

STATE OF ALASKA

DEPT. OF HEALTH AND SOCIAL SERVICES

Office of Faith-Based and Community Initiatives

SARAH PALIN, GOVERNOR

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Faith-Based and Community Initiatives Advisory Council

Meeting Minutes

Friday, September 14, 2007

Call to Order

Scott Merriner welcomed members and called to order the ninth meeting of the **FBCI Advisory Council** at 8:30 a.m. on Friday, September 14, 2007 at the Frontier Building in Anchorage.

Welcome & Introductions

Advisory Council members introduced themselves and roll was taken.

Council members present: Scott Merriner, Glenn Clary, Loren Leman, Kathleen Svenson, Julie Morris, Lucy Hansen, Nancy Campbell, Keith Hamilton, Jeanie Greene, Kim Patterson (via phone), Cindy Cashen, Gloria Tokar, June Ulz, Jay Pullins for Lt. Governor Sean Parnell, Eugene Harnett

Council members not present: Judy Fulp, Mike Enschede, Diane Johnson, Allen Levy, Ryan Ray, Robert Flint

Staff members present: Michael Curran, Ann Marie Sack & Stephanie Wheeler

Also present: Daniel Daughtry-Weiss, Santiago Sanchez, and Alicia Kadesch (National Resource Center), Cathy Lee and Joquin B. (First CME and Community), and Shenee Williams (Shiloh Missionary Church)

National Resource Center (NRC) Presentation

Staff from the NRC (Alicia, Santiago, and Daniel) presented an overview of their office and its role as a Federal Contractor for the Compassion Capital Fund. The Compassion Capital fund is administered through the Administration for Children and Families under the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services.

The following are the three Compassion Capital Fund Programs:

- Demonstration Program (Federal \$ given to intermediary organizations to distribute among grass-root and faith-based organizations for capacity building activities, e.g. Compassion Alaska)
- Targeted Capacity Building (Federal mini-grants approx. \$50,000 given directly to grass-root organizations for capacity building)
- Communities Empowering Youth (Federal \$ given directly to a group of organizations, who have collaborated together to address at-risk youth)

Please see the attached power point presentation for more information.

Compassion Alaska & Office Update-Stephanie

- 12 organizations have completed baseline surveys for Compassion Alaska so far (due date October 3, 2007)
- Council members are invited to participate in the PEC committee to review and score applications for Compassion Alaska (*Julie, Nancy, Kim, Keith, June, and Kathleen* expressed interest)

Approval of Minutes: Council members approved minutes from the March 13-15, 2007 meeting

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Kenny Lake “The Bus”

Council member *Glen Clary* described a recent success story involving FBCI Council members and Michael Curran who worked together with the Kenny Lake community to get a bus donated to a local substance abuse program.

Food to Rural Alaska Discussion

Council members briefly discussed ways to outreach to rural Alaska, the needs in rural Alaska, and whether the council should play a role in getting food out to rural Alaska.

Strategic Plan Discussion

Co-chair *Scott Merriner* suggested that the council spend this part of the meeting brainstorming ways to build new examples of faith-based contributions. He posed the question, “How can this council make a difference?” Below are highlights from this discussion:

- Regarding rural Alaska, should the council focus on heat or eat?...the goals should be to heat & eat!
- *Scott* identified two potential issues for the council to focus on next year
 - Food to rural Alaska
 - Foster Care in collaboration with the Office of Children’s Services (OCS)
- The council is feeling pressure to come up with success stories to justify to the legislature the need for funding to continue Alaska’s Office of FBCI
- Questions arose about whether to focus on one of the two issues, or both?
- Questions arose about whether it’s the council’s role to get directly involved
- Questions arose about whether the need for getting food to rural Alaska is real
- *Scott* identified other unresolved issues that were mentioned in previous council meetings
 - Is the Office of FBCI structured in the best way?...is the structure most effective?
 - How to get the legislature to understand the value of FBCI

Intro to Foster Care Discussion

- *Scott Merriner* briefly described the early discussions between the FBCI and the Office of Children’s Services to assist with issues related to foster care
- Lt. Governor, Sean Parnell, initially proposed that the FBCI go to OCS to offer help
- By December, 2007, the FBCI Advisory Council will put together a 1-year plan that will address how to recruit and retain faith-motivated foster families and create a Foster Care Work Group to implement the plan
- Foster Care Work Group should consist of 20 or less people including council members, front-line staff, and a group of strong faith-based leaders

Foster Care Presentation-Travis Erickson, Anchorage Region Manager, OCS

- OCS continues to make changes within the system
- OCS does not want more foster homes at this time-retaining foster parents is biggest issue facing OCS

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- Top complaint received by OCS is that workers are not returning calls (the reason is due to the OCS worker attending to the most severe cases)
- OCS decisions regarding child placement are based on what beds are available (not an ideal situation)
- Many evaluations have been done on OCS-all report the same problems-getting to the solutions is where OCS struggles
- New Hope on the Last Frontier and its camp for foster care kids is an example of a faith-based effort that helps meet the “enrichment” needs of children
- *Travis’s* response to a question asking his opinion on if certain areas could be changed at OCS what would they be?
 - Cap case loads for workers
 - Make OCS a desirable place to work
 - Make OCS a proactive office where resources are offered to families at first contact!

Lunch and Community Presentations from 1st CME & Shiloh Missionary Church

- First CME and Community: Cathy Lee and Joquin B. presented
- Shiloh Missionary Church: Shenee Williams presented

Strategic Discussion Continued

- Should the council focus on both issues (food to rural Alaska & foster care) given the duties of the council to report to the Governor and organize a conference?
- *Scott* reviewed the Office FBCI budget and its current sources of funding
- *Jay Pullins* suggested that the council collectively make a request to the Commissioner of DHSS to designate a person to focus on the foster care issue
- Members suggested that the next advisory council meeting (December) be held in rural Alaska

Action Steps

- *Keith* and *Allen* to take leadership regarding the food to rural Alaska
- By the December meeting, *Scott*, *Glenn* and *Julie* will come up with an action plan detailing how the FBCI Advisory Council can assist OCS with improving the foster care system
- On behalf of the advisory council, *Scott* and *Glenn* will communicate with Commissioner Jackson to consider the possibility of dedicating a person from DHSS to address the foster care issue
- By the December meeting, *Scott* will prepare a report on the FBCI budget and how much effort and/or money is needed to continue the work being done by the Office of FBCI
- *Ann Marie* to update information regarding Advisory Council members on the FBCI web-site

Adjournment

Jeanie Greene closed the meeting with a prayer

Scott adjourned the meeting at 3:00 pm on Friday, September 14, 2007.

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Agenda Items Not Covered

- Loren Leman – Hooper Bay
- Subcommittee Work (meetings/discussions/planning)
 - Education, Legislative, Rural, Office Support, Special Initiatives
- Subcommittee Reports and Wrap Up

Minutes submitted by: Ann Marie Sack (Associate Coordinator)

Minutes approved by: Stephanie Wheeler (Executive Director) & Scott Merriner (Advisory Council Co-Chair)