

## **AOC meeting March 7, 2007**

**In attendance:** Willow Griffin – SAIL and Sitka Commission on Health Needs and Community Services (CHNCS), Pat Alexander – CHNCS, Quinn Sharkey – CHNCS, Curt Ledford – Community Schools, Lillian Feldpausch – Boys and Girls Club education program manager, James Differt – B&G Club, Robi Craig – STA education, Jeff Shaeffer – STA; Annette Becker – STA Safe Start Coordinator; Ryan Kauffman – Community Schools Peer Helpers; Felix AuYeung – Sitka Affordable Housing coordinator; Jill Williams – YAS program manager; Steve Bradshaw – Sitka School Superintendent; Cheri Hample – SEARHC behavioral health & Faith in Action; Taylor White – high school Peer Helper; Julia Smith – SAFV; Maria Gaonne – Youth Court; Marilyn Lande – SEARHC Clinic 2; Bob George – Sitka Counseling and Prevention Services.

### **Update from CHNCS – Willow, Pat, Quinn**

Last week, CHNCS presented to the Assembly their report/suggestions for changing how the city distributes grants to community organizations. Today they show AOC members the resolution they've written that they'd like the Assembly to pass at next week's Assembly meeting – March 13. One of the commissioners mentioned that the Assembly asked the commission to look at the grant process and make recommendations, but that doesn't necessarily mean that they're all fully on board with it. Commissioners encouraged AOC members to contact their Assembly members to voice their support for the process changes, and/or testify their support at the Assembly meeting on March 13.

Their proposal to the City includes recommendations for the process, i.e. having designated agency categories, establishing a better application and review process, and requesting better evaluative reports from funded agencies. Their proposal also includes a request that, instead of the total amount to be granted being a mysterious “leftover” general fund amount, that the City annually set aside 3% of their budget to be distributed through this process. One AOC member suggested that if the Assembly members are hesitant about assigning that amount of money to this process, perhaps the Commission could just focus on the process with them for now.

### **Renewal of Drug-Free Communities grant – Curt**

Community Schools has a Drug-Free Communities grant, which pays Matthew and Kayla to facilitate AOC, and funds some of the coalition's projects. This grant is up for renewal, and Curt asks the group for their ideas about projects/action plans for the coalition – ways to help propel this group beyond being a network. AOC members made the following suggestions:

- Ways to meet the community's need for resource families and improved foster care.
- Increased access to child care for infants and toddlers, and/or community meeting to find solutions for the lack of child care.
- Program in Sitka akin to Habitat for Humanity
- Emergency shelter for teens

### **Debrief Town Meeting**

Matthew asks the group to reflect briefly on the Town Meeting that was held in February.

He asked the following questions (responses follow):

Anybody have quick comments about the meeting itself? Surprises?

- I was totally impressed by students that were there – they handled themselves well, communicated well; their openness created a nice atmosphere in the room
- One thing that struck me was the consistent and poignant message from Pacific High students about their perceptions of being in the community and being a PHS student – how they wrestle with that stigma in the community and among their peers.

What buzz did you hear afterward?

- my neighbor saw on TV, but only parts of it – I had to explain the whole thing to him and it took a long time; maybe if they didn't watch the whole thing, they're missing something.
- The B&G Club was mentioned in the context of serving youth – that prompted us to do a survey about how B&G could serve youth here – we got 210 surveys back.

Any indicators that there's a ripple effect happening?

- The timing was awesome for Peer Helper grants; not sure how many people would have submitted without hearing about it at Town Meeting, but our call to action put that out there, and we got really good proposals.
- What I'm hearing is "what's next? What are we going to do about our concerns?"
- That student voice is great; my pet peeve that we don't listen to students – they have strong things to say. I heard from another community member who was impressed with the students that spoke up – I think we continue to try to get more student things on TV, where students do have a voice.
- think the survey got lost a little, what kids said, etc.

Ideas for what's next:

- Matthew says he and Kayla have some ideas on the back burner to put more kids in the public eye
- Put the survey data out in the public more
- Put Calls to Action out in the media, including agency highlights
- Train adults in their responsibilities for interacting with youth

### **Peer Helpers grant award announcement**

Taylor White announced the winners of the Peer Helpers mini-grants:

- Southeast Alaska Independent Living – Peer Helpers, along with other youth and adults, will be designing and building a ramp to assist Tlingit elders in reaching the door of a clan house.
- Sitka Trail Works – Peer Helpers, along with other youth and adults, will attend a workshop on how to build mountain bike trails from a professional trailbuilder, then it is into the woods to work on a section of trail. A mountain bike skills training, and mountain bikes to use for the day, will also be offered.
- White Ribbon Campaign – Three exciting projects are being offered, each targeted to reach young people and talk to them about building and maintaining healthy relationships. A weekly multi-generational ultimate Frisbee game will end with straight talk about relationships. A fly fishing trip will team a few young men with healthy adults to learn new skills and benefit from positive role modeling. A surfing and camping trip will give a few young men a chance to go deep into dialogue about

- healthy relationships, and have a lot of fun.
- Sitkans Against Family Violence – An ongoing group of young leaders will receive training on modeling and teaching healthy relationships to their peers, and develop theater pieces around the topic.
- SEARHC – The WISEGUYS are planning an alcohol and smoke-free comedy event on St. Patrick’s Day. Peer Helpers will dress as leprechauns and do silly antics to promote the event around town. A special comedy class will be help by the invited comedian for select students.
- Sitka Conservation Society – Peer Helpers along with other students will be working with SCS members to plan a booth to commemorate Earth Day and educate elementary students. A special chartered educational tour of the Tongass will follow.

Matthew tells the group that what he thinks is so exciting about this project is that the Peer Helpers are in charge of the money: they did the proposals, reviewed them, and then will be helping to plan the events and will be participating along with other young people, ideally underserved teens. He says hopefully we’ll find a way to continue these projects next year.

### **HBO Addiction Action project – Cheri**

Community Anti-Drug Coalitions of America, together with other prevention and recovery organizations, are partnering with HBO to present the Addiction Project. This multi-media campaign will help Americans understand addiction as a treatable brain disease, spotlight new treatment advancements, and provide hope for long-term recovery. The 14-part series will air during a free HBO preview weekend on March 15-18.

### **Announcements:**

Roby Craig – STA introduces their Home to School Liaison Program to enhance academic achievement through family support. Five liaisons have been hired, one for each school in the Sitka district. For more information, contact Robi at STA.

Also, STA is conducting a child care survey in the community – the goal is to see what resources are out there for early childhood, families, and pre-school aged children, and what their services and hours of operation are. There is also a child care *needs* survey – specific to parents, where parents identify their child care needs. The two surveys will be linked together to see what’s available, not available, and where to link the services.

The grand opening of Sitka’s Boys and Girls Club will be March 24, 12:00-3:00 at the Club (601 Alice Loop Road). Membership is free to all Sitka youth of 7-18 years of age. The B&G Club is also seeking donations of various items for the club. For more information, to donate, volunteer, or sign up a new Club member, call Lillian at 747-4961 or email [lfeldpausch@sitkatribes.org](mailto:lfeldpausch@sitkatribes.org).

Julia Smith – SAFV sponsors T.R.A.I.N, an after-school teen dating violence prevention group that targets teens ages 13-19. The program will meet Tuesday evenings from 7-8:30 at SAFV and will engage students in nonviolent, fun activities that promote healthy choices and lifestyles. Students will be able to fulfill community service hours and or volunteer hours (they hope to offer school credit). If you know teens that would benefit from this group, please contact Julia Smith at 747-3370 for more info. There may be opportunities for travel and/or performing.

The White Ribbon campaign, a program of Sitkans Against Family Violence, promotes and supports men who have made pledges against violence of women. Meetings of this group are held at SAFV from 1-2 pm on the 2nd and 4th Fridays. For more information, or to see their excellent new T-shirts, contact Julia at SAFV: 747-3370.

Take Back the Night will be held April 20. Watch for more details to come.

Sitka Tribe of Alaska's Family Wellness Department and the Family Justice Center are sponsoring the carving of a Peace House Post. The goal of this project is to help heal the intergenerational cycle of trauma and grief by using traditional carving. Youth will work with community groups to write a story, create the design and carve the post under the mentorship of Elders. The carving will happen this summer at the Boys and Girls club, and the post will be raised in October in front of the STA Healing House. All interested persons are invited to attend the first planning meeting on Wednesday, March 14, 3:30 at the Healing House. If you can't make that, but want to be involved call Annette Becker at 747-5532 or [abecker@sitkatribes.org](mailto:abecker@sitkatribes.org).

Sitka Trail Works, SEARHC and Community Schools are partnering to host a Heart Disease Survivors Run/Walk on May 5 at the Heart Lake Trail. This event will also mark the opening of the trail from Thimbleberry Lake to Heart Lake.

Jill Williams – Youth Advocates of Sitka is currently serving about 60 students in school district. The biggest challenge is meeting the number of referrals – it's difficult to find people to work in the schools. If you know of someone, contact Jill. Positions are 35 hrs/wk with option to work toward FT, option of some work in the summer; 2 positions open; also Hanson House needs people too – there are 9 residents there right now.

Maria Gaonne – Sitka Youth Court; just started new volunteer training – 7 newly trained court members. She hopes to connect with agencies soon about service possibilities.

Felix – Sitka has a Home Opportunity Program – a down payment and closing costs assistance program to assist income-qualified home buyers. More information and applications can be found at [www.cityofsitka.com/housing](http://www.cityofsitka.com/housing). Agencies are also asked to post flyers about the program (the flyer can be downloaded from [www.sitkaaoc.org](http://www.sitkaaoc.org)).

Also, the RFP for the city shops property went out – proposals are due April 3. Felix is assembling a review committee of 4 people and he's looking for one more person, potentially from AOC, ideally a renter or a client, someone who could judge potential of the proposals and make recommendations to Assembly. The time commitment will be about 8 hours total over 1 1/2 weeks – it depends on how many proposals.

Cheri – Faith In Action will change their name this month to Braveheart Volunteers (the English translation of their Tlingit name).

Bob – SCPS HUD 6-plex is finished and they're interviewing the last applicant. Also, SCPS an started anger management program on Tues nights (a closed group). They probably will do another after this one finishes, and maybe will run a youth program as well.

Kayla tells the group that she received an email from Maybelle Filler, the new case manager at OCS. She wasn't able to attend today's meeting, but wants to be involved with this group. OCS is planning an open house in May – she will send more details soon.