

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

Present: Nancy Devaney, Annie Fairlie, David Janelle, Valerie McGuire, Joseph Meister, Toni O'Neil, Kristen Quinlan, AnneMarie Silveira, George Tracy, and Mark Wood

APPROVAL OF 2/21/06 MINUTES

Minutes from 2/21/06 were approved.

UPDATE ON POLICE REPRESENTATION ON COMMON GROUND

Congratulations to Tony Pelopida, who was promoted to detective. We will be seeking a new police representative for our subcommittee.

UPDATE ON WELCOME WAGON

Anne Marie Silveira and Joe Meister volunteered to ride along with the police to visit Café Newport and JP's Bar and give them a copy of our Welcome Wagon Packet. AnneMarie and Joe also discussed the possibility of visiting with the manager/owner if they were unable to reach a police representative.

UPDATE ON TASK FORCE ON MINIMUM MANDATORY FINES

At the last meeting, 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 task force, and Nancy Devaney had suggested that Tony Pelopida might also be willing to help us research this issue. Given Tony's promotion, we will need to find a new representative for this task force. Common Ground members also discussed the importance of having a judicial representative. Nancy Devaney said she would bring this concern to the steering committee.

LEGISLATIVE SUPPORT

Nancy Devaney announced that the Social Host/Procurement Bill would be heard tomorrow, March 22, 2006. She said that a statewide underage task force is conducting a "message in a bottle campaign", which involves the delivery of empty beer bottles containing messages about underage drinking to representatives. CG members unanimously voted to support Bill 2189 and 7071, related to the Social Host/Procurement Bills.

CG members decided that at the next meeting, we would discuss Bill 2483, which would exempt license holders who only sell beer and wine from the server training requirements. The subcommittee voted 6 to 2 to support legislation allowing police officers to request blood or urine in the case of DUI with death resulting. Because the issue did not have unanimous support, it was decided that individual members can write to their legislators regarding this legislation, but that the subcommittee as a whole would not support it.

DISCUSSION REGARDING THE RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN OFF-CAMPUS CROWDED HOUSING, ALCOHOL, AND FIRES

Nancy Devaney suggested inviting the fire inspector to come to one of our meetings to discuss the issue of off-campus housing and fires in more detail. CG members were concerned that every rental property in Narragansett was not inspected due to lack of personnel.

SOUTH KINGSTOWN PRESS CONFERENCE

Mark Wood announced that there had been a press conference on March 21st announcing SK's plans to join a new tavern agreement. The tavern owners in SK plan to meet next week to develop a formal tavern association.

Valerie McGuire suggested holding an annual meeting with the SK and Narragansett Tavern Associations, where expert speakers could meet with the two groups. She also suggested that SK and Narragansett might start a list of people who had served to underage or intoxicated patrons in the past, so that they would not be hired in either town in the future. CG members discussed inviting legislators and judges to the Tavern Association meetings to increase pressure regarding the penalties for underage drinkers. Other CG members suggested having judges and legislators sit at the door of a local tavern on a typical night in order to gain perspective on the issue of underage drinking. It was suggested that an event that occurred in August that was publicized in September would put pressure on these individuals, given that this is an election year.

Other CG members suggested creating a newsletter that would be distributed to tavern owners in order to share ideas about the policies and practices that are working well within each establishment. David Janelle offered to contact the National Restaurant Association to see if there was any information on staff training. Nancy suggested that the development of a newsletter like this might be a goal of the coalition for the upcoming year.

NEXT MEETING

The next meeting will take place on Tuesday, April 25th at 6pm in the small conference room of the Narragansett Town Hall.