

Narragansett - URI Coalition

"Building a community of mutual respect"

**Meeting Minutes
Tuesday – October 18, 2005
7:00PM
Narragansett Town Hall**

SUBCOMMITTEE MEETINGS

The following subcommittees met prior to the full Coalition meeting:

- Communications (Chair: Jim Hurton)
- Realtors/Neighborhood Association (Co-Chairs: Eileen Desforges and Joe Robenhymer)
- Programming (Chair: Leslie Williams/Pat Zito)
- Common Ground (Chair: Nancy Devaney)

The Coalition Meeting convened at 7:00 PM.

Moderator Ben Matone started the meeting by reviewing the agenda. He introduced guest speaker Kristen Quinlan, Graduate URI Research Associate representing Common Ground.

GUEST SPEAKERS

1. Membership Survey - Kristen Quinlan

Kristen Quinlan, Graduate Research Assistant for the Common Ground Project provided feedback on a survey Coalition members took last spring. Drinking and driving was noted as a serious concern in Narragansett by the largest number of Coalition members. 40% of the respondents indicated "increased enforcement of ordinances" as their top priority and the second top priority, 17.1% indicated "increased patrols for DUI enforcement." The survey provides information to help inform the coalition regarding time spent on projects, improving organization structure, broadening members' knowledge and planning future activities. Detailed Results can be found on the coalition website www.uri.edu/alcohol/coalition under "Presentations."

2. Jurisdiction Policy Changes –Thomas R. Dougan

Thomas Dougan, Coalition Co-Chair and vice president of URI Student Affairs updated the membership on the University's revised jurisdiction policy that address enforcement issues for off-campus students living in Narragansett. He explained that one of the Coalition's goals for this academic year was to apply the student conduct code to those students living off-campus. He stated that the changes were not going to solve all the problems, but the university will be better enabled to address the problems that many have experienced in Narragansett with students who violate university regulations.

SUBCOMMITTEE REPORTS

The moderator called for reports from the subcommittee chairs.

- Realtor/Neighborhood Association Committee (Joe Robenhymer, reporting)
 - a. Discussed the distribution of newspapers in the neighborhoods; individual owners need to call PROJO to cancel.

- b. Model lease has been approved; will be available on the Coalition website, URI commuter housing site, and town of Narragansett's. Nuisance ordinance has been added.
 - a. Subcommittee names will be posted on the web site.
 - b. National Neighborhood Day will be a focus for next year.
 - c. The subcommittee's next meeting is at 6:30pm, November 15, prior to the full Coalition meeting.
- Common Ground (Nancy Devaney, reporting)
 - a. New members were welcomed.
 - b. In conjunction with URI's common ground project, a Signing Ceremony for local taverns and liquor stores was held on October 12th. This was well attended and received excellent press in the local papers. Our local establishments are to be commended for their public commitment to responsible beverage service and to the safety and well being of the local community.
 - c. Nancy indicated that there was additional information on the display table for people to look at during the open house (immediately following the meeting.)
- Programming Committee (Leslie Williams, reporting)
 - a. As a follow-up to Dr. Dougan's presentation, Leslie informed the members that a comparison between the old policy statements and the new revisions to the student handbook was located on the table in the back of the room.
 - b. Handouts were also available for police reports and the university's response; and the upcoming orientation and housing fair on October 20th. Presentations include representatives from the Coalition in addition to display tables provided by local realtors and banks and free pizza.
 - d. The fall food drive is planned for December 10.
 - e. Seven new community liaisons have come on board and they will be working with the Programming committee, subcommittees and the Coalition in general. They stood to be recognized and were welcomed.
- Steering Committee/Communications Committee (Chief Smith, reporting)
 - a. Reporting for the Steering Committee, Chief Smith stated that one should not assume too much with the passing of the Code of Conduct policy providing jurisdiction to off-campus behavior. (a Coalition goal for this academic year.) We are looking for a balance in enforcement between the town and the university and this is getting us there.
 - b. In the spirit of implementing the goal for increasing student participation, the Chief asked Lauren Fink, a new member to the Coalition to report on behalf of the Communications subcommittee. Lauren stated that the Coalition needs to get the word out to the students because there is a misconception that students have about the community and law enforcement and vice versa. She stated that ads will be placed regularly in the *Cigar* inviting students to attend Coalition meetings; the web site needs to be more attractive to students and that we need to humanize members of the Coalition, for Narragansett is an open and welcoming community.
 - c. The Chief added he would like to see profiles of the committee members and students to help others see them as contributing members of our community. He would like to see an entire house of students profiled.

Open Forum

- A. Narragansett Resident Alex Brincko asked how many students would be participating in the Coalition if the numbers were increased by 50%. He asked for a show of hands of how many students present at the meeting were being paid (community liaisons) and how many not. The majority present were not paid. Chief Smith asked for a more positive "tone" as the Coalition more actively and supportively works to attract students.

Leslie Williams, Co-chair of the programming Committee and Assistant Director for Student Affairs stated that the students sought out these positions because they want to contribute to the community and the value of their contributions and the desire to improve relations in the community are what is important. Coalition Coordinator stated that representatives from the Greek organizations would have been here this evening but they had previous commitments. She also indicated that based on her review of student participants last year, that an additional 10 to 20 new students would meet the 50% goal.

- B. Carol Stuart, Steering Committee member and resident of Eastward Look, informed the Coalition that Rob Rossi, member of the Steering Committee representing the University's Inter-fraternity Council, extended an invitation to the entire Steering Committee and a guest to attend their lobster bake kick-off to philanthropy week. She was appreciative of this generous invitation and she and her husband felt very welcomed at the event.
 - C. David Anderson informed the Coalition that he was very upset about the recent door tags that were distributed around neighborhoods. He was offended that the first recommendation to improve neighbor relations on the students' side of the tag was to inform your neighbor that you were having a party. On the residents' side it was to introduce yourself to the new student renters. Leslie Williams stated these were designed awhile back and that she would hope he would help out in the design of new ones next year. Chief Smith echoed her statement and said his point was well taken and that although the door tag caused him to be angry, he welcomed him to the Coalition and hoped that he will participate in creating the next version. Dean of Student Life, Fran Cohen stated that that Coalition has been evolutionary over time and that we hope to improve as we go along and feedback is essential in helping to improve this process. Carol Stuart offered that the distribution process needs to be looked at to make it more efficient and equitable. Scott Vellone, Community Police Officer, stated we are all working very hard to improve the communication and relations between the students and residents.
 - D. Two new students had arrived and Chief Smith asked them to introduce themselves. They were Patrick Mills, Student Senate president and Kevin Lopes, former Student Senate President and current Chief Operations Officer.
- 4. Closure/Next Meeting**
There being no further business, the Moderator closed the meeting at 8:00pm and invited everyone to browse the tables set up for the open house and enjoy refreshments in the back of the hall. The next Coalition meeting will take place November 15th at the Town Hall.

Respectfully submitted,

Paula Santos
Coalition Coordinator

Coalition Minutes
10/18/05