

**Harney County Commission on Children and Families**  
**Regular Meeting Minutes**  
**3/14/06**

Attending: Chair: Dan Nichols; Debbie Ausmus; Ann Vloedman; Michelle Bradach; Kristen Johnson; Lou Davies; Ramona Hofman; Kristi Curtis, Assistant; Patty Dorroh, Director  
Absent: Joyce Moser; Sonni Svejcar  
Guests: Terri Hellbusch; Dustin Hiatt; Gwen Haigh; Laura Van Cleave; Laura Moulton; Kathy Rementeria; Susan Taylor; Debbie White; Chris Siegner

Dan called the meeting to order at 1:45 p.m. The commissioners had been reviewing the Harney Behavioral Health (HBH) Comprehensive Plan. Dan stated the Commission will need to make a recommendation for the plan before he signs it prior to County Court tomorrow, and that there would be more discussion later in the meeting. Call to order

The agenda for today's meeting and minutes of the January 9, 2006 annual retreat meeting were approved as written. Approval of  
Agenda,  
Minutes

Laura Van Cleave and Laura Moulton were present for public comment. They came to make the Commission aware of the events happening for April Awareness Month: Child Abuse Prevention Month, Sexual Assault Awareness Month and Crime Victims Rights Week. Laura V. stated the month will start with hanging origami birds from the trees on Broadway with the names of victims of abuse. HHOPE staff are planning to visit some of the rural schools to educate children. There will be a Super-market Saturday at Sentry on April 15<sup>th</sup> and Harney Partners will be hosting the Spring Conference April 20<sup>th</sup> & 21<sup>st</sup>. Self defense classes will be held April 21<sup>st</sup> & 22<sup>nd</sup> and donations for scholarships for those classes are coming in. Activities throughout the month will be "Hands are not for Hurting" and public service announcements on the radio in three different languages. Laura Moulton gave information concerning the speaker Jan Hindman, who will be presenting a workshop at the Camp Casino on April 12<sup>th</sup>. Jan's topics are "Our American Society" and "There is No Sex Fairy." Everyone is encouraged to attend. The cost is \$50. Public  
comment  
from Laura  
Van Cleave  
and Laura  
Moulton

Lou asked Laura V. what we as a commission can do to help reduce domestic violence. Laura V. answered that we need to educate children and parents. Laura M. added that the cycle needs to be broken with the victims. Lou wondered if there was some way to mandate couples to take a class when purchasing a marriage license. Laura V. stated education needs to start early and HHOPE has brochures at the courthouse, hospital, and clinic.

Terri gave an overview of the CASA program and history. Grant/ Harney CASA began in 1999. Terri stated the child abuse rate is 27 per 1,000 in Grant County and 37.9 per 1,000 in Harney County. Harney County is the highest in Oregon. The average for Oregon is 12 percent. She said there are 41 children in Harney County being served by a CASA. There was an unusually large case increase in September. Gwen stated 13 children were taken out of their homes in September. It's believed that some high risk families are moving to Harney County for low income housing. Dan stated that DHS has recently done a good job of catching up on their cases. Ann asked Terri what community members can do to help the volunteers with some of their costs, especially with the rise in fuel prices. Terri commented that she thinks there are restrictions as to donations CASAs can accept. She said she would look into that and get that information to the commission.

CASA  
Update

Dustin gave an update on the Community Stewardship Corps. He stated that six students have been part of the program this year. All the students are from the alternative school, since this program doesn't work with the normal high school schedule. Three students earned two credits and one student earned a half of a credit and then returned to BHS. The program can take two or three more students. The program is for students ages 16-21, but most of the students are 17-18 years old. Gwen has given several names to Dustin as referrals. He can take up to six students at a time (capacity of the vehicle). The students involved seem to be maintaining or improving at school. Dustin reported that he's received a new crew vehicle and he brought copies of the latest newspaper article on the students plus a couple of reference letters from satisfied project clients. The students just finished building a fence for the refuge. Their current project is replacing the door at the Sodhouse Ranch. The students also do recycling and snow shoveling for seniors. If you have project ideas for the students, Dustin said to contact the TEC office at 573-6676. Dan commented that this program helps students take pride in what they're doing and builds self-esteem.

Community  
Stewardship  
Corps  
Update

Gwen gave an update on the Big Buddy Mentoring Program. She passed around scrapbook pages created by the students involved in the Big Buddy Mentoring program. High school students are paired up with fourth and fifth graders. Originally there were 15 pairs, but that number has decreased to 13 pairs due to children being taken out of their homes and sent out of the area. The commission has given \$6,000 to support the Big Buddy program. Meetings are held at the Boys & Girls Club. The next two meetings are March 22<sup>nd</sup> and April 21<sup>st</sup>. Gwen hopes to be able to do an end of the year fun day in Bend.

Reinforcing Positive Youth is having their 2<sup>nd</sup> trimester event tomorrow. The students will go to the theater for a movie and pizza. 178 students were eligible for the 2<sup>nd</sup> trimester event; an increase of 40 from the 1<sup>st</sup> trimester. The 3<sup>rd</sup> trimester event will take place at Crystal Crane Hot Springs on May 31<sup>st</sup>. The capstone event will feature a clean comedian, Gary Benick.

Gwen stated Teen Court is going well. Judge Cramer and other professionals are taking part to make the experience very realistic. The teens are expected to act and dress appropriately for court. Gwen would like to take a group to observe Redmond's Teen Court. She would also like to take the teens that are justices to a training. Teen Court received a \$250 grant that was used to make posters. Some of the students from Teen Court will be passing out flyers at the Spring Conference as a part of their community service. Patty asked if there is any way to measure outcomes. The Juvenile Department may be able to provide statistics on teens that have gone through Teen Court. Patty will follow up on that.

Chris Siegner from Harney Behavioral Health joined the meeting to help the commission in its review of the HBH Comprehensive Plan. The state is implementing a Phase II plan to build a new state hospital and build resources in local communities. HBH has been running their residential program for 16 months. The HBH Advisory Committee has brainstormed some programs to implement into their Comprehensive Plan. There is a need for activities, social functions, and one-on-one counseling (possibly from former consumers) for HBH consumers. The Juvenile Department and mental health cases could be shared when treating adolescent sex offenders. There has been discussion about having a "drug court." This is something other counties use. The consumer would meet with Judge Cramer and a counselor once a week and a plan of action would be established. The consumer would have accountability and would have to return to court if he/she didn't follow through with their plan. HBH also has plans to work together with Child Welfare, the School Superintendent, and increase parental involvement. Group activities could be available at the school relating to mental health and support. Tracking, appointments, and having a common plan will be emphasized in case management. HBH would like to be able to have treatment foster care which would include crisis beds and trained foster parents. The goal is to keep kids in the community. They would also like to have a Child Psychiatrist available for quarterly visits and teleconferencing. Additionally, HBH would like to be able to provide services to the elderly and work along side their physician.

Big Buddy  
Mentoring  
Program  
Update

Reinforcing  
Positive  
Youth

Update on  
Teen Court

HBH Comp  
Plan  
Review:

Need for  
activities,  
counseling

Discussion  
of Drug  
Court

Partnering  
with  
Schools

Foster Care  
Element

<p>Patty provided the Director's Report. She began by welcoming Kristi Curtis, our new Community and Program Liaison staff member.</p>	<p>Welcome to Kristi Curtis</p>
<p>Patty said the minor changes to the Biennial update to Harney County's Comprehensive Plan on Children and Families, discussed at the January 9<sup>th</sup> retreat, were made. The plan was presented to Harney County Court on January 19<sup>th</sup>, the County Court approved the plan, and it was submitted to the State Office ahead of schedule.</p>	<p>County Court Approves CCF Comp Plan Update</p>
<p>The Director reported that the State Commission requires that each county staffed below 2 FTE request a waiver. We are currently at 1.5 FTE, which is where we've been staffed since 2001. Patty prepared the waiver, had it signed by the County Judge and Commission Chair, and mailed it March 7<sup>th</sup>.</p>	<p>2 FTE Waiver Submitted</p>
<p>On January 13<sup>th</sup> Patty attended the final meeting for the Healthy Start Restructure Committee. This was the last of six trips to Salem between October and January. She was able to prevent the imposition of a mandated minimum program size, which would force some counties to regionalize (including our Healthy Start). The result of the committee is a new funding formula to be used next biennium to fund Healthy Start programs. The effect will be to move programs closer to cost efficiency and greater adherence to providing intensive services to high risk families. Harney County's Healthy Start program is doing well along these lines.</p>	<p>Healthy Start Restructure Comments</p>
<p>Patty reported that all providers are on track for their programs and all of them attended the bidders' workshop. Patty attended the Big Buddy Mentoring event on February 15<sup>th</sup> and the February 21<sup>st</sup> session of Teen Court.</p>	<p>Provider Update</p>
<p>Harney County Healthy Start is scheduled to receive a site visit on April 4<sup>th</sup> &amp; 5<sup>th</sup>. As a result of the Healthy Start Restructure process, our Healthy Start program was assessed as needing to create a work plan. The work plan will be based on our site assessment and is required for next year's funding. Patty and Kristi will be participating in the site visit and assessment. Patty stated our program is providing good service and we will be receiving the same level of funding for 2006-2007 as last year.</p>	<p>Healthy Start Site Assessment April 4,5</p>
<p>Donation letters went out and donations were disbursed. In other follow up items, Patty suggested that the film "This Place" be shown at the Harney Partners Spring Conference; however, they have chosen not to include it.</p>	<p>Old Business</p>
<p>Regarding commission support of the Steens Mountain Academy: Patty received some information from Kirkland Institute but would like to hear more. Kirkland staff indicated they would appreciate the commission writing a letter of support for their files. Patty suggested that we invite Dr. Smith to answer our questions at a future commission meeting and then draft a letter. Dr. Smith will be invited to our next meeting.</p>	<p>Steens Mountain Academy Information</p>
<p>Patty attended the Harney ESD Board meeting on February 8<sup>th</sup>. She thanked them for the use of the office space and complimented the Early Childhood</p>	<p>Meetings &amp; Activities</p>

Center on their programs.

Radio and newspaper announcements were advertised for the two bidders' workshops held Feb 17<sup>th</sup> & 21<sup>st</sup>. The deadline for the proposals is March 23<sup>rd</sup>.

Bidders'  
Workshops  
Held

Last month Patty was busy as part of the Head Start Policy Council. She attended a training and then participated in the program self-assessment. It was a very thorough review and much time was spent reviewing records. The program is very well administered.

Head Start  
Assessment

The outlook for the next few months: It will be important to have a quorum for April 11<sup>th</sup> as we'll be reviewing proposals and making funding decisions. During the May 9<sup>th</sup> meeting, commissioners will need to evaluate the Director's performance. Dan mentioned that it is important to do a Director evaluation and he suggested providers and partners be surveyed for their input. Finally, we don't anticipate holding an HCCCF meeting in June. Staff will be busy getting provider workplans and contracts ready.

Near Term  
Outlook

Meeting was adjourned at 3:38 pm. Dan asked if we could move future meetings to 2:00 p.m. because of a time conflict he has with another meeting. Consensus was to move the time to 2:00 p.m. The next HCCCF meeting is scheduled for April 11<sup>th</sup> at 2:00 pm in the State Office Building conference room.

Adjourn

Respectfully submitted,

Kristi Curtis