

# *Narragansett - URI Coalition*

*“Building a community of mutual respect”*

## **Meeting Minutes Tuesday – February 20, 2007 7:00PM Narragansett Town Hall**

### **SUBCOMMITTEE MEETINGS**

The following subcommittees met prior to the full Coalition meeting:

- Realtors/Neighborhood Association (Co-Chairs: Kim and Kara Churas)
- Programming (Chair: Leslie Williams)
- Common Ground (Chair: Nancy Devaney)

Fran Cohen opened the meeting at 7:10pm and called for reports.

### **SUBCOMMITTEE REPORTS**

#### REALTORS/NEIGHBORHOOD ASSOCIATIONS – KIM CHURAS REPORTING

- Tracking student violators – still under review; looking at a program at the University of Vermont.
- Bonnet Shores Fire District is looking at producing a handbook for landlords.
- Studying how to enhance the structure of neighborhood associations.
- Carol asked Scott Vellone for an update on the police initiative to meet with neighborhood associations on a monthly basis. Officer Vellone stated it is a work in progress that - they are looking at certain addresses that do not necessarily warrant stickers but some intervention is necessary. The police are also looking at Newport's ordinances.

#### COMMUNICATIONS – NO REPORT

#### PROGRAMMING – LESLIE WILLIAMS REPORTING

- Updated police reports on the table in the back
- Spring Clean up is scheduled for Earth Day weekend – Saturday, April 21 from 9:00 to noon at Bonnet Shores, Eastward Look and Point Judith with lunch provided at the Bonnet Community Center at noon.
- End of the semester Food Drive will be held around the 8<sup>th</sup>, 9<sup>th</sup> or 10<sup>th</sup> of May. Final date to be determined. Narragansett Rubbish Removal volunteers to pick up the food and it is donated to the Johnny Cake Center.
- The community liaisons are trying to firm up a date for a community bingo for students and permanent residents.

#### STEERING COMMITTEE – CAROL STUART REPORTING

- Restructure SC/Coalition - Carol reported that this topic is a major discussion for the next Steering Committee meeting. Paul Haas stated that he would like to see the SC come before the full Coalition with a recommendation for action whereby it is the consensus of the Coalition that it supports X...
- Statistics are under review.

#### COMMON GROUND – MARK WOOD REPORTING

- Common Ground is introducing a Mystery Shoppers program to alcohol retailers. It is similar to compliance checks but it is internally driven and does not involve the police department. It encourages staff to follow RBS policy reducing selling to minors and thereby reducing liability and risk to the establishment – copy attached.

- Legislative update: The Misrepresentation of Age law has been revised and presented to Representative Don Lally (Narragansett) and Senator Susan Sosnowski (SK) for submission to the House and Senate respectively – copy attached. (Further discussion held in open forum.)
- In a recent case, a man who had purchased and gave alcohol to a minor with death resulting was given one year probation and fined court costs (\$93.00.) The decision is very disturbing especially in terms of the message it sends to the community regarding the severity of the crime and the weakness of the penalty. (Further discussion held in open forum)
- Lamented the lack of a judicial involvement on the subcommittee.

#### **OPEN FORUM**

- After lengthy discussion, the members present asked the Steering Committee to contact the members via the listserv to ask for their support of the revisions of the legislation regarding misrepresentation of age. If the members support the passage of the revisions, the Chairmen will send a letter to the key legislators stating as such and send back to the membership information about actions they can take as individuals to support the passage of this law. It was requested that a statement be placed in the *Cigar* stating the Coalition supports the passage of the revisions.
- Discussion was held regarding the recent SAMHSA (Substance Abuse and Mental Health Administration) report. (Go to SAMSHA.gov for further information.) Washington County is in the top 15 for reported binge drinking and drug use among 18 year olds and younger. Initiatives that focus on the under 18 group are being taken by the Narragansett Youth Task Force (N. Devaney) and the SK Partnership for Prevention (V. McGuire.) The University is targeting the college student 18 and over but the impact of this work effects all ages. Ms. McGuire stated we have a real problem in this area and that families are integral to affecting this issue. She would like to see parents take more responsibility for what goes on in their own homes but acknowledges this is very difficult because you can't tell someone how to parent.
- Doug Wardwell indicated that he has a video made by a former class of student that addresses college student drinking. He asked about its utilization in getting the message out to students. Ms. McGuire stated that there is a video from MADD that shows how individuals underestimate how many drinks it takes to get to .08. Dean Cohen shared that through the efforts of Dan Graney in the Office of Substance Abuse Prevention there are multiple initiatives taken to address individual alcohol and drug use but that we are learning that environmental methods can be more powerful. The RhodeMap to Safety campaign continues to regularly inform students about alcohol related issues.
- Joe Meister raised a concern that after the grant ends in August, how is the process going to continue. Dr. Wood shared that his portion of the grant will continue with evaluation for an additional year and once the data is sorted it will be used to inform us and others about future efforts.
- Relative to the Coalition supporting increasing the penalties for providing alcohol to a minor death resulting, the Steering Committee will be provided with a draft of a proposed revision from SK and will take it under review and submit it to the full Coalition via the listserv for endorsement.
- Ben Matone announced that the next Coalition meeting is going to be held at the University. He stated that students are excited about welcoming the community to their school and encouraged all to attend. Location to be announced.

#### **CLOSURE/NEXT MEETING**

The meeting adjourned at 8:00pm. The next meeting is scheduled for Tuesday, March 27, 2007 at 7:00 pm at the University of Rhode Island.

Respectfully submitted,

*Paula Santos*

Coalition Coordinator