

BOARDS & COMMITTEES ANNUAL REPORT
2007

DATE: February 5, 2007

COMMITTEE NAME: St. Johns County Health and Human Services Advisory Council

CHAIRMAN: Lynn Brueske-Walton

STAFF SUPPORT: Ann Henry, St. Johns County Social Services

BCC LIAISON (IF ANY): Commissioner James Bryant; Commissioner Ben Rich

BRIEF HISTORY OF COMMITTEE: In 1997 the Health and Human Services Advisory Committee and the Mental Health Substance Abuse Advisory Committee were combined to form the Health and Human Services Advisory Council to the Board of County Commissioners. The Council evaluates human services programs in the community, assists in determining the effectiveness of a program, reduces duplication of services and assures the health and human services needs of the residents of St. Johns County are met. They review applications requesting county funding for programs that provide health, mental health, substance abuse and social services and submit recommendations to the Board of County Commissioners. The Council performs its functions and duties without regard or condition as to the race, religion, gender or national origin of any affected person.

MISSION STATEMENT: The health and well being of a community is a function of its quality of life, including the delivery of health and human services supported by public policy and funding those in need of such services. Our mission is to be responsive to those needs and to recommend funding programs worthy of public support for citizens of St. Johns County.

MAJOR ACCOMPLISHMENTS IN 2006: The Council continued refining the Request for Proposals (RFP) process in the conjunction with Health and Human Services staff and the County Purchasing office for its funding recommendations of service agencies to the Board of County Commissioners. The Bylaws of the Council were revised, allowing for the Council to consist of 13 individuals, with five professionals in the Mental Health, Substance Abuses and Social Services fields; one representative from the County school district; one representative from the United Way of St. Johns office; one representative from the County Sheriff's office; and five at-large members, including but not limited to such areas as business, banking and finance, education, law enforcement, community religious leaders, consumers and any other interested parties comprising of the general public. Duties and responsibilities of the Council were revised as well to include: that the Council participates in the planning process for Health and Human Services; review and evaluate community Health and Human Services programs, needs, services, and special issues; promote a comprehensive and integrated approach to Health and Human Service issues within the County; serve as a sounding board for a wide base of community response regarding the community's Health and Human Service issues and programs;

establish an ongoing program of education and dissemination of information to its own members; and continue to participate in the RFP Process for Health and Human Services through the Health and Human Services Director and make reports and recommendations to the Board of County Commissioners and the County Health and Human Services Director and other such bodies as appropriate. The change in the Bylaws allowed for additional membership, for which attempts are continuing to meet the 13 members as required.

New Officers were installed in December 2006. Lynn Brueske-Walton will serve as Chair and Cleo Palmer will serve as Vice Chair.

Local agencies gave presentations to the HHSAC in effort to keep the Council informed of the services provided through County funding. Presentations ended once the Request for Process (RFP) process began to ensure no appearance of impropriety or favoritism on the part of the Council or an agency. The Council will continue with such agency presentations when the RFP process ends.

Trainings and workshops were held on units of service, performance measures and allowing for questions and answers on the RFP process. The workshops began in September 2006, ending in December 2006. The workshops were provided with assistance from the Health and Human Services Department. The workshops were provided to assist agencies in gaining skills and knowledge so that they may report their accomplishments in a clear and concise manner in the RFP Process and their monthly and bi-annual reporting to the County.

Commissioner Ben Rich, BCC Liaison attended many of the Council meetings. His input and updated information concerning our County provided needed educational information to the Council and assisted the Council in completing its duties. It is hoped that the new BCC Liaison appointed will continue this trend by attending Council meeting when possible.

GOALS AND OBJECTIVES FOR 2007: Membership of the Health and Human Services Advisory Council has grown. One new member, Dr. Ron Dixon, is a local dentist and resident for of the County for many years. He and others in the community are composing a plan for the provision of adult dental care in the community. The Council will continue to provide encouragement and assistance as it can in this much needed service.