



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

MINUTES
April 17, 2013

Members Present: Sandra Bass, Sheriff Susan Benton, Susan Buelow, Scott Crutchfield, Ruth Handley, Julia Hermelbracht, Donna Howerton, Anne Lindsay, Darlene Phypers, Kevin Roberts, Jeff Roth, Micah Scanga, Karen Wright, Tealy Williams, Annette Yunck

Others Present: Gail Escobar, Brenda Heston, Kati Pippin, Jennifer Lipowski, Kathy Main, Lt. Greg Pearlman, Holly Wallace, Rev. Darin Canary, Cebien Alty, Pallavi Agarwal-Highlands Today

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: Kati, Pippin, Brenda Heston, Kathy Main, Jennifer Lipowski

Agenda Item 3: Invocation, Pledge of Allegiance & Motivational Moment
Led by Jeffrey Roth, Director of the Champion for Children Advocacy Center

Agenda Item 4: Volunteer for next meeting's motivational moment: Donna Howerton will provide the motivational moment at the next meeting. The next meeting is Wednesday, May 15, 2013 – 7:30 a.m. at the Champion for Children Advocacy Center.

Agenda Item 5: Approval of Board Meeting Minutes of March 20, 2013. After a review of the minutes, Tealy Williams made a motion and Micah Scanga seconded the motion to accept the minutes as presented. Motion approved.

Agenda Item 6: Child Abuse Prevention Awareness Month-Recap

The kick-off at the Courthouse was a success. Julia Hermelbracht said that she has participated in proclamations in other counties and the ceremony at the Courthouse is definitely the most moving, and most professionally executed. Kevin Roberts said that it is a well put together, wonderful heartwarming experience with kids involved. He is proud of what Highlands County has done for kids and how Jeff Roth has led this initiative. Anne Lindsay said that it was inspiring to see the goals and objectives of the Council being a part of this event. Jeff Roth asked the members for referrals of potential speakers for this event. A proclamation was also presented at the School Board offices on a different day.

Agenda Item 7: 2013 Objectives Update:

- **We Care Hotline**

- **1.1.1 Project** - Addressed later in agenda

- **Pet Shelter for Sebring Safehouse**

Jeff Roth is working on a grant that will be due May 15, 2013. The grant has required an MOU between the Safehouse and the County, and Jeff is finalizing the MOU and has secured Dr. Jernigan as the veterinarian. The MOU will be placed on the County's meeting agenda for approval before the next Council meeting. The designs have been completed by Mr. Ogg, and the actual construction of the kennels will only take a few days once all paperwork is completed and approved.

- **School Administrative Mental Health Summit**

The Mental Health Summit is scheduled for the principal's meeting on May 8. The School Board is inviting school principals, guidance, and SRO's, while Jeff Roth has organized the attendance of some specific agencies such as, Central Florida Behavioral Health, Tri-County Human Services, Peace River Center, One Hope United, Heartland for Children, and Russ Sharp - CAC Prevention Specialist. Each agency will give a brief overview of their organization, and then participate in a panel discussion that will field questions/scenarios from the school board representation.

Agenda Item 8: 1.1.1 Campaign (Polk County Reception)

Ruth Handley attended this reception and was greatly impressed with the information presented in helping churches become involved in foster parenting. It is the responsibility of this Children's Services Council to assist our local churches in realizing our local fostering needs by supporting foster families within their congregations.

Agenda Item 9: 1.1.1 Project

Rev. Darin Canary of Wauchula is assisting Missy Albritton with the local 1.1.1 Project. He and Cebien Alty, a foster parent, gave an excellent presentation of how to involve churches in supporting and how to engage families in participating in fostering within their own local church congregation.

The need for foster parents would be easily resolved if only a fraction of the churches in each community would take ownership of this concern. Many times, children in Highlands County must be fostered out of the county because Highlands does not have an adequate number of foster homes to fill the need. A 1.1.1 Project kick-off is being organized for Highlands County.

Agenda Item 10: Autism Project

Jennifer Lipowski, owner of My School Childcare Center, discussed her experience with autistic children which has created her desire to help the affected families in our community. This passion has led to the Champion for Children Foundation becoming involved by creating a new fund and project specifically for assisting autistic children and their families within our county. Scott Crutchfield made a motion and Anne Lindsay seconded the motion for the Council to endorse the **AWE-tistic Child** project through the Champion for Children Foundation. Motion approved.

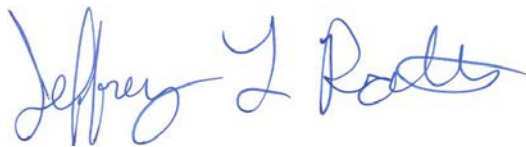
Agenda Item 11: New Business

- The blood mobile will be at the CAC starting at 9:00 a.m. on Wednesday, May 15th, right after the conclusion of our next meeting. Please pass the word and/or consider giving blood.
- Sebring Church of the Brethren is hosting an adult bullying documentary on Sunday, May 5th starting at 4:00 p.m.

Agenda Item 12: Adjournment

Meeting adjourned at 9am.

(Next meeting Wednesday, May 15, 2013 – 7:30 A.M. at the Champion for Children Advocacy Center)



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

Respectfully submitted: Gail Escobar