

Interagency Council of Brevard
Meeting Minutes
April 11, 2012

Attendance: Donald Blair, Darryl Deal, Sherrie Fries, Lori Goodwin, Robert Gramolini, Martha Guillen, Ray Herring, Danielle Jones, Kathy Lowe, Heather Mack, Marilyn McAndrew, CJ Miles, David O'Brien, Karen Orosz, Helen Ortiz, Cathy Osaisai, Nancy Riley, Mariann Sampieri, Lynda Schuchert, Jennifer Secor, Linda Seegraves, Heather Theobald, Karen Wagner, Nancy Watkins, Cindy Wickham, Maryjane Wysocki.

Meeting was held at Brevard Achievement Center in Rockledge.

Minutes were taken by Danielle Jones.

Welcome and Introduction: Maryjane Wysocki opened the meeting followed by introductions.

Mission Statement: Linda Seegraves read the mission statement as discussed at PATH meeting in February. It is thought that the group will read the statement at the beginning of each meeting in order to remember the goals of our group.

Review of Minutes: Danielle reviewed March minutes. Danielle advised of emailed revision request to explain Transition Services meeting from Announcements section. Addition to read: "The purpose of this meeting was to talk to interested parents and recruit for Project Search." Concern was raised that a transition fair was held without notice. Revised minutes from March 2012 were approved unanimously and will be emailed to group.

Treasurer's Report: Kathy noted that the check from Project 10 for \$1500 has come in and there is currently \$3308.12 in account. Attendees to the Visions Conference are Sandi Dacri (part of whose expenses are paid through IDEA) and Kathy (IDEA paid for), along with \$500 from ICB. She also noted that \$1500 will need to be spent by October 1, 2012 and a decision will be made at the August meeting about doing so. Treasurer's report was unanimously approved.

Prior to breaking into Taskforce groups, Maryjane explained that two separate committees will need to be formed for projects to be completed. A special **bylaws committee** will complete updates to the current bylaws to include changes made since February 2012 meeting, but should only take a short time to get done. Maryjane and Heather Mack volunteered to do this.

Next, Maryjane requested a separate **nominations committee** to be formed in order to elect a new board, ask membership of group to nominate, confirm with nominated person and find nominees, if needed. It was in agreement that two people sat on this committee last time and a person who is running cannot sit on the board, although standing officers can. According to the current bylaws, it states that a person on the nominating committee

cannot run for seat on board. Maryjane, Linda Seegraves and Sherrie Fries volunteered to be on this committee.

Nominations:

ICB Chair: Lynda Schuchert

Vice Chair: Jackie Yearby and Jennifer Duros

Secretary: Danielle Jones

Treasurer: Kathy Lowe

Elections will be held at June meeting.

Next, Danielle brought up discussion about dispersion of meeting minutes, following conversation of updating email list with Karen Johnson, ICB Communications representative. It was noted in previous discussions, the group agreed to disperse meeting minutes only to ICB members that regularly attend the meetings and are on the email listing. Danielle explained that in discussions with Karen, this will continue to attract more people to come to meetings regularly. Kathy noted the privileges of attending include not being listed on the ICB brochure as well as voting rights, but Maryjane noted that the voting only counts for the board. She explained that the group as a whole completes votes on a regular basis and a count is not completed to see who should be allowed to vote at that meeting.

Karen Wagner explained that she tried to attend ICB meetings for 10 years, but was not allowed to due to her agency's for profit status. She explained that allowing others like her group to attend will bring more to ICB. Kathy explained that although rules have changed to allow for profit groups in to ICB, for profits cannot be posted on the website or ICB poster as monies are based from the school board. Group added that the bylaws also changed concerning for profit agencies to add voting benefits and that for profits are allowed to sit on the board.

Maryjane added that 150 addresses can be included on one email and group agreed to proceed with opening up communications to all whom are interested, which will also be added to the bylaws.

Taskforce Updates: Maryjane requested to skip having the Assessment/Evaluation taskforce today, as no members were present. Groups to meet will be: Best Practices/Transition, Marketing/Community Outreach, Vocational and Bylaws.

Prior to review of taskforce updates, Maryjane opened up discussion about still having presentations at every meeting. Lynda noted that this topic was discussed on the survey that was just completed via Survey Monkey. The group responded that although we do still want to have presentations, we would like to have different agencies/groups.

- Idea was posed to have an interagency "networking" meeting so that each agency has 5-10 minutes to discuss their agency and the rest of the time for committee issues.

- Another idea was to have quarterly presentations.
- Idea was approved to keep presentations on a quarterly basis. At that meeting, there will be 30 minutes at beginning and end for networking. For an hour in the middle, the hosting agency will have an hour to present. This will start in August and four speaking topics will be presented on June ballot based on Survey Monkey ideas.

Best Practices/Transition Provided by Lynda Schuchert

- Details were provided regarding recent survey and will be sent out to the group for review.
 - Likes included the location, time and day.
 - When asked why they are not coming, most stated that they are currently overextended.
 - There was no real interest in holding virtual meetings and most are ok with contributing to the kitty for refreshments.
 - Discussion topics included: group's focus, accessible housing, government issues, Medicare/Medicaid, new ideas for recreation, Local/State/National news, short-term and long-term goals, return to work, employment based discussions, ages 0-5 transition, special education connections, guardianship and advocacy.
- Kathy noted that there are transition services available now and the group should know how to make referrals to them. She stated about making a possible presentation to the group since that is the purpose of ICB.
- Lynda noted that the new name for their taskforce is Transition, as they were confused if the best practice term was for ICB as a group or the transition group individually.
- Lynda will remain chair of Transition taskforce.

Marketing/Community Outreach Provided by Jackie Yearby

- The taskforce has decided to table face-to-face contacts for now as this will not be their current focus. They want to increase communications with parents, teachers, guidance counselors and social workers.
- Jackie received a copy of the ICB Invite Letter and will receive an electronic form from Kathy. This will be distributed to the team for suggestions. The taskforce will then determine who receives a letter.
- They discussed the idea of having quarterly presentations and networking events.
- Jackie reported that their biggest goals are recruitment and membership. She noted that after conversations with each group individually, Access FL; Brevard Pals and Scott Center for Autism should be attending meetings shortly.

Vocational/Employment Provided by Jennifer Secor

- Jennifer provided a clarification of goals from March 2012 meeting. Notes should state to “Organize a workshop for staff who work with clients that have criminal histories and are looking to return to work.”

- Panel idea was discussed for the workshop that will ask for law enforcement, legal, human resources and other professionals to speak candidly about hiring people with criminal histories.

Bylaws Provided by Maryjane Wysocki

- Maryjane explained that she will send the notes to everyone as time was running short. They will be discussed at May meeting and voted on at June meeting.

Guest Speaker: CJ Miles from Fair Housing Continuum explained that they are a private, non-profit agency that provides enforcement in order to eliminate housing discrimination. They are funded by a 3-year grant through HUD and are the second non-profit housing agency in the State of Florida. Their goal is to work in conjunction with the Department of Justice, HUD and civil rights agencies as well as provide access to fair housing lawyers in order to enforce the fair housing act.

CJ explained that enforcement started with the Act of 1866 when everyone did not have access to housing fairly. The Act of 1964 allowed accessibility for people with disabilities for agencies that were receiving Federal dollars. They service seven forms of discrimination for race, color, national origin, gender, religion, families with children under the age of 18 and disability. In the past seven years, CJ reported that he has noticed a trend of changes in Brevard. Initially, most cases were based on racial discrimination then families with children and now it seems like persons with disabilities are being targeted. Three-fourths of cases are individuals or families that include a person with a disability.

As of 1988, CJ noted that a multi-family dwelling must be accessible, although some builders still don't always build this way. He told a story of a Federal lawsuit filed against the owner of the San Diego Chargers a few years ago because he was building homes that were not accessible. They eventually settled out of court.

A home modification program was started based on a three-year grant and is currently in its last year. This is to provide home modifications to people who cannot afford it. Fair Housing works in conjunction with SCCIL on the referrals and each cover half of the cost in order to extend the allotted monies. The agencies have provided modified bathrooms and ramps in order to assist people with having accessible homes.

Lastly, CJ noted that the big issue now is for accessibility requests made to a landlord that are going denied. The law states if the request is "reasonable," it should be granted. Some examples used included having a service animal in a complex that states no pets allowed or for having a handicapped parking space available in front of a tenant's house. In the first, CJ explained that the Attorney General recently defined what a service animal is and "reserved spaces" are allowed with handicapped placards at the closest entrance to a tenants dwelling unit.

Next, Marilyn McAndrew explained details about their testing program. She reported that her job is "proving what is happening". In doing so, Marilyn stated that information

is taken from a complainant about an offending dwelling and Fair Housing will make a call to verify. If a response received is not in line with the complaint, testers are sent out to the dwelling. Initially, a White person with no disabilities is sent followed by a member of a protected category that is sent. Both testers ask the landlord questions and a report is completed based on the findings.

A special project that they are focusing on is for testing with hearing impaired population. They are completing a telephone test with available electronic equipment using Florida Relay system, which seems to cause intimidation to a lot of landlords. They are trying to have more validity to utilize people with disabilities for their testing in order to see what happens to them. A small stipend of \$50-60 per job is paid after required 4-hour training.

CJ also noted that another big issue is with care providers that are taking care of people in the protected categories. In an example, CJ explained that he worked with a couple that was taking care of their son with a disability as his primary caregivers and were denied access into a 55+ community because of this. With review, the couple was able to purchase the home as Fair Housing explained to the community that they can fight, but will lose. CJ reports that many times, violators think that there is a difference between physical and mental disabilities.

Fair Housing services Brevard County and every county that “touches it”, although they have branched out to areas on the west coast as well. CJ explained that most people will call for landlord/tenant issues, but that is not what Fair Housing deals with and refer these calls to Community Legal Services.

Announcements:

- ❖ Karen Wagner noted that on March 26, a Federal judge in Miami mandated that Medicaid must pay for behavioral treatment for people with Autism. Agency for Health Care Administration (AHCA) must complete a treatment plan within seven days and people ages 0-22 years old will be able to apply for behavior analysis services with an ICD 9 diagnosis of Autism. She went on to explain that a Medicaid Waiver provider can provide behavior analysis services for up to 40 hours per week per child with new ruling as this previously was only available if the child had a secondary diagnosis, like Conduct Disorder.

She explained that a student with behavior challenges that is disrupting lessons can get an ICD 9 diagnosis from their pediatrician and Medicaid waiver providers can provide services. Wait list clients are now eligible, but not if on Med Waiver.

- ❖ Heather Theobald announced that on April 20, the ESE Parent Training with Kathy Gleason will be held and the flyer will be resent to the group.
- ❖ Jackie noted that the Autism Fair will be held on April 22 and a table can be reserved through Space Coast Early Intervention.

- ❖ Lynda reported that Relay for Life will be held in Rockledge on April 14 to raise money for the Cancer Society. This is a personal event for Lynda as her husband was diagnosed with the disease.

Next Meeting: Scheduled for May 9, hosted by Space Coast Center for Independent Living in Rockledge.