

Harney County Commission on Children and Families
Regular Meeting Minutes
9/16/04

Attending: Chair: Dan Nichols, Ann Vloedman, Joyce Moser; Sonni Svejcar; Beth Walberg; Debbie Ausmus; Lou Davies; Ramona Hofman; Patty Dorroh, Director
Absent: Michelle Bradach
Guests: Peg VanderZanden, Paul Smith, Tammy Johnston

Dan called the meeting to order at 12:08 pm. Introductions were made.

Call to order

Patty introduced Peg VanderZanden, the Local Systems Development Coordinator for the Eastern Region, from the Oregon Commission on Children and Families (OCCF). Peg provided a brief history of OCCF and Senate Bill 555, which mandated that each county devise a collaborative process to develop its own coordinated, comprehensive plan. She also provided an OCCF orientation which addressed the State Commission, local commissions, and community mobilization, and shared some of Wallowa County's ideas, measurement tools and programs with the commission. It was an educational, informative, and helpful session.

Peg VanderZanden:
State Commission
Presentation

Debbie brought up the topic of the important role of schools in children's lives, and the need for schools to address parental dissatisfaction with school practices. Discussion followed. The commission may be an appropriate vehicle for organizing a public forum for these issues. It was noted that this needs to be done in a positive way, with school knowledge and participation in the process. Commissioners who no longer have school-age children may be in the best position to work this issue. The goal would be to address real concerns, provide school officials with that feedback, and work together to address solutions. Other suggestions included visiting the school superintendent and administrators for informal discussions, and recognizing or rewarding teachers/principals who set the finest examples. It was decided to continue this discussion at the next commission meeting.

Discussion of the
Importance of
Schools
and the Need for a
Public Community
Forum for School
Issues

Paul Smith, the Grant-Harney County CASA Director and Tammy Johnston, the Harney County CASA Volunteer Coordinator were introduced. Paul provided a CASA update. The CASA program provides an important service to children in the court system. Harney County has 34 children requiring CASA support, with 13 new cases added during the July-August timeframe. Grant and Harney Counties each added three new CASA volunteers to their staff. Another CASA training session is being scheduled for this winter. Paul's focus has been on building capacity and programs to handle the increasing caseload and sustaining funding. He stated that he would like to return during our RFP process to compete for HCCCF funding.

Paul Smith:
Grant-Harney
County CASA
Update

Patty provided the Director's Report. Provider contracts and workplans are in place. Quarterly reports, budget distribution and funding release documents were submitted to the State Office on time. Funds were released to Harney County in the amount of \$166,851. Remaining funds will be requested quarterly. The Director attended the Eastern Region meeting of CCF Directors and local CAT, Harney Partners, and County Court meetings. Ann Vloedman and Joyce Moser were reappointed to the HCCCF by unanimous approval of the County Court. The 40 Developmental Assets booth at the Harney County Fair provided a way to educate the community and reinforce the 40 Assets approach. Many thanks went to Kathy Rementeria, Sonni, and Ramona for their help with the fair booth.

Director's Report

Debbie provided information on the options and cost for potential purchase of HCCCF banners. She was able to find one local business that makes banners. She had some pricing and layout information. The commission would like to see samples of the sizes and waterproof material available. Debbie will try to arrange that for the next meeting.

HCCCF Banners

Dan noted that three commissioner terms (Lou, Beth, and Debbie) will expire in December 2004. He asked that the three commissioners consider serving another term, or let us know their intent to resign so we can begin recruitment for vacant positions. Debbie and Lou stated their willingness to serve another term. Beth stated that she will likely resign at the end of her term and that it might be good to have a school-oriented representative. Lou stated that he is usually against providers serving as members of the commission, but he agrees that a school-affiliated member may be a good idea.

Commissioner
Terms

Dan provided feedback he's received from Harney County citizens who want to see more positive youth strategies in the schools, and that the 40 Developmental Assets focus for building successful children seem to have faded across organizations. A suggestion for profiling a weekly "40 Asset" local story in the newspaper was mentioned. Patty will mention this at the next Community Action Team (CAT) meeting. This will be a topic for further discussion at the next meeting.

40 Developmental
Assets Discussion

Ann moved to approve the minutes as written. Motion carried.

Approval of Minutes

The majority of the commissioners said that the usual 1:30pm start time was preferable for future commission meetings. It was moved, seconded and motion carried to return to the 1:30pm meeting time.

Commission
Meetings
Start Time

Meeting was adjourned at 2:40 pm. Next meeting is scheduled for October 14, 2004 at 1:30pm.

Adjournment

Respectfully submitted,

Patty Dorroh - Director