

**CHARLOTTESVILLE/ALBEMARLE COMMISSION ON CHILDREN AND FAMILIES
MEETING MINUTES
May 4, 2005
ACOB-5TH STREET, CCF CONFERENCE ROOM**

MEMBERS PRESENT

Martha Carroll, 16th District Court Service Unit
Shirley Copeland, Albemarle Citizen Representative
Robert Cox, Charlottesville Dept. of Social Services
Madison Cummings, Albemarle Citizen Representative
Dr. Michael Dickens, Charlottesville Citizen Representative
Leslie Harris-Scott, Charlottesville Citizen Representative
Timothy Heaphy, Charlottesville Citizen Representative
Tracey Hopper, Albemarle Citizen Representative
Winx Lawrence, University of Virginia
Dr. Susan McLeod, Thomas Jefferson Health District
Linda Peacock, City of Charlottesville
Kathy Ralston, Chair, Albemarle Department of Social Services
Sterling Robinson, Albemarle Citizen Representative
Alia Stewart-Silver, Charlottesville Youth Representative
Danielle Wilcox, Charlottesville Citizen Representative

MEMBERS NOT PRESENT

Phil Campbell, Region Ten Community Services Board
Dr. Kevin Castner, Albemarle County Schools

MEMBERS NOT PRESENT (CONT)

Noah Schwartz, Monticello Area Community Action Agency
Cathy Train, United Way-Thomas Jefferson Area
Kim Walters, Albemarle Youth Representative
Roxanne White, Albemarle County

CCF STAFF PRESENT

Saphira Baker, Director
Linda Rahman, Program Assistant
Gretchen Ellis, Planner

OTHERS PRESENT

Dave Chapman, Commonwealth Attorney
Andy Block, Just Children
Megan Raymond, UVA

HANDOUTS (prior to meeting)

Agenda for May 4, 2005 CCF meeting
March 2, 2005 CCF meeting minutes
Director's Report
Work Plan: Areas for further development
Charlottesville CSA Summary Financial Report
Albemarle CSA Summary Financial Report
CSA Meeting Minutes

HANDOUTS (during meeting)

NONE

I. WELCOME AND INTRODUCTIONS

K. Ralston, Chair, called the meeting to order at 5:00 p.m. and welcomed Commissioners and the public.

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

No agenda items were added.

- ◆ **THE COMMISSION APPROVED THE AGENDA OF THE MAY 4, 2005 CCF MEETING.**

III. COMMENTS FROM THE PUBLIC

No comments were made.

IV. MINUTES FROM THE CCF MEETING FOR MARCH 2, 2005

A motion to approve the March 2, 2005 minutes was made by Madison Cummins and seconded by Martha Carroll.

◆ THE COMMISSION APPROVED THE AMENDED MINUTES OF THE MARCH 2, 2005 CCF MEETING.

V. DELIBERATION OF PUBLIC COMMENTS ON CHILD ADVOCACY CENTER

K. Ralston stated that at the last Commission meeting, comments were made by Andy Block (See March 2, 2005 CCF Meeting Minutes, Comments from Public,) regarding the Child Advocacy Center. K. Ralston invited Dave Chapman, Commonwealth Attorney for Charlottesville and member of the CAC Taskforce to respond to Mr. Block's opposition to the CAC. D. Chapman introduced himself and gave an overview of the background that led to the development of the CAC Taskforce, what professionals were involved and what the anticipated outcome would be. He stated that the Multidisciplinary team looked at the merit of founding a CAC formed with the intention of integrating professionals frequently involved with child abuse and neglect cases, providing support and services for victims of child abuse and their families, providing information to aid in the prosecution of perpetrators, and providing information and education to the community and other professionals. He stated they came together for this principal. The taskforce did not see the CAC simply as a building, a major source draining assets from the community, but a better continuum of services and procedures dealing with children and families affected by verbal, physical and sexual abuse and their perpetrators. He stated that it is remarkable in the prevalence in terms of the number and variety of children and families that have been touched by abuse and the affect is traumatic. He noted that prevention is the best tool but that we should not put all our efforts in prevention without being effective, efficient and appropriately focused on serving those who, in fact, are the victims of child abuse here and now in addition to serving the perpetrators. D. Chapman stated that we do not cease to serve those who have already been victimized in anything that we do. We do not put all of our educational efforts into prevention and fail to try to remediate. D. Chapman stated that the taskforce wants to make sure that people hear the perspective of a CAC in the proper context, rank it in the appropriate order and sees it as a resource that will have a continuum of services that meets the needs of the community.

A. Block stated that he had a better understanding of what the CAC entailed but still questioned whether the community needs a center or something else to accomplish the goal of providing better service and questioned whether there was a need for the task force to raise money.

M. Dickens inquired if the taskforce was set up to objectively measure the outcomes. G. Ellis stated that a group of students at the University of Virginia Darden School of Business conducted a Business Plan for the CAC, which they presented to the major members of the task force and will do so again on Tuesday, May 10. The students concurred with all the suggestions and advised that the taskforce start with a virtual CAC, without monetary resources but using existing space and resources. The students believed the data underlined was a critical piece and advised them to move forward slowly and not use a lot of resources from other places.

T. Heaphy noted that the Commission and taskforce had already spent a substantial amount of time and energy on this project and the Commission was past the point of stopping the CAC; however, it did not mean the Commission was not interested in prevention. L. Harris-Scott inquired if all the pros and cons and alternatives were reviewed. G. Ellis stated that the sub-committee considered whether there were alternatives and noted that this is not a perfect world

and it is no one's job to follow up on victims of non-caretaker abuse and that the CAC would meet those needs.

Commission members discussed the pros and cons and the need for quality improvement and an actual center. D. Chapman noted that the Drug Court is not a certain place and that the CAC would not be much different at first. However, G. Ellis noted that in order to receive State and Government benefits, we would eventually need to have a "place". She stated that the CAC Taskforce would report back to the Commissioners in October with recommendations for implementing.

K. Ralston inquired if the Commissioners wanted to change directions and all agreed to support the continuation of the CAC. The Commission thanked Andy Block and Dave Chapman for their involvement and encouraged them to stay involved.

VI. NOMINATIONS/TERMS ENDING JUNE 30TH

K. Ralston notified the Commissioners that the Nominating Committee was not ready to present nominations at this meeting but will have nominations to present at the next meeting.

L. Peacock stated that the Commissioners would be notified of the nominations before the next meeting so they would have time to reflect on them.

VII. UPDATE ON POST-RETREAT STRATEGIC PLANNING

K. Ralston summarized for the Commissioners the scenario they agreed to at the retreat and what the Commissioners had asked the Executive Committee and the Re-design/Re-structuring committee to flush out, the possible changes to ABRT and to review different models of organizations similar to CCF around the country. K. Ralston reviewed with the Commissioners the work plan they had received previously. She noted that the Executive Committee was on target with the goals and would have a full report ready for the Commissioners in July. S. Baker stated that it was exciting and energizing talking to directors of other Commissions and gave an overview of what she has found. The Commissioners discussed the need to focus their energy in one direction while taking into consideration their capacity with cuts in State funding which would require the need to look for additional revenue. S. Baker stated that the reception she has received has been favorable to a non-profit arm. The Commissioners discussed applying for grants that would take the Commission to the next step. S. McLeod suggested that the Commission discuss joining forces with the Board of Children, Youth and Family Services to avoid overlaps or duplication of services. The Commissioners agreed that while seeking additional sources for funds, they need to be aware of funds that might be competitive with other non-profits and the importance of not reducing support for direct services. K. Ralston stated that the Commission is not a direct service agency but that we still need to be thoughtful. T. Heaphy noted that we are seen differently in the eyes of the public and non-profit agencies; agencies know us for our ABRT work and the public knows us for *Stepping Stones*. Commissioners discussed fundraising and establishing parameters on the types of funds that are sought.

VIII. DIRECTOR'S REPORT

S. Baker stated that we have two Commissioner openings in the County and one opening in the City. She announced that Dr. Dickens and Sterling Robinson's terms are ending and Alia Stewart-Silver will stay one more year. She reminded the Commissioners that word of mouth is the best way to solicit Commissioners and encouraged them to spread the word. She announced that the City deadline is June 2nd and the County deadline for applications is May 26th.

S. Baker commented that W. Lawrence did a fabulous job in presenting the Assets for Youth report to the County Board of Supervisors today. The Board was very engaged, asked a lot of questions and mentioned the idea of establishing a job-clearing house for youth employment. The City Council was also very positive and asked the Assets for Youth Work Group to make a presentation to the Housing Authority. W. Lawrence stated that the Board had a lot of enthusiasm, especially for eliminating fees for student activities and hoped that the School Board would agree.

M. Cummings announced that 64 people attended the Youth Learning function and the testimonials were very good.

IX. MEMBERS COMMENTS

M. Carroll spoke about education on gang involvement. She stated that she and Saphira met with Chief Longo and Miller. The current plan is to conduct doing extensive training in late summer with teachers and people on the front line (probation officers, social workers, etc.). M. Carroll stated that staff in local institutions have seen significant gang activity and that gangs are present in the community. She stated that they are looking forward to raising citizen's awareness. K. Ralston noted that a presentation had been made to the County Leadership Council and she thought a similar presentation to CCF would be useful. T. Heaphy stated that the D.O.C. has a visual presentation that would be helpful and warned about using the word "gang" as it is a loaded term. He advised being careful of "labels", as there are neighborhoods in Charlottesville that will resist being labeled. K. Ralston asked M. Carroll to help organize a presentation to the Commission in July or August.

T. Hopper spoke about the impact of divorce on children. She stated that she is a Family Law Attorney and has witnessed the devastation that divorce has on children and families and has spoken to counselors on how to help with this situation. She reported that statistics shows that 60% of married couples are getting divorced and there are a huge number of children that are affected by that. T. Hopper stated that there are professionals available to help people with questions and premarital counseling but services to help children cope with the divorce is lacking.

The Commissioners discussed intervention, court ordered parental classes, and what CCF can do. S. Mcleod stated that CYFS currently conducts classes regarding this and we should invite them to be part of this brainstorming. W. Lawrence suggested that T. Hopper get in touch with Bob Emery at UVA; he is nationally known and a great person to include as he pioneered mediation and working with the courts on the impact of divorce on kids here in Charlottesville.

M. Dickens informed the Commissioners that divorce is the biggest problem he faces with his patients. The Commission discussed the impact and where in the break-up of the marriage are there signs that the divorce is impacting the child; and who would we aware of these signs first. T. Hopper will talk to Bob Emery and asked the Commissioners to email her with any information they may have. K. Ralston suggested FOCUS as another resource and S. McLeod suggested involving high school students in a focus group to discuss.

The meeting adjourned at 6:20 p.m.

**THE NEXT MEETING OF THE COMMISSION WILL BE
JUNE 1, 2005
IN THE ALBEMARLE COUNTY 5TH STREET OFFICE BUILDING
CCF CONFERENCE ROOM**

