

Island County Children's Commission
March 5, 2009 Meeting
Minutes

Members Present: Sandy Ziemer, Beth Derrig, Janice O'Mahony, John Dyer, Bess Windecker-Nelson, Margie Forbes, Kristin Lasher, Gail Cleveland, Cynthia Shelton, Alyssa Steele, Anne Murphy, Kate Grossman, Carol Stillian, Paty Williams

Members Not in Attendance: Mark brown, Peggy Dyer, Hillary Mellish, Rod Merrell, Dave White

Staff: Dan N. Bond, Keith Higman

Guest: John Dean, BICC

This meeting was called to order by Chair, Carol Stillian who facilitated welcomes and introductions.

The first order of business was a topical discussion with County Commissioner, John Dean. John was asked five specific questions, which were: **1)** How do you see the challenges facing Island County children and families in this current climate? What are you hearing and seeing that you are particularly concerned about – or pleased about? **2)** How do you see the landscape, and/or the forces at play, that might affect our ability to do the work we were created to do? **3)** What do you see as challenges, and opportunities, for this Children's Commission? **4)** From your perspective, how do you think we are doing and how do you think we can be more effective at our job, which is to: improve the quality of life for children and youth in Island County, and be advisory and a resource to the BICC? **5)** Specifically, how can we be of the most help to the BICC? For instance, can we assist by routinely attending BICC meetings when issues affecting children and families are being considered?

Excerpts from John's comments are:

- 1)** Concerned about the economic losses to families, but chooses to see a "silver lining", in that families may have the opportunity to return to "core values", such as helping one another when needed. Sees the Children's Commission as "good news".
- 2)** Sees no obstacles to our doing our work, though there is the possibility of funding losses. Sees no stronger force than individual professional commitments to children.
- 3)** ICC's biggest task right now may be "attracting public attention and earning a Commission reputation ... as the premiere leader and coordinator of youth issues".
- 4)** Sees that Children's Commission faces a "huge task at hand" and it may be difficult to be effective on any grand scale. Thinks ICC is "giving a wonderful gift to Island County and its children...". Thinks we may be more effective by collectively focusing on one project or issue per year, rather than taking on a multi-issue work plan.
- 5)** Suggests we be willing to accept a task, such as the "youth initiative" proposed by the City of Oak Harbor; address a compelling social need; actively support

formation of youth organizations; and monitor state and local governments to speak on behalf of children re: laws that affect children's lives.

The full transcript of John's comments is attached to these minutes and available from Dan N. Bond, at danb@co.island.wa.us.

Following our discussion with John Dean, Chair Carol sought approval of the February minutes, which were approved as written.

Executive Committee Report:

- 1) On April 14th, the ICC is awarding its first annual Children and Youth Hero Award to Victoria Santos, at the CHAB's Health Hero event. This event is at Whidbey General Hospital in Conference Rooms A&B, starting at 5:30 PM. Commissioner Rod Merrell will be speaking on Victoria's behalf, and will present the Award. We are told that space is at a premium, and individual Commissioners are not encouraged to attend. Dan, Carrie and Keith Higman will be in attendance, as well as Rod Merrell.
- 2) ICC Action Teams will be reporting out later in the Agenda. Every Children's Commissioner is expected to be active on at least one Action Team. Members are encouraged to think about where they want to expend their sub-committee time.
- 3) Carol announced that Commissioners who commit to tasks need to follow through on those commitments, especially when the efforts are collaborative, as ICC community reputation is on the line.
- 4) Carol asked Dan to relate the brief history and outcome from the request from the ESD regarding their application for Safe Kids/Healthy Schools. The ICC was asked to be the Advisory Body for that effort should the funds be awarded. This took negotiation, as the role is uncompensated, and originally called for a large amount of work and responsibility. The potential role of the ICC was diminished to a reasonable scope, should the application be accepted.
- 5) Carol reported that the State of Island County Children and Youth Summit is April 24th. Plans for the event were reviewed and Commissioners were strongly encouraged to attend. The ICC is the sponsor, and members need to take an active role.

Action Team Updates

Team Leaders/Spokespersons reported out briefly about the Action Team Plans. Dan will make the full plans available to all ICC members via email, and/or hard copy.

Round Robin

Members were asked to state their preference regarding which Action Team they will spend their sub-committee time working on. This was done around the table.

Public Comment – There was no public comment

Adjourned