and in January to the Venice City Commission. Following these presentations, the hope is to have a community conversation with the cities, the county and others around this issue.

Michael Theall reported that Florida Mental Health Institute (FMHI) has been contracted to do a comprehensive evaluation of the CART Initiative. The evaluation will track participants over a 3, 6, and 12 month period to determine how well they are doing once they complete the program.

Planning Committee

Michael Theall reported that the Planning Committee is developing a community plan which will be integrated into the Department of Children and Families' (DCF) regional Substance Abuse and Mental Health strategic plan. DCF should have its new plan format in early 2006 and will provide a copy to the Planning Committee.

The committee plans to hold community forums to provide different groups with an opportunity to give the committee feedback on their perspective of the mental health system in the county. Groups such as the Family Resource Network, the Hispanic-Latino Coalition, and the NAACP have already come forward and stated that they would like to participate in these forums. The committee is in the process of contacting other organizations that provide referrals to the mental health system such as the Florida Bar Association, SHORE and other organizations. The first community forum will be at the Family Resource Network in Sarasota on December 6. During these forums participants will identify gaps in the community's substance abuse and mental health system. The committee's goal is to complete these forums by the end of January 2006.

The next Planning Committee meeting will be on Tuesday, December 13, at 9:00am at the Health Department.

NEW BUSINESS

2-1-1

Alberto Suarez mentioned that the 2-1-1 bill passed the Senate, which is another step in the right direction.

Elliott Metcalfe mentioned that recently there was a very supportive article in the New York Times on 2-1-1 nationwide.

Scheduling of January and February Meetings

Elliott Metcalfe noted that the Steering Committee needs to set and agree on dates for the January and February 2006 meetings, due to the fact that the usual meeting dates both fall on holidays.

Pauline Tracy mentioned that last year the January meeting was moved to the following Monday of the month, which this coming year would be on January 23, but the February meeting was not changed because the majority of the members were working on President's Day.

The Steering Committee members agreed on moving the meeting in January to January 23 and to leave the February meeting on February 20.

Public Comment

There was no public comment.

NEXT MEETING:

January 23, 2006, 1:30 p.m. The meeting will be at the Sarasota School Board Chambers, 1980 Landings Blvd.