

APPROVED ON APRIL 7, 2005  
CITIZENS ADVISORY COMMITTEE  
CAC MEETING MINUTES

**MARCH 17, 2005**

**PORTSMOUTH CITY HALL**

**6:00 P.M.**

Present: Chairman Bob Layton, Vice Chairman Cicero Lewis, Dani Rooney, Jean Pecunies, Barbara Driscoll, Lynne Langley, Stephen Lichtenstein.

Absent: Nancy Emerson (notified staff), William Thorpe (notified staff)

Staff: Cindy Hayden, Deputy City Manager (first part of meeting); David Moore, Program Manager

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At 6:00 p.m. Chairman Layton opened the meeting. He noted that each agency would have 15 minutes to present information about their applications. He asked that the presenters address the questions on the handout, which they had been sent. He then recognized Ms. Assiah Russell of AIDS Response to begin her presentation.

Ms. Russell presented on behalf of AIDS Response -Seacoast (ARS). She characterized demand as increasing about 9% from last year. Demand has changed as new clients have increasingly diverse needs due to their poverty level, immigration status, and family structures. She described how living with AIDS can affect all aspects of an individual's life. Ms. Russell noted various outreach efforts including her agency's work with the Homeless Health Van known as "Helen". Ms. Russell also communicated her expectation that ARS would see a significant decrease in federal funding for AIDS. Ms. Hayden asked how much advocacy the agency conducts in support of federal/state program funding. Ms. Russell said she was not directly involved in that aspect, but would be happy to provide the CAC that information. Ms. Rooney asked if ARS handled any case management in conjunction with the hospital. Ms. Russell said that they did work with Portsmouth Regional Hospital in assisting AIDS patients within privacy laws. As there were no further questions, Chairman Layton thanked Ms. Russell for her presentation.

Pam Haggarty then began her presentation on behalf of A Safe Place. She said the agency served 1,660 clients in FY 2004, an increase of 10% over the previous year. Ms. Haggarty said the number of Portsmouth clients served had decreased from the previous year. She did note that it does cost the agency more money to serve each client. She described additional services of the agency aside from the shelter program. Those services include counseling, education for children and professionals, and emergency-phone support. A Safe Place served 80 people from Portsmouth in FY 2004, and several of these were shelter clients. The agency's outreach efforts include cooperation with Sexual Assault Support Services, Family First Support groups, DCYF, and the Portsmouth School system. Federal funds are available to A Safe Place and Ms. Haggarty noted an organizational effort to attempt to raise more funds from municipalities and utilize volunteers to continue other fundraising efforts. Ms. Haggarty said that the agency would need to cut staff if they did not receive funds during this grant round. Mr. Layton asked what the program budget provided by the agency represented. Ms. Haggarty explained that those are the funds, which are dedicated to assisting Portsmouth residents. As there were no further questions, Chairman Layton thanked her for her presentation.

Chairman Layton then recognized Helen Taft, who presented on behalf of Families First Dental Program. Ms. Taft said the eligibility for the Dental Program is for all prenatal, well child, and primary care clients of the health center. She also indicated that program growth has been very rapid and that the agency had decided to focus on clients who were children. Future program growth would allow the agency to extend services to adults to meet the pent up demand. She said this is the only dental program for the uninsured and underinsured in Portsmouth. The funds provided from CDBG funding would go towards a part-time hygienist salary. Ms. Taft said that there is no federal funding for the Dental program and an attempt to secure funding at the state level was not successful. She expressed an overall strategy for the agency to not be overly dependent on State and Federal funds because they do fluctuate. Mr. Lichtenstein asked how many hygienists were on staff. Ms. Taft said there were a total of three (3), none of them are full-time. Chairman Layton asked if the decrease in funding from the Foundation was likely to continue. Ms. Taft said that the Foundation had needed to contain costs because of its yield on its investments. She indicated that those cuts affected all agencies differently. As there were no further questions, Chairman Layton thanked her for her presentation.

Keryn Kriegel began her presentation on behalf of Families First, Family Support Program. Ms. Kriegel explained some of the support programs available to clients as well as new efforts, which have been made to increase outreach including the receipt of a grant from the Greater Piscataqua Community Foundation to fund an outreach coordinator. Ms. Kriegel then read a letter from a parent who had a very positive experience with Family Support programming and now serves on the Families First Board of Directors. She explained that outreach efforts include networking with agencies, especially the Division of Children, Youth and Families. Mr. Liechtenstein asked how the Family Support program differed from other agencies including Child and Family Services and SeaCare. Ms. Kriegel said that Family Support programming does not include medical services but peer to peer support for parents and families. Also, in general, one-on-one services were not available with agency staff. Ms. Rooney asked what the breakdown of volunteer versus paid staffers. Ms. Kriegel said that a combination of staffing is utilized. For example, some support groups will have a few un-paid volunteers with a professional coordinator or facilitator. As there were no further questions, Chairman Layton thanked Ms. Kriegel for her presentation.

Ms. Fran Joseph then began her presentation along with Bill Dearborn, Community Action Program, program manager. Ms. Joseph thanked the CAC for their support of the program in the past. She reminded the CAC that the agency is driven by its mission to support people in their own homes, provide companionship, and to provide light meals and travel assistance. Ms. Joseph and Mr. Dearborn both spoke of the economic costs of institutionalizing seniors and adding to the burden on the health care system by seniors who might otherwise have preventable or minor health conditions. Ms. Langley asked if Compass Care coordinated with Area Homecare or with the hospital to provide services to recently discharged patients. Ms. Joseph said that they do. Ms. Langley asked if there was a need for Senior Companions. Ms. Joseph and Mr. Dearborn said that there was always a need for companions and that recently they have discussed changing the program requirements in order to gain more companions. In order for companions to be compensated for their participation they must be at least 60 years old. Mr. Moore asked if the agency received any state or federal funding. Ms. Joseph said no. Mr.

Lichtenstein asked what other agencies do this type of work for seniors. Ms. Joseph said that there are no other agencies in this area that do this work. She said some private agencies provide these services but they may charge \$20 per hour. Mr. Lichtenstein asked how many of these agencies were in the state. Mr. Dearborn said that there were about 26 agencies in the State. As there were no further questions, Chairman Layton thanked Ms. Joseph and Mr. Dearborn for their presentation.

Mr. Bill Chausse then began his presentation on behalf of Child and Family Services. Mr. Chausse spoke about three specific cases handled by the professional assigned to the Portsmouth office. Mr. Moore asked if the agency received any state or federal monies and Ms. Langley asked what the "contracts" line item on the revenue side of the budget referred to. Mr. Chausse said he would need to provide responses to those questions at a later date. As there were no further questions, Chairman Layton thanked Mr. Samuels for his presentation.

Ms. Phyllis Eldredge then began her presentation. Ms. Eldredge explained the two prescription programs that Info-link conducts. The Medical Financial Assistance program is a short-term prescription medication program, which has a \$300 limit for Portsmouth residents. The Portsmouth Regional Prescription Assistance Program is for patients with chronic conditions who need medications for long-term needs. Ms. Eldredge stated that she expected level or decreased funding from private sources such as the Foundation for Seacoast Health and the United Way. Mr. Lichtenstein asked how seniors in Portsmouth would get their medicine if Info-Link's services were not available. Ms. Eldredge said that there would be no alternative for those seniors who could not purchase their own prescriptions. As there were no further questions, Chairman Layton thanked Ms. Eldredge for her presentation.

Tracy Tucker Executive Director and Dave Cohen, Assistant Director then presented their application for New Heights, Per Diem After School Program. Mr. Cohen explained that funds were needed to pay after school staff for the daily drop in program at the Community Campus. He said that more individualized attention provided by more staffing led to better services. Ms. Tucker explained that the Seacoast Mental Health Center is the sponsoring agency for the New Heights program. Mr. Cohen also described a school-based program, which is grant funded through a local private source. Chairman Layton asked if the same bus company that served Portsmouth schools also provided the transportation to the Community Campus. Mr. Cohen said that it was the same company. Ms. Rooney pointed out to the CAC that the committee had previously funded the New Heights dropout prevention program. Mr. Cohen explained that the program had gone away, largely due to a change in staffing. As there were no further questions, Chairman Layton thanked both Ms. Tucker and Mr. Cohen for their presentation.

After all the presentations were made Mr. Moore reminded the committee that the next meeting would be March 21, 2005. He said two new agencies would make presentations at that time.

The meeting was adjourned at 8:00 p.m.