

**CHARLOTTESVILLE/ALBEMARLE COMMISSION ON CHILDREN AND FAMILIES  
MINUTES  
SEPTEMBER 5, 2001**

**MEMBERS PRESENT**

Martha Carroll, 16<sup>th</sup> District Court Service Unit  
Dr. Kevin Castner, Albemarle County Schools  
Mark Kindler, Albemarle Citizen Representative  
Dr. Susan McLeod, Thomas Jefferson Health District  
Richard Merriwether, Chair, Charlottesville Citizen Representative  
Larry Miller, Albemarle Citizen Representative  
Aurora Nichols, Charlottesville Youth Representative  
Linda Peacock, City of Charlottesville  
Jim Peterson, Member-at-Large, Region Ten Community Services Board  
Debby Pomerantz, Charlottesville Citizen Representative  
Kathy Ralston, Albemarle Dept. of Social Services  
Sterling Robinson, Albemarle Citizen Representative  
Marti Snell, University of Virginia  
Cathy Train, United Way-Thomas Jefferson Area  
Roxanne White, Albemarle County  
Ashley Young, Albemarle Youth Representative

**MEMBERS NOT PRESENT**

Robert Cox, Member-at-Large, Charlottesville Dept. of Social Services  
Dr. Michael Dickens, Charlottesville Citizen Representative  
Ruth Stone, Vice Chair, Private Provider Representative  
Dr. William Symons, Jr., Charlottesville City Schools

**CCF STAFF PRESENT**

Saphira Baker, Director  
Linda Balnave, Project Assistant  
Cindy Stratton, Administrative Secretary  
Amber Zavada, Information and Outreach Coordinator

**OTHERS PRESENT**

Carla Sykes, Observer from the League of Women Voters of Charlottesville/Albemarle  
David Lerman, Piedmont Works

**HANDOUTS (prior to meeting)**

Agenda for September 5, 2001 Meeting  
August 1, 2001 CCF Meeting Minutes  
Comprehensive Services Act Committee August 2001 Report  
CART August 2001 Cases  
Director's Update for September 5, 2001 CCF Meeting  
Draft of the CCF Annual Report  
Guidelines for CCF Work Groups (Draft)

**HANDOUTS (during meeting)**

CCF Annual Retreat Agenda for October 10, 2001  
Presentation on the Youth Council of the Local Workforce Investment Board for the CCF, September 5, 2001  
CSA Summary Financial Report, County of Albemarle, State Pool Funded Services, Month of June 2001 (Adjusted)  
CSA Summary Net Expenditures Report, City of Charlottesville, State Pool Funded Services, July 2001  
CSA Summary Financial Report, City of Charlottesville, State Pool Funded Services, July 2001  
Reprint of an article published in *The Observer* on August 29, 2001 about *Stepping Stones*  
Reprint of an article published in *The Daily Progress* (On-line) on August 27, 2001 about *Stepping Stones*

**I. WELCOME**

Richard Merriwether called the meeting to order at 5:06 p.m. and welcomed the Commissioners and all others in attendance. He introduced Aurora Nichols, the new youth member representing the City of Charlottesville, and Ashley Young, the new youth member representing the County of Albemarle. He also presented new CCF staff members, Amber Zavada, the Information and Outreach Coordinator, and Cindy Stratton, the Administrative Secretary, to the members of the Commission.

## **II. SPECIFICATION OF ITEMS TO BE ADDED AND ADOPTION OF AGENDA**

The agenda for the meeting was adopted with no changes or additions. Cathy Train moved to adopt the agenda. Larry Miller seconded the motion.

- ◆ **THE COMMISSION ADOPTED THE AGENDA FOR THE MEETING WITH NO CHANGES OR ADDITIONS.**

## **III. COMMENTS FROM THE PUBLIC**

The Chair recognized the presence of Carla Sykes, the observer from the League of Women Voters. David Lerman, of Piedmont Works, explained that he had worked with abused youth in Louisiana and Southern California and was interested in observing the proceedings. Channel 29 News taped portions of the meeting.

## **IV. MINUTES FROM AUGUST 1, 2001**

The minutes from August 1, 2001 were adopted with no changes or additions. Kathy Ralston moved to adopt the minutes. Sterling Robinson seconded the motion.

- ◆ **THE COMMISSION ADOPTED THE MINUTES OF AUGUST 1, 2001 WITH NO CHANGES OR ADDITIONS.**

## **V. REVIEW OF ANNUAL REPORT DRAFT – K. RALSTON**

K. Ralston introduced the draft of the annual report asking for comments from Commission members on the report's recommendations. The current format will be revised before presentation to City Council and the Board of Supervisors. Suggestions regarding the format or content of the rest of the report should be forwarded to Saphira Baker. A summary of the most salient recommendations is contained in the Overview section of the report (on pages 8 to 10).

The first organizational recommendation is the "expansion of citizen participation" in the Commission. S. Baker reported that at the last Commission retreat it was determined that the Commission should be representative of the community with demographics reflective of the community's racial and ethnic diversity. Adding more citizens to the Commission would also help to keep the organization in compliance with Department of Juvenile Justice guidelines that call for a citizen majority. M. Carroll asked if there were new ideas about how to solicit broader community involvement. S. Baker replied that recruitment would take place through local organizations and neighborhood groups. L. Peacock suggested changing the recommendation to advocate that current Commission members actively participate in the recruitment of new members.

The second organizational recommendation is to "enhance links to other local governmental planning bodies" such as the Charlottesville and Albemarle Planning Commissions. K. Ralston noted that there does not seem to be a connection between local government planning of physical infrastructure and human services planning. L. Peacock observed that the comprehensive plan does not contain a social component. K. Ralston suggested forging some relationships and increasing dialogue about the kinds of services needed and the impact of physical planning on people. L. Peacock pointed out that an annual meeting would probably not achieve the goal. Requesting that both planning commissions select individuals to serve on the CCF (or visa versa) might accomplish more. R. White agreed, adding that greater CCF involvement in groups that are working on neighborhood team issues might incorporate human service elements into more planning decisions. S. McLeod indicated that the Thomas Jefferson Planning District Commission has a broader focus than the CCF and she questioned adding it as a non-voting member. S. Baker explained that the Planning District Commission is getting more involved with youth policy and this might be a way for

the two organizations to relate institutionally. R. White advised rewording the recommendation to encourage more links to land use issues that impact on human services but not to specifically develop relationships with other planning bodies. L. Peacock concurred, adding that the CCF should announce its intention to establish those links and state that the Commission is available to offer counsel. L. Miller expressed his concern about the measures required to maintain the links and he agreed with S. Baker that there was no precedence for the interactions. L. Peacock proposed sending an annual report to the City and County Planning Commissions with information that they need to consider. S. McLeod expressed doubt that the recommendation was ready to be sent in the annual report to City Council and the Board of Supervisors. She felt it was a new issue that the Commission, as a whole, may not yet embrace. R. White replied that the recommendation could state, “enhance links to local government planning efforts and develop links between human services and land use planning” without indicating precisely how to make the connections. C. Train suggested using the words “open channels.” More specifics concerning the formation of the links could be placed in another part of the report.

K. Ralston reviewed the next two recommendations: “increase opportunities to share information” and “support the continued and expanded use of outcome measurement.” L. Peacock noted that the Commission needed to be more specific about how to share information effectively. R. White advised the CCF to do its homework and be aware of issues that come before the Council and Board. When the CCF has information that is relevant to the issues being introduced then it is appropriate to inform the Council and Board that the CCF has important information for them to consider before they make their decisions. M. Snell agreed that this idea would offer more specificity, be more under the CCF’s control and be more measurable than a vague recommendation. C. Train questioned the use of “public agencies” in the outcome measurement recommendation. Involvement has been with community based non-profits not public agencies. Weed and Seed uses outcome measurement criteria but has not begun a review. L. Peacock suggested specifying only “community agencies.”

K. Ralston continued by presenting the three recommendations listed under Partnership for Children (on page 9): “assist Partnership members in raising community awareness of the impact of child abuse and neglect on local children,” “support efforts to improve access to affordable dental care for low-income children,” and “promote the Partnership for Children as a local asset.” L. Peacock asked about including support for affordable dental care in the legislative packet. S. McLeod indicated that she was unsure what was meant, as there was not enough involvement by dentists regardless of their acceptance of Medicaid. D. Pomerantz stated that she would like to come up with alternative language that offers a solution to the problem since the CCF could not compel dentists to accept Medicaid patients. One possibility might be to ask for more money for the Health Department in the legislative packet. A. Young inquired about Medicaid and why dentists were reluctant to accept Medicaid patients. K. Ralston mentioned the low reimbursement rate and the cumbersome paperwork. S. McLeod spoke of the way some people with Medicaid keep and show up for appointments. A. Young asked what the legislative packet was. R. White explained that the region develops a legislative packet or program, supported by all the local governments, to take to the state legislature specifying local concerns. M. Snell noted that the dental care issue was not really a recommendation and all viable options had not been identified. S. Robinson observed that the issue was nevertheless very important and needed to be addressed so others could work on finding solutions as well. M. Snell suggested rewording the recommendation to state that the Commission was gravely concerned about the issue with out promoting options. L. Peacock advised ending the sentence after availability, deleting “and to urge local dentists to accept Medicaid patients.”

K. Ralston conveyed the Juvenile Justice Advisory recommendations: “encourage and, if necessary, fund effective interventions to mitigate young people’s involvement in crime” and “require development of quality programming that balances the security and service needs of juveniles at the Detention Center and the Assessment Center Annex, based on the input of the participants at a January 2001 roundtable.” She continued by outlining the Children Needing Extensive Services recommendations: “assist local agencies in lobbying the legislature and the governor to provide the total state funding for placement of CNES children” and “support and lead a community initiative to reduce domestic violence.” She followed with a description of the Comprehensive Services Act Committee recommendation (on page 10): “lobby for removal of the local match required for Medicaid, and for increased administrative funds to support CSA information management systems and reimbursement for staff and support services required for state-

mandated administration.” The CSA recommendation is similar to one supported last year, which went into the legislative packet but did not reach the governor’s desk. R. White proposed that the Children Needing Extensive Services recommendation should say “lobby the legislature” not “assist local agencies in lobbying.” S. McLeod suggested including in the Overview section only key points, cross referenced by page number to more extensive information provided in the body of the report. S. Baker informed the Commission that the annual report is scheduled to be presented to City Council on October 1<sup>st</sup> and to the Board of Supervisors on October 3<sup>rd</sup>. She asked that Commission members provide her with their edits within seven days. She requested that Commissioners consider participating in the presentations before the Council and Board, which should last between ten and fifteen minutes.

R. Merriwether asked for a motion to approve the draft annual report with the comments made by Commission members. Larry Miller moved to approve the draft annual report. Martha Carroll seconded the motion.

- ◆ **THE COMMISSION APPROVED THE DRAFT ANNUAL REPORT WITH CHANGES MADE BASED ON THE ABOVE STATED COMMENTS FROM MEMBERS OF THE COMMISSION.**

## **VI. PROPOSAL FOR OCTOBER 10 RETREAT – R. MERRIWETHER**

R. Merriwether announced that the CCF retreat would take place on October 10<sup>th</sup> at Camp Albemarle. The environment is rustic and he advised dressing appropriately. Jan Dorman, the facilitator last year, would facilitate again this year. The focus of the retreat would be children and families and commissioners were asked to consider what has been learned and to translate that information into work for the Commission. He asked Commission members to come and enjoy the good food and good company. S. McLeod asked who would participate in the presentations, Commission staff or members. S. Baker responded that CCF staff would provide support for the retreat. S. McLeod suggested that next year, the annual report should come out of recommendations made during the Commission retreat. S. Baker indicated that there was still time to struggle with the annual report before it is brought to City Council and the Board of Supervisors. She said the findings in the annual report would be part of the focus of the retreat. A. Young asked if the retreat could be postponed by half an hour since she did not get out of school until 3:50 p.m. She was encouraged to come when she could.

R. Merriwether asked for a motion to approve the draft agenda for the retreat. Martha Carroll moved to approve the draft agenda. Sterling Robinson seconded the motion.

- ◆ **THE COMMISSION APPROVED THE DRAFT AGENDA FOR THE RETREAT WITH NO CHANGES OR ADDITIONS.**

## **VII. UPDATES FROM WORK GROUPS**

### **A. OUTCOME MEASUREMENT WORK GROUP – L. PEACOCK**

L. Peacock reported that joint applications were developed on a pilot basis for the City, the County and the United Way. The purpose was to employ the economies of scale to trim costs and to reduce the number of times agencies had to appear. The work group conducted an analysis to determine how well this worked and to see if the structure was conducive to the schedules of the United Way Campaign and the City and County budget processes. There were problems coordinating the dispersal of information to each agency. Last year there was a joint presentation in January. The turn around time made it necessary for the United Way to review programs in April that were not part of the process. The work group concluded that a single joint review program was not feasible. Although there could be a common application and training, a separate review process was required due to the different calendars. Other efforts have been put on hold. Site visits will be held when they can be agreed on. Plans by the United Way to conduct agency

tours with agency team members will occur when possible. A common application for the separate review process will be refined, updated and released by late September (due in November). A meeting will be set up between the CCF and the United Way to discuss how to share information and collaborate further. Training of peer tutors to do cooperative outcome measures will take place on either October 4<sup>th</sup> or 11<sup>th</sup>. The award given to agencies that have done well will not be given this year and outreach to surrounding counties will not occur because of a shortage of staff and resources. S. Baker noted that a box advertisement would be placed in the newspaper announcing the start of the new funding cycle. Future plans include expanding and invigorating outcome measurement participants, adopting a process to approve outcome measures and conversing about joint site visits. C. Train commented that the United Way had no idea what they had to spend until April or May. L. Peacock noted that for business people the end of the fiscal year was the end of the calendar year. K. Ralston observed that a common application that seems to meet everyone's needs might expand beyond reasonableness for small agencies. C. Train stated that the application needed a lot of clarification and simplification. R. White said the application was not much different than the one last year. R. Merriwether thanked L. Peacock for her report.

#### **B. COMPREHENSIVE SERVICES ACT COMMITTEE – R. COX**

R. Merriwether related that Buz Cox was ill and was not present to give the report. He asked where all these CSA children came from. J. Peterson said that several hundred children were being served each year. M. Snell asked if kids were being seen more than once. M. Carroll indicated that they often were. K. Ralston said there were some new children in the CART report. It was noted that some of the situations were truly heart breaking. There was significant domestic violence in the background of some of the children. This is occurring over and over and is something the community needs to get a handle on as it is producing sad results in the children affected. Drug and alcohol abuse in parents is common and in some cases may cause congenital syndromes in the kids. Due to chaotic life styles, some children are missing many days of school with out follow up. It needs to be determined whether a family that moves from jurisdiction to jurisdiction needs to be monitored or not. The circumstances echo common themes from the Children Needing Extensive Services report. R. Merriwether wondered if any children came from surrounding counties. S. McLeod observed that it was the nature of many of these families to move frequently but other counties were not necessarily to blame. R. White said some data on CNES cases could be obtained from Harmony. K. Ralston stated that what was needed was a massive data management system funded by the City and County, not Harmony. S. Baker commented that Harmony contained demographic and cost data and had potential that was not being utilized due to technical constraints. S. McLeod suggested putting a request for a data information system into the annual report. M. Carroll observed that domestic violence cases flooded the court and greatly outweighed reports of juvenile delinquency. C. Train asked if an appeal was put out for African American foster families. K. Ralston said she would find out. M. Snell inquired about the differing costs for treatment facilities (Grafton \$9,000/month, Pines Treatment Center \$5,000/month, and DeJarnette \$13,000/month). M. Carroll stated that the figures reflected what the cost was to the locality (what CSA gives to local and state government) not the cost of the whole service and did not include monies from other funding sources. R. Merriwether thanked work group members for their report.

#### **VII. UPDATE ON YOUTH COUNCIL OF LOCAL WORKFORCE INVESTMENT BOARD – S. ROBINSON**

S. Robinson gave the Commission an update on the Youth Council of the Local Workforce Investment Board Youth Symposium planned for Planning District 9 on November 7<sup>th</sup> at the Holiday Inn in Culpepper and for Planning District 10 on November 13<sup>th</sup> at the Double Tree Hotel in Charlottesville. A grant to assist with some of the costs could not be obtained. At present, the budget for the Youth Symposium is \$10,000. The facilitator has not been determined. A meeting will be held on September 18<sup>th</sup> to formulate plans. The registration package and program will be developed by the middle or end of October. Flyers

will be distributed to high schools and other locations. The Culpepper school superintendent was assisting with the planning for Planning District 9 but his term has ended. It is hoped that the community response to the Symposium will be similar to the reaction to the Youth Summit in July. R. Merriwether thanked S. Robinson for his report.

**IX. MEMBERSHIP GUIDELINES FOR WORK GROUPS – S. BAKER**

S. Baker presented the draft of the *Guidelines for CCF Work Groups*. She reported that the impetus for the development of the guidelines came from Juvenile Justice Advisory Committee members who wanted to clarify their role and their connection with the Commission. Many of the recommendations were common sense, such as the concept that the Commission is informed of decisions made in the work groups. K. Ralston asked about disagreements between the work group and the CCF. S. Baker indicated that the JJAC wanted the CCF to have the opportunity to “agree to disagree” with the work group without stopping the work of the committee. This would allow members of the JJAC to feel they had an impact on the juvenile justice system without having their hands tied. J. Peterson questioned whether the Commission or members of the Commission had the opportunity to disagree. R. White was unclear about the meaning of the request. If the work group labored according to the Commission’s priorities, wouldn’t the work group need to know when the Commission disagreed? It was clarified that Dave Chapman, the Commonwealth’s Attorney for the City, expressed the need for autonomy as a constitutional officer responsible to the court and believed he could not be held by the decisions of the Commission. He is accountable to the public who elected him. Other members of the JJAC were not as concerned about the relationship with the CCF. S. McLeod suggested taking the *Guidelines* to the City Attorney for his advice. S. Baker will bring the *Guidelines* to the next CCF meeting after discussions with the City Attorney.

**X. UPDATE – S. BAKER**

S. Baker reported that more people were calling for information after the extensive media exposure on *Stepping Stones*. Since the regular October CCF meeting was cancelled due to the retreat, she asked that the legislative agenda be approved by email, with the Executive Committee having the final approval. The work groups were already working on the legislative agenda and as yet there were few major changes from last year. C. Train observed that agencies were commenting that the media coverage of *Stepping Stones* presented an oversimplification of the issues, bringing in extrapolatory data and suggesting things that were not true. They suggested calling the reporter and providing more information. S. Baker replied that *The Daily Progress* was looking for trends and wanted to focus only on teen pregnancy. K. Ralston remarked that *The Observer* reported the views of other agencies.

**XI. MEMBERS’ COMMENTS**

R. Merriwether asked for members’ comments. He thanked Saphira Baker and her staff for their great effort in developing the annual report. He asked for a motion to adjourn. Jim Peterson moved to adjourn the meeting. Sterling Robinson seconded the motion.

◆ **THE COMMISSION APPROVED THE MOTION TO ADJOURN.**

The meeting adjourned at 6:40 p.m.