

# *Narragansett - URI Coalition*

*"Building a community of mutual respect"*

**Meeting Minutes**  
**Tuesday – March 27, 2007**  
**7:00PM**  
**University of Rhode Island**  
**Memorial Union – Atrium 1**

## **SUBCOMMITTEE MEETINGS**

The following subcommittees met prior to the full Coalition meeting:

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

Ryan Battis, Moderator, opened the meeting at 7:05pm and introduced Ben Matone, External Affairs Committee Chair, URI Student Senate. Ben welcomed everyone to campus and stated that he wanted to highlight the many positive aspects of the URI student body. Too often we focus on negative off-campus behavior yet the far majority of University students are good, solid citizens of the community. He stated that we were in the Memorial Union which is the center of student activities; this building houses student based activities such as the radio station, newspaper, habitat for humanity, student senate, the robotics club, the Student Entertainment Committee and many more. In addition he spoke of the Greek Community which is recommitted to scholarship, leadership and philanthropy and how they are becoming a role model for other schools around the country. There is a newly forming realtors club (whose members will surely be contacting the local realtors) and many championship athletic teams such as sailing, hockey, soccer, and track. Our basketball had a great season bringing a lot of excitement to the State.

He then asked Domenick Barneano to speak. Domenick is a campus tour guide and Ben asked him to discuss what potential and incoming students and their parents ask during the tours. In addition to the core information about the school and the campus, many ask about off-campus housing. When he informs parents about what is available in the area, especially Narragansett, most find housing affordable, and certainly, once they have driven through the area, find it quite attractive. When a Coalition member asked why students come to school here, Dan stated that it is for academics, organizations and clubs to get involved in, sporting events and that people here are really nice here. Ryan thanked Ben and Dan and moved on to subcommittee reports.

## STEERING COMMITTEE – THOMAS DOUGAN REPORTING

- Dr. Dougan informed everyone that the SC voted to approved support of two bills recently submitted to the legislature: Nancy explained the details of the changes and stated that letters will be sent to both the House and Senate Judiciary Committees and an email to the Coalition listserv will also be sent encouraging members to contact the house and senate members to approve the amendments to the bills. Paul Haas asked about the University sending out these important messages to the students. Coordinator Santos pointed out the many posters surrounding the room as part of an intensive media campaign to inform students about alcohol policies and laws and the severe consequences of breaking these laws.
- Dr. Dougan also shared that the SC is in the discussion stage of rethinking the Coalition and meeting the needs of all constituents.

## **SUBCOMMITTEE REPORTS**

### PROGRAMMING – LESLIE WILLIAMS REPORTING

- Leslie stated there was no formal meeting this evening but plans are still moving forward with the neighborhood clean-up scheduled for April 21 and the spring food drive the week of May 6th. Info will be sent via the listserv and posted on the website.
- Updated police reports are on the table in the back of the room.

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

- Discussion continues around ensuring that all rental properties are listed with the Town in accordance with the rental registration ordinance. Carol Stuart reiterated the importance of this so that if there are problems in the properties, the property owner can be notified of these occurrences and be held responsible for corrective actions. The Building Inspector's office has increased activity to get these rental properties registered.
- Ms. Stuart also shared that as one of the original members of the coalition for the past 7 years, she hopes that Narragansett and the University will enhance its "Town-Gown" efforts and make the relationship stronger.
- Paul Haas updated everyone that the ombuds team, now referred to as the "Conflict Resolution Team" flyer is ready for print and will be distributed initially in the Bonnet Shores Fire District. He thanks the Steering Committee for its support and Dorie Lawson, Common Ground Project Coordinator, for assistance in designing the flyer.

#### COMMON GROUND – NANCY DEVANEY REPORTING

- Nancy Devaney had spoken earlier about the two pending laws and encouraged everyone to support them. She introduced Captain Jeffrey Allen from the South Kingstown Police Department who explained in more detail the importance of strengthening the law against violators who procure and give alcohol to an underage person with death resulting.
- Ms. Devaney also informed everyone that there was a Law Enforcement Training sponsored by MHRH focusing on alcohol and large party dispersal. Narragansett Community Officer Scott Vellone was one of the presenters and he was also in attendance with Community Officer Rob Storm.

#### COMMUNICATIONS – NO REPORT

#### **OPEN FORUM**

- Nancy Devaney, as Director of the Narragansett Youth Task Force, asked that the Coalition write a letter in support of an additional \$500,000 grant over five years. Paul Haas introduced the motion to support the Narragansett Youth Task Force..., seconded by Leslie Williams. Approved unanimously.
- Neil Cavanaugh, outgoing President of the Student Senate, stated that this was his last meeting as president and thanked everyone for their support and that it has been a pleasure being involved in the Coalition.
- Bob Shields, a Narragansett Pier resident, commended Paul Haas on his work creating the Conflict Resolution team as he believes this process can precede and hopefully prevent legal action and hopefully incidents will be reduced. Any actions that help students to better understand their obligation as renters living in Narragansett is helpful to all.
- Joe Meister, a Schooner cove resident and active member of the Common Ground sub committee as students to be selfish - selfish in protecting their time and character while at URI. He stated that after graduation, the world of work awaits them and they should make every effort while in school not to do anything that will prevent them from being able to enter the workforce. He shared a quote from his father: "if you want to fly with eagles, do not nest with pigeons."
- Martin Donovan of SAS - Student Action for Sustainability, appealed to the Coalition to support a commuter bus line between Narragansett and URI. This service would help alleviate traffic on the roads, cut down on green house emissions and ease up on parking on campus. His group meets at 5:00pm every Monday and all are welcome. Carol Stuart congratulated this group for its activism and that they need to be more visible and go the Town Council and State House to fight for their cause. A student stated he had done that but felt he was not listened to because he was from out-of state. The Coalition is a good forum to present an individual concern, and if supported, can become a group action. The Steering Committee will take this under consideration as it has been brought up before.
- Paul Haas, in support of Joe Meister's comments, stated that he got to serve with graduating student Ben Matone. Ben is heading to Wall Street because he believes Ben has been one of those

students who has been responsible. He has made solid contributions to the Coalition and is proud to be associated with him. He asked the students to be smart with their decisions.

- Coalition Coordinator Santos stated that it was at the invitation (and insistence) of the student leadership, especially the work of Ben Matone, that the meeting be held on campus this evening. The Student Senate provided this evening's refreshments and welcomes everyone to enjoy after the meeting. Dean Cohen stated that this is your State University and the Union is the heart of the campus. She would be happy to give members a tour of the building if interested.

**CLOSURE/NEXT MEETING**

The meeting adjourned at 8:00pm. The next meeting is scheduled for Tuesday, April 24, 2007 at 7:00 pm at the University of Rhode Island.

Respectfully submitted,

*Paula Santos*

Coalition Coordinator