

Community health depends on community voices

North Port CHAT Meeting Summary
May 12th, 2010 4:30 pm

Present: Fay Williams, Tom Davie, Hilary Woodcum, Vince Guiffre, Linda Stone, Janis Russell, Jim Blucher, Sam George, David Carter, Kimalee Rowley, Rachel Perry, Ellen Barcan, Hector Mendez, Mary McDonald, Todd Konen, Ken Alexander, Jenn-Marie Grant, Diane Ramseyer

Welcome and Introductions – Fay Williams, Chair, welcomed everyone and introductions were provided.

March (no April Meeting) Meeting Summary Acceptance – Meeting Summary from March was reviewed and approved. There was no April meeting so that members could support the North Port Drug-Free Youth (NP D-Fy) event at the High School.

Health Services Committee – Sam George provided an update from the May Meeting of this group. Note- the group will meet on the first THURSDAY of each month at 4:00 pm at the Family Services Center (change). Next meeting is on June 3rd at 4:00 pm.

One of the issue areas being discussed is the need for specialty care services for community members who are uninsured and unable to find the service they need. This has been a great issue for the North Port Health Center. One idea talked about was the opportunity to advocate for a reduction in impact fees for medical practices who agree to see a defined portion of patients from this population.

Committee continues to welcome the new providers to the community with a visit and cake. The group will be doing this on Thursday with a new Oncology Group and in the near future for an internal medicine physician.

A brief discussion was held on the uniqueness of North Port's need to recruit new medical services and welcoming them formally to the community. One additional new concept which is starting to be utilized in North Port is "time sharing" office space. This helps spread out the overhead costs as their practices are built. One local builder is now working on implementing this concept, in addition to the 2nd floor of the Emergency Room building.

Linda Stone commented that the Health Clinic is seeing a 30% increase in patients, which includes as many as 90 patients in one day. It appears they will soon be at capacity (100/day), even as the need continues to grow. Once their renovations are completed in later in the year, they will have more capacity.

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NP-ASAP Update – Jenn-Marie Grant provided an update on the activities of NP-ASAP and the NP D-Fy project. The April 14th was successful with over 100 students and parents attending, and 88 students indicating their interest. We have about 20 kids who have begun the screening/membership process. There was an additional open event at the High School with 20 more kids attending. The leadership group has also spoken to the City Commission for their support. Currently, the group is working on capacity building with business and civic groups. TKM Stables has become an official partner, and will hold a fun-day event on May 22nd which NP D-Fy will have representation at the event. They hope to be able to offer riding lesson scholarships for D-Fy members.

Commissioner Blucher shared that the Commission wants to find ways to support the initiative as well. They have begun to explore ways through their recreation department to offer support.

SCAT Park and Ride – SCAT is working on an express bus system to Sarasota from North Port. This is coming very soon. There is also the opportunity for a park and ride in North Port. SCAT is interested in the Park and Ride being located on SMH property off Sumter. The issue appears to be that the Federal Funding requires a 25 year lease. This is a difficult negotiation point, and there might be value in the CHAT participating in discussions. The City is also working with both parties on the issue. Other locations have been discussed and may still prove to be suitable. Several CHAT members indicated they would be interested in following the discussions – Fay and David will make some inquiries with SMH, and Diane will follow up with SCAT to see what the disposition currently is. There is a July 1, 2010 deadline for the funding.

CHAT Structure – Fay introduced discussion regarding possibility of creating a more formal structure to enhance sustainability. There have been ideas raised at leadership meeting through each CHAT as well as the CHAT Leadership Council. One of these ideas is to define additional roles for memberships, which provide the mechanisms to carry out their activities. As projects are developed in the CHAT, a “champion” or leader for the project must be identified to coordinate and lead the project. These activities have sometimes been accomplished through CHIP Staff (Diane), which is not possible in current staffing situation. CHIP could provide information, data, grant opportunities, and resources. CHIP would also help facilitate conversation and joint activities between CHATs, as well as other CHIP groups. Several topics for county-wide efforts include obesity and prescription drug misuse/abuse – as well as overall wellness which are impacted by “life issues”.

The goal this year is for each CHAT:

1. Define the roles of CHAT members
2. Explore their local issues which will include utilization of data from the 2010 CHIP Community Health Survey which will be available by late summer.

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3. Develop a Strategic Action Plan for January 2011 – December 2011 – with identified champions/leaders of each project.

Ken Alexander also encouraged members to identify representatives from North Port on the Community Alliance and Human Services Board. Additional discussion was held on opportunities for collaboration with other local groups as a way to combine resources for maximum results.

For next meeting we will outline the activities completed and in progress – identify resources in place and begin to define the roles needed to accomplish activities, as well as those necessary to maintain the regular functioning of the CHAT.

Community Announcements

Jewish Family and Children's Services has a program to help community members who are homeless, or at risk of being homeless. Call Ellen at 366-2224 X 149 for details.

FISH – *Friends In Service Here* – is in need of volunteer drivers (liability is covered) to provide rides for medical appointments for seniors – in local area. At one time there were over 100 drivers in the North Port area, and is now down to 20.

June 15th – Chili's in Port Charlotte – portion of receipts that day will go to Tri-County Community Counseling

Tidewell is providing a service on May 10 honoring veterans – call Rachel at 650-1274.

How to save your home program at the library – May 25th 6-7:30 pm

Block Party Planning Meeting – May 24th – Library 10:15 am – planning for the largest Block Party ever in North Port

Upcoming Meetings

June 1st, 3:00 pm – D-Fy Oversight Group – Family Services Center

**June 3rd, 4:00 pm – Health Services Com – North Port Family Services Center
6919 Outreach Way (corner of Pan American and Outreach Way)**

Date and Time Change – now First Thursday of each month at 4:00 pm.

Next CHAT meeting – June 9th – 4:30 pm at North Port Police Department

North Port Connects Meeting – June 14th at 5:30 pm – North Port Library

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