

**Common Ground Subcommittee Meeting  
Tuesday, February 21, 2006**

Present: Nancy Devaney, Annie Fairlie, Valerie McGuire, Joseph Meister, Toni O'Neil, Kristen Quinlan, Paula Santos, AnneMarie Silveira, Danielle Tancredi, & Jessica Yarlow.

**APPROVAL OF 1/24/06 MINUTES**

Minutes from 1/24/06 were approved.

**REVIEW UPDATED ALOCHOL LICENSE HOLDER'S LIST**

Nancy Devaney announced that the Quarter Bar has new ownership and will become PJ's Bar and Grill. She also discovered that Café Newport has recently been granted a liquor license. Anne Marie Silveira and Joe Meister have volunteered to ride along with the police to visit these locations and give them a copy of our Welcome Wagon Packet.

**PRELIMINARY RESULTS OF THE STUDENT SURVEY**

Kristen Quinlan reviewed preliminary results from a survey of URI students during the fall of 2004 and the fall of 2005. Preliminary data suggest that URI students' perceptions are changing:

- 70% had seen the RhodeMap to Safety slogan during the fall of 2005.
- Students are more aware of community efforts to increase enforcement, and there has been an increase in student perception of DUI enforcement.
- Students feel it is less likely that they will be able to obtain alcohol from local bars and liquor stores.

Research has demonstrated that student perception of DUI enforcement is a strong predictor of drinking and driving behavior. More detailed results will be discussed at a future meeting.

**LEGISLATIVE ADVOCACY 101**

Nancy Devaney offered a brief review of how a bill becomes a law. She distributed a handout which outlined this process, gave a brief tutorial on how to write an effective lobbying letter, and outlined the names of appropriate officials to contact. She also provided a brief discussion on the status of legislation that we may want to take an interest in, including:

- Social Host Legislation (Senate Bill #2189, House Bill #7071)
- Responsible Beverage Service Legislation (Senate Bill #4283)
- Search Warrant Legislation (House Bill #7481)
- "Merlot to Go" (Senate Bill #'s 2194 and 2122, House Bill #'s 6719 and 7051)
- Alcohol Vaporizing Legislation (House Bill #6593)

For the next meeting, CG members were asked to visit [www.rilin.state.ri.us](http://www.rilin.state.ri.us), and review the legislative efforts listed above. They were asked to think about which legislation complements the work of the CG subcommittee, and which legislation will contradict our efforts. **Important: At the next meeting, we will be taking a vote on which legislation CG will recommend be supported by the entire coalition.**

**UPDATE ON RHODY RIDES**

As stated in the addendum to the minutes from January 2006, Rhody Rides received approval from the Student Senate, and has been in operation since February 10<sup>th</sup>. Subcommittee members expressed concern that some students may abuse the program, but preliminary evaluations have indicated that the program is running smoothly.

#### SOCIAL HOST ADVERTISEMENTS FROM RI DEPARTMENT OF MENTAL HEALTH

The Rhode Island Department of Mental Health, Retardation, and Hospitals recently developed advertisements to increase awareness of social host liability. These advertisements are currently playing on 92 ProFM, Hot 106 FM, Lite Rock 105 FM, and 95.5 WBRU. Nancy Devaney played a few sample advertisements.

#### TASK FORCE ON MINIMUM MANDATORY FINES

At the previous meeting, Joe Meister suggested researching Narragansett's minimum mandatory fines for a variety of drinking-related offenses. He suggested we determine whether these minimum fines are enough of a deterrent for re-offense. Nancy Devaney suggested that we form a subcommittee to speak with Henry Baker regarding the average fine that is imposed for drinking and driving, driving with a suspended license, and transporting alcohol. Joe Meister volunteered to serve on this subcommittee, and Nancy Devaney suggested that Tony Pelopida might also be willing to help us research this issue.

#### ADDITIONAL DISCUSSION

Joe Meister noted that on the 28<sup>th</sup> of January, ABC news aired a segment about fires in off-campus housing. The segment pointed out that crowded housing, older buildings, and alcohol contribute to the frequency of fires in off-campus settings. Joe Meister asked that this issue be discussed by Common Ground during a future meeting.

#### NEXT MEETING

The next meeting will take place on Tuesday, February 21 at 6pm in the small conference room of the Narragansett Town Hall.