



CHILDREN'S SERVICES COUNCIL  
OF  
HIGHLANDS COUNTY, INC.  
Champion for Children Advocacy Center  
1968 Sebring Parkway, Sebring, FL 33870

MINUTES

March 20, 2013

**Members Present:** Sandra Bass, Wally Cox, Ruth Handley, Julia Hermelbracht, Anne Lindsay, MaryAnn Lewis, Darlene Phypers, Kevin Roberts, Jeff Roth, Micah Scanga, Tealy Williams

**Others Present:** Gail Escobar, Dorthia Barrera, Jeannie DuBenion, Lt. Greg Pearlman, Terri Saunders, Angel Wiggins, Holly Wallace, Doris Nardelli, Cynthia Acevedo

The meeting was called to order by Darlene Phypers, Chairman, at 7:30 AM.

**Agenda Item 1: Welcome by Darlene Phypers.**

**Agenda Item 2: Introduction of Guests:** Doris Nardelli with Central Florida Behavioral Health and Cynthia Acevedo with Healthy Families

**Agenda Item 3: Invocation, Pledge of Allegiance & Motivational Moment**

Led by Tealy Williams, principal of Avon Park High School.

**Agenda Item 4: Volunteer for next meeting's motivational moment:** Jeff Roth will provide the motivational moment at the next meeting. The next meeting is Wednesday, April 17, 2013 – 7:30 a.m. at the Champion for Children Advocacy Center.

**Agenda Item 5: Approval of Board Meeting Minutes of February 20, 2013.** After a review of the minutes, Tealy Williams made a motion and Micah Scanga seconded the motion to accept the minutes with the correction of including Tealy Williams and Anne Lindsay as present.

Motion approved.

### **Agenda Item 6: Update on Child Abuse Prevention Awareness Month**

The pinwheels are now available to distribute to business and partner agencies. The major event for the month is the kick-off on Tuesday, April 2, 2013 with a program on the Courthouse lawn. A reading of the Proclamation will be at the County Commission meeting immediately following, and a Proclamation will also be read at the School Board meeting on Monday, March 25, 2013.

### **Agenda Item 7: 2013 Objectives Update:**

- **We Care Hotline** –Anne Lindsay gave a summary of the activities of all the schools that participated in the campaign. A variety of activities were planned by each school with some using advertising during school announcements while others created PSA's. There was production of banners, t-shirts, magnets, bracelets, pencils, while holding student driven meetings, and creating safety rules for elementary grades. Some of the student groups involved in the activities was student government, national honor society, journalism, and TV production. The students did the work of promoting the hotline with the support of school staff. The schools were thankful to the Council and Foundation for their support of this project.

- **1.1.1 Project**

The purpose of this project is to encourage communities of faith to promote one of their families to become foster parents, to whom they would then provide encouragement and support that the State is not able to provide. This support could be in the form of providing camp fees, respite care, costs related to the participation in sports or the Arts, activities at school, etc. Some of the Council members will attend the recruiting event in Polk County on Friday, March 22, 2013 that is promoting the 1.1.1 Project in Polk County. Our goal is to have churches commit to having potential parents attend a local orientation event. This project will also be mentioned and promoted from the podium at the kick-off program for Child Abuse Prevention Month.

- **Update on Pet Shelter for Sebring Safehouse**

Jeff Roth stated that this project is in progress and they are working on the MOU. A grant is being written that is due in May that would pay for the construction costs and a second grant is being submitted that would pay for the pet food. The Highlands County CHEFF Homeschool group is still involved in getting this project completed.

- **School Administrative Mental Health Summit**

At the principal's meeting on May 8, a presentation will be given on the services available and how to access these services as it pertains to children's mental health. Dialog will follow to discuss the biggest needs and the gaps in service. A diverse group of service professionals and law enforcement will be present at this meeting. Likewise, the appropriate school personnel will attend this meeting.

**Agenda Item 8: Update on Circle Theatre**

Kevin Roberts, CEO of the Champion for Children Foundation, said that the opening of the Theatre will probably be moved to the summer because of obstacles that have presented themselves and must be worked through.

**Agenda Item 9: Human Trafficking**

Julia Hermelbracht with the Department of Children and Families presented an overview of human trafficking and the risk factors as related to children. Trafficking is a lucrative business that involves the sex and labor industries with 32 -34 billion dollars in profit each year. Gangs are turning to the sex trafficking for money making. 56% of the victims are women and children with 83% of victims used in the sex industry. The number one vulnerability for sex trafficking, or commercial sexual exploitation of a child (CSEC), is foster children, particularly those with multiple runs. In May 2009, the DCF Abuse Hotline began accepting calls for human trafficking. The state statute now allows calls for sex trafficking to be taken without needing the name of a perpetrator. Law enforcement now has the discretion to not arrest someone they suspect as a victim.

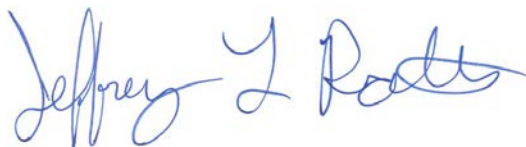
**Agenda Item 10: New Business**

No new business was presented.

**Agenda Item 11: Adjournment**

Meeting adjourned at 9am.

**(Next meeting Wednesday, April 17, 2013 – 7:30 A.M. at the Champion for Children Advocacy Center)**



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Jeffrey L. Roth, Executive Director  
Children’s Services Council of Highlands County

Respectfully submitted: Gail Escobar