



## Community Action Network Community Council 10/20/08 Meeting Minutes

**Attendees:** Amy Wong Mok, Anne Harutunian, Ann Stafford, Bruce Elfant, Cynthia Colbert, Eric Blumberg, Kathie Tovo, Laurie Seremetis, Linda Kokemor, Marquis Williams, Pat Dabbert, Ruby Roa, Terry Cowan, Willie Williams **CAN Staff:** Chantel Bottoms and Vanessa Sarria

**Unable to Attend:** Barbara Anderson, Barbara Cilley, Barbara Smith, Clint Smith, Jason Earle, Kevin Coleman, Linda Murphy, Matt Curtis, Michelle Augustine, Penny Lichenstein, Shawn Lemieux

- I. **Call to Order, Introductions & Announcements:** Community Council Chair Terry Cowan called the meeting to order at 5:37 p.m. Community Council members introduced themselves. Pat Dabbert announced that AISD has a proposition up for vote on November 4<sup>th</sup>; for more information on this Tax Ratification Election please visit [www.austinisd.org](http://www.austinisd.org). Cynthia Colbert announced that Catholic Charities is hosting life skills, financial literacy, and ESL classes; for more information visit [www.ccctx.org](http://www.ccctx.org).
- II. **Approval of Minutes from September 15, 2008:** Minutes were reviewed and approved with corrections. Staff will edit the minutes accordingly.
- III. **Citizen's Communication:** None
- IV. **Community Council Business:**

**Nomination & Approval of New Community Council Member:** Community Council members discussed Jim Reed who was nominated by Laura Morrison. Jim's background includes work with the Ethics Commission and work on environmental issues. The Community Council voted to approve Jim Reed as a new member.

**Nominations for 2009 Community Council Vice Chair:** Marquis Williams, Amy Wong Mok, and Kevin Coleman were announced as nominees for the 2009 Community Council Vice-Chair position. All three nominees will be contacted by Cynthia Colbert to discuss what the position involves.

**Update on CAN retreat held on October 10<sup>th</sup>:** Approximately 75 people attended the retreat. The Community Council had the greatest participation rate out of all of the CAN councils. At the retreat attendees reviewed the ideal statements that were presented to the Community Council two months ago. Retreat attendees provided feedback and input. Community Council members were provided with a revised list of the ideal statements based on suggestions made at the retreat. Vanessa Sarria stated that CAN staff were unsure how to incorporate the ideas of play or open spaces. Community Council members suggested incorporating the following phrases: "healthy environment" (under thriving) and "growth and development." The revised ideal statements will be presented to the other CAN committees, and the process will end when the Resource Council approves the ideal statements. The Resource Council did unanimously vote to move forward with the CAN community dashboard at the retreat. Community Council members requested information about what other communities are doing in their dashboard processes. CAN staff will send this information to Community Council along with Mary Dodd's brief presentation on the dashboard (a summarization of Ann Kitchen's extended presentation). A dashboard workgroup is now being developed. People on the dashboard workgroup must meet the criteria of having experience working with indicators across issues. The workgroup will hear presentations and testimony from certain groups on key findings and will also ensure that proposed indicators are vetted through the various CAN councils and stakeholders.

**Update on Community Council Recommendations to Resource Council:** The Community Council recently made a recommendation to the Resource Council regarding enhancing outreach and enrollment assistance for programs such as Medicaid and Food Stamps. The A-Team has begun working on this recommendation and has brainstormed several strategies for CAN partners. Community Council members were asked to respond to the proposed A-Team strategies through e-mail (A-team minutes with proposed strategies were provided to Community Council members at the meeting). The Community Council would like feedback from the A-Team about how they can assist in this process. Pat Dabbert and Cynthia Colbert volunteered to examine and report back on successful campaign efforts around the country.

V. **Leadership Taskforce on Teen Pregnancy and STI (Sexually Transmitted Infections)**

**Prevention:** Dr. Philip Huang presented. The teen pregnancy rate (ages 13-17) in Travis County has been declining, though the teen pregnancy rate among Hispanics remains significantly higher than the rates for African Americans and Whites. The birth rate for Hispanic teens aged 13-17 is also significantly higher than the birthrate for African Americans and Whites. Forty-seven (47%) of births to females aged 10-24 were to unmarried women. Data shows that one third of all unplanned pregnancies occur to unmarried women in their 20s. The number of Hispanic teen pregnancies is projected to increase over time and is expected to occur at a much greater rate than African American and White teen pregnancies. Disparities in birth rates among teens were as follows: White 5.0 per 1,000, 20.2 per 1,000, and 45.9 per 1,000.

Also, 1 in 4 sexually active females between the ages of 14 and 19 has one of the most common STIs (for example, Chlamydia and Herpes). Zip code mapping shows that rates of teenage Chlamydia, Gonorrhea, and Syphilis are disproportionately higher on the east side of Austin. The rates of Chlamydia and gonorrhea are also disproportionately higher for teenage girls than teenage boys. Dr. Huang stated that STIs are underreported for a number of reasons such as when a STI is asymptomatic.

There are now some collaborative efforts and initiatives in our region to address these problems.

Based on a literature review, Dr. Huang presented some selected risk and protective factors that may affect adolescent sexual behavior. The implications of these factors are: 1) As a community we must address multiple risk and protective factors at different levels. 2) We may need to address sexual and non-sexual risk and protective factors. Dr. Huang presented some evidence-based and otherwise promising curricula that could be used to work with teens and parents around these issues.

Next steps for our community are: an assessment of our local programs, activities, research findings, best practices, and data to review, update, confirm/enhance public health strategies to prevent teen pregnancy and sexually transmitted infection in Austin/Travis County.

Currently Texas law mandates that we are an abstinence only sex education state. AISD has elected the option to teach about contraceptives, but under the abstinence only law they must teach it a certain way. Parents are allowed to opt their children out of these classes and many do despite studies that have shown that parents prefer for their children to receive comprehensive sex education. The problem may be in the way consent forms and sex education curricula are presented to parents. A number of bills will be introduced to the legislature in the next session to address this issue. In January Planned Parenthood is releasing a big report on how well Texas school district sex educations perform.

Locally, awareness has been raised around these issues though a prenatal care campaign targeted at Hispanics and a STI prevention campaign targeted at African Americans.

The Community Council passed a motion to include a teen pregnancy clause in last meeting's motion to the Resource Council.

**VI. Other Business (Future Presentations):**

- Recommendation from Eric Blumberg
  - ATCMHMR would like to establish a program in Austin where the homeless and the mentally ill can receive bridge rental subsidies while they are waiting for HACA housing. The amount of funds that would be provided through this program are similar to funds that would be given through HUD assistance. Ruby Roa announced that the Community Development Commission is currently working on their 5 year plan and would be willing to work with ATCMHMR on this. Ruby Roa and Eric Blumberg will work to develop a CAN recommendation in conjunction with Frank Fernandez. Community Council members suggested that NHCD housing advocates and CAN staff make a presentation at an upcoming Community Council meeting to discuss the community housing plan, and to encourage people to attend related public hearings.
- Based on feedback from the Community Council and Issue Area Groups, Vanessa Sarria suggested topics for future forums include Developmental Disabilities, Criminal Justice, Community Engagement, Financial Stability, Workforce Development, and non-crisis mental health services. Community Council members that we specifically address poverty in January because it is hunger awareness month.

**VII. Meeting Adjourned at 7:35 p.m.** Next Community Council Meeting: Monday, November 17, 2008, at 5:30 in City Hall. Presentations and other data from Community Council meetings are available online at <http://caction.org/Councils/CommunityCouncil/Presentations/index.htm>.