

**Medina County Family First Council  
Planning Committee Meeting  
November 25, 2008**

**Attending:** Lynne Castele, Vincent DeGeorge, Diane Dockrill, Debra Grace, Beth McGuire, Debra Radecky, Christine Ruf, Nick Solar, and Phillip Titterington.

**Guests:** Julie King and Dale Fortner

Lynne Castele welcomed everyone and called the meeting to order at 7:40 a.m. Beth McGuire made a motion to approve the minutes from October 28, 2008. Debra Grace seconded. The motion passed.

**1. Strategic Plan**

Debra Grace introduced Dale Fortner, Superintendent of Wadsworth City Schools. Dale distributed a five page document on strategic planning (copy attached to original minutes) and discussed his strategic planning background. Dale noted the following:

- What is strategic planning all about?
- Meticulous planning will enable everything you do appear spontaneous to other people.
- Coordinated and systematic to reach your potential.
- Goals based strategic plan.
- Breakdown needs to be more specific than our last strategic plan.
- Develop more action steps.
- Random acts of improvement.
- All different agencies and organizations represented working towards the betterment of the whole.
- Focus on the big arrow.
- Take the random acts of improvement and move them towards one common area.
- How can you combine them all in one direction to move FFC forward?
- How can he help us?
- What are our needs?
- What are the expectations?
- We need clear goals to move the organization forward.

Questions and answer session:

**Question:** There is a clear purpose in the schools, but not a clear purpose with FFC. We have no real clear vision for the future. HMG may not be part of FFC and we may lose half of our funding.

**Answer:** Look at strengths and threats. Education has changed in the last 20 years dramatically with technology, families, and homes. What is the mission and belief of FFC? It may change over the year. Review where you are, where are you going and have a plan to get there. Go by the 70% rule of consensus.

**Question:** We are not a service provider. Our intent is to mobilize the community. We have had cuts from the state level and we don't have funds to provide the services. We try to get the constituents in the county to mobilize the community by building community capacity. Our target is youth, mid and seniors. We need to engage and empower families and get everyone on the same page. How do you get everyone on the same page as we are not providers?

**Answer:** Define the organization. FFC is not a provider. Develop an approach through public relations. Sustain the services and not just in a monetary way. The best way to do this is within our means. Supporting the network may not be financial. How can we support you in other ways? Develop a framework to support. Everyone has to understand their role and function. FFC may not be a bank or a

checkbook for the support. Everyone needs to have the same focus and be on the same page. How can we help you get to our goal without writing a check?

**Question:** Our last strategic plan was not as organized as the last two we had. What would Dale do and take us through the plan?

**Answer:** The strategic plan needs more detail in the action steps. Define who will do it. It can be done within a day but it will have to be an intense day and no personal agendas. Facilitator needs flexibility in working with the members. Who will take responsibility to do these things? Need breakdowns of the strategies and then make goals. Start from scratch or refine what we have.

**Question:** There are 1-1/2 FTE's at FFC. Many of our things get done within committees. Ohio Revised Code says some have to be here and others are elected. How do you get the volunteers? How do you empower the people?

**Answer:** You need to define the plan for a short term plan (2 years) and hold people accountable. Are you moving forward on the plan? Are you balancing between the hurdles and the rocks? Take the primary ones, get on the same page and get the arrows to the same direction. Part of the goal may be to refine the organizational structure. Look at the bylaws. FFC needs main purposes and main goals. Don't add more to the plan. Move forward.

Nick Solar introduced himself as the Chair of the Strategic Planning Retreat, Chair of the Bylaws Committee and Chair Elect. The Planning Committee members introduced themselves, what agency they represent and what they do or how they are part of FFC. Discussion included:

- Fulfill the plan.
- Regular updates.
- Everyone needs to take a piece.
- Only a few do what they need to do.
- Each person does a little bit and then it will all come together.
- How do the family reps fit into the strategic plan?
- What is the number Dale normally works with? 35-45.
- Have to have the right people there.
- The capacity to do the tasks.
- Good accomplishments but small and scattered.
- The things we want to do are too many.
- Goals are too lofty.
- Change the number of goals and narrow the focus.
- More complex with reduced resources.
- Look at your focus and narrow it.
- How can we best serve our clients?
- How to survive in the world we are living in?
- Plan has to be fluid.
- Some members give money to Council. Some members receive money from Council and it may influence how people interact with Council.
- Need to have people believe in what they are doing.
- Who is at the table?
- Why are they at the table?
- Be strategic in the approach.
- Developmental assets.
- Make a commitment to obtain funding.
- Lead, follow or get out of the way.

The Strategic Planning Retreat is September 25, 2009. Dale needs direction from here on to start the process. Jayme McCourt will send a copy of the Planning Minutes to Dale for his reference.

## **2. FCFC Recommended Short-Term and Long-Term Cross-System Challenges**

Vince DeGeorge received this document from Angela Sausser Short, OFCF Director. Lady Strickland visited all of the Family First Councils (88 counties) in 2007. This document is a compilation of what issues surfaced repeatedly by several counties. We are being asked to identify three short-term challenges and three long-term challenges that are pertinent to Medina County. These challenges are to be addressed within a three to six month basis.

The short term challenge recommendations are:

- Flexible funds to meet local needs
- Consistent and sustainable funding
- After school combined educational/social skill services

The long term challenge recommendations are:

- Expand councils to cover life span
- Employ CareTeams in local school districts
- Expand service coordination to more vulnerable populations

Beth McGuire made a motion to approve the submission to Ohio Family & Children First as written above. Diane Dockrill seconded. The motion passed.

## **3. Next Meeting and Adjournment**

Nick Solar noted that our next Family First Council meeting will be at Job and Family Services in the Berry room. The Planning Committee will meet at 7:30 a.m. in the same room.

Diane Dockrill made a motion to adjourn. Debra Radecky seconded. The motion passed. The meeting adjourned at 8:55 a.m.

Respectfully submitted by,  
Jayme McCourt