

Bellingham-Western Washington University Campus Community Coalition

Friday, February 23, 2007
St. Luke's Health Education Center, 3333 Squalicum Parkway

Meeting Minutes

Attendees

Amy Cloud, WWU University Communications
Anna Carey, WWU New Student Services
Barbara Brandt, South Hill Neighborhood Association
Barney Goltz, Cornwall Neighborhood Association
Bianca Smith, WWU Police Department
Brian Waller, The Beaver Inn
Buff Schoenfeld, WWU President's Office
Christine Burkhart, Bellingham Police Department
David Garcia, WWU Police Department
Darren Sandstrom, Bellingham Police Department
Devlin O'Donnell, WWU Prevention & Wellness Svcs
Dick Conoboy, Samish Neighborhood
Doug Dahl, Whatcom Traffic Safety Task Force
Elva Giddings, WWU Prevention & Wellness Svcs
Emily Farnon, Straight Talk About Responsibility (STAR) Task Force
Erwin Lloyd, Puget Neighborhood Association
Joe Fuller, Whatcom County Health Department
John Martin, WA State Liquor Control Board
John Purdie, WWU University Residences
Karen Klebs, WWU Student
Kent Nelson, ACE Beverage

Kevin Majkut, WWU Student Activities
Kevin McClain, WWU Associated Students Board
Kunle Ojikutu, WWU Office of Student Affairs
Lara Welker, Campus Community Coalition
Lidia Tillman-McAdoo, Rental Property Owner
Luke Loeffler, Congressman Rick Larsen's Office
Malcolm Fleming, City of Bellingham Mayor's Office
Marie Sather, WWU Campus Recreation Services
Mark Young, Bellingham Police Department
Mary Gamache, WWU Prevention & Wellness Svcs
Michael Schardein, WWU Office of Student Life
Michael Sledge, WWU Residence Life
Nicole Allen, WWU Student
Rafael Lucatero, WA State Liquor Control Board
Renee Collins, WWU Office of Student Life
Richard Sullivan, Happy Valley Neighborhood Association
Ryan Anderson, City of Bellingham Attorney's Office
Sandi Jones, Windemere Management
Stacy Piper, WWU Student
Tom Dixon, WA State Liquor Control Board
Tony Masias, WA State Liquor Control Board
Wendy Henerlau, WWU Prevention & Wellness Svcs

Lara Welker welcomed the group, and members introduced themselves. Lara extended a special welcome to people attending a Coalition meeting for the first time. She then acknowledged and thanked two departing members: John Martin from the Washington State Liquor Control Board who is moving to Wenatchee where he will continue with the LCB; and Susan Adams, Co-Coordinator of the CCC, who recently moved to Portland, Oregon, for a position at Mt. Hood Community College.

Lara announced that she recently attended the National Institutes on Alcohol Abuse and Alcoholism (NIAAA) steering committee meeting in Maryland, and she was reminded that the Coalition's work to address underage and high-risk drinking by college students is unique in that it both employs interventions for individual drinkers and also addresses environmental issues that influence student drinking.

Lara also announced that the Coalition was the recipient of the 2007 National Association of Student Personnel Administrators (NASPA) Program Excellence Silver Medal Award. She emphasized that the success of the Coalition lies in its diversity and many partnerships, in which people from the campus and community help develop, implement, and evaluate the programs. She congratulated Coalition members for their work that resulted in the NASPA award.

CCC Project Updates

(Please see handout **CCC Update 2.23.07** for more details.)

Late Night @WWU Update

Kevin Majkut reported on Late Night activities. WWU's late night programming serves two purposes: to offer late night, attractive, alcohol-free activities for students, and more generally, to promote a campus culture with a feeling that "WWU is an exciting place to be."

During winter quarter there have been several successful events. In January, Beta/Gamma Residence Hall held a Welcome Back Ball for over 300 students, and Associated Students Special Events put on a Laser Show at the Student Recreation Center that attracted 375 participants. In February, Neko Case performed to a sold-out house (660 seats) in a concert organized by Associated Students Pop Music. An ongoing late night film series is offered at the Underground Coffeehouse on Friday nights, averaging over thirty students each week. The Residence Life shuttle bus started running until 1:00 am on Friday nights to provide transportation for on-campus students who attend the film series.

Kevin noted that it seems that Late Night has yet to become fully institutionalized at WWU, and that developing late night programming has some important implications for staffing and facilities. The Late Night@WWU work group will be meeting next week to discuss budget and staffing issues, and ways to continue improving late night programming.

Malcolm Fleming asked how the late night programs were funded, and Kevin explained that the Coalition has provided seed money for events, the Associated Students has allocated \$15,000 to late night events, and University Residences contributes through its departmental and student program budgets. Lara added that Campus Recreation Services/Wade King Student Recreation Center and New Student Services also both make significant contributions to Late Night@WWU by providing staff time and facilities.

Enforcement Update

Lara gave an update on enforcement data. The Coalition recently made exciting progress in accessing data from the Bellingham Police Department (BPD). Prior to 2004, the only BPD data that the Coalition reviewed was from Party Patrol. In 2004 the Coalition began tracking 911 calls reporting loud parties by hand searching BPD data, which was both time consuming and left room for error. This year, Lt. Gill at BPD wrote database queries that isolated all pertinent data for the Coalition. Using this more reliable and systematic method, the Coalition analyzed data from 2004 to the present, and while the exact numbers differ from what was presented last year, the data still show a downward trend in total alcohol cases (see handout **CCC Enforcement Data 2.23.07**, page 1).

Officer Christine Burkhart pointed out that the data reflects all alcohol-related activity and does not differentiate between student and non-student incidents, and wondered whether the number of students living in the "intervention neighborhoods" (York, Sehome and Happy Valley) has changed. Lara remarked that she did not think it had changed significantly, but that it would be interesting to check that.

Comparing alcohol cases in York, Sehome and Happy Valley with other Bellingham neighborhoods, the percentage of cases coming from those three neighborhoods has remains

fairly constant over the past three years (page 2). Isolating “loud party” cases, there is an overall decline in the past three years (page 3). Alcohol related citations overall have remained fairly constant (page 4) and Party Patrol citations have decreased overall (page 5). Liquor Law Emphasis Patrol, which is different from Party Patrol because it is a focused patrol using only a few officers, showed increased citations.

Kent Nelson noted that the numbers for minor in possession and drinking in public citations were identical in 2006 and wondered if these two offenses were written up in one citation. Lara explained that the offenses were handled differently and the identical numbers was coincidental. Kent also pointed out that while the number of Liquor Law Emphasis citations increased, so did the number of nights, so the rate of *citations per night* remained constant.

Dick Conoboy asked what the data really reflect, and specifically how it can be determined if the changes are due to the efforts of the Coalition. Lara explained that looking at enforcement data is one aspect of understanding the impact of the Coalition’s work, and another piece is student survey data. Comparing data from “intervention neighborhoods” (York, Sehome and Happy Valley) with data from other neighborhoods will help ascertain the impact, as will comparing data from WWU and Bellingham with two other Washington university communities. Lara acknowledged that it is difficult to establish clear cause-and-effect relationships, and more extensive analysis would be necessary to have a definitive answer as to what is causing the changes.

Lidia Tillman-McAdoo asked whether the minor in possession citations were primarily college students or high school students, and Lara replied that at this time we do not have that information.

Following the discussion of the enforcement data Lara asked members to contact her if they had further questions or wanted to request specific data.

Neighborhoods Engaging with Students (NEST) Update

Lara briefly reported that the “Living Together in Bellingham” Let’s Talk Forum on January 31 attracted 120 participants—the biggest forum to date. She noted that the Bellingham Herald provided some good coverage which she hopes will help attract more non-student community members, since it remains a challenge to bring them into the dialogue.

Coalition Steering Committee Report

Mike Sledge reported on the recent work of the Steering Committee. In January, the committee convened to look at the priorities for future Coalition activities that had been suggested by CCC members at the fall meeting. In deciding which suggestions should be acted upon, the committee looked at whether the activity showed evidence of effectiveness or best practices, and how feasible it would be to implement (see handout **CCC Steering Committee Priorities 2.23.07**). Thirteen activities received four or more votes, and the top three activities were to continue BPD enforcement efforts and expand the Party Patrol; continue distribution of the “Think Locally–Act Neighborly” doorknockers; and to continue Liquor Control Board enforcement of alcohol sales and underage drinking laws. Mike then acknowledged the committee for their good work, and recognized Maggie Feeney and Lara’s work in writing a grant proposal that included many of the committee’s priorities.

Lara announced that a grant proposal was submitted to the Department of Education last week. The proposed activities included in the grant proposal were based on the input from Coalition members at the November 2006 quarterly meeting and the Steering Committee's prioritization of these activities. The grant proposal both addresses the Coalition's priorities and is "packaged" to meet the Department of Education's funding guidelines. Lara thanked Maggie Feeney for her expertise and hard work in preparing the grant application.

Lara reviewed the strategies and activities that were included in the Department of Education grant proposal (see handout **CCC DOE Grant Proposal Summary**).

Barney Goltz asked what constituted "high-risk drinking", and Lara explained that the most commonly used definition was that of binge drinking, or 5 drinks for a man/4 for a woman at one occasion. There are other measures, such as frequency and harms experienced, but these all correlate to binge drinking.

Lara pointed out that of all the highest Steering Committee priorities, just one was not included in the grant proposal, and that is using the WWU judicial system to provide sanctions for students who get citations off-campus. She explained that there are two reasons that it was not included. First, there was a short time-line between the Steering Committee meeting and the grant application due date, which did not provide enough time to lay the ground work for a policy change strategy such as this. Second, since change at the systems and policy level takes a lot of time, it was felt that this strategy was not one that could necessarily be accomplished in the two-year grant period.

Lara clarified that while this strategy was not included in the grant proposal, it is still something that the Coalition could undertake. She acknowledged that there is a range of views among Coalition members regarding if WWU should have a role in sanctioning students' off-campus behavior, and if so, what that role should be. It is a controversial and somewhat "hot" issue that would probably require extensive discussion, but she hoped the Coalition could play a role in that discussion in the next year.

Kunle Ojikutu concurred with Lara that policy change requires a long process filled with complexities, which needs to happen before including it in a grant application. John Purdie pointed out that policy change does not need grant money; it needs people willing to come to the table to discuss and negotiate. Lara also noted that sanctioning students' off-campus behaviors could be seen as a continuum, with "do nothing" at one end and "do everything" at the other, and that the discussion would entail defining various options along that continuum.

Discussion on priorities and grant proposal activities

Lara opened up the meeting to discussion. Malcolm Fleming extended his appreciation to the Steering Committee for their work in ranking the activities for the grant proposal. Kunle Ojikutu pointed out that the current grant from the National Institutes on Alcohol Abuse and Alcoholism ends in August, but will likely to be continued for another year through a no-cost extension. There is no guarantee that the Coalition will be awarded another grant, and he stressed that it is vital to continue the work with solid funding, and not rely on grants. He hoped that WWU would do its part to help secure the Coalition's work, and encouraged other Coalition stakeholders to do the same.

Barbara Brandt asked if the activities that the Steering Committee had deemed as lower priority would be abandoned altogether. She pointed out that “Continue to send the letter to property owners each fall” received no votes from the Steering Committee, and she wondered if that activity would be dropped. Lara explained that it has not been decided what to do with the lower priority activities. It would be necessary to sift through them and see which, if any, the Coalition would continue, which would partly depend on the resources involved. Barbara stated she would like to see the rental owner letter continued.

Brian Waller clarified that the Steering Committee members were allowed by a limited number of votes. Therefore an activity with no votes was not necessarily seen as one with no value, but as a lower priority than some of the others.

Marie Sather expressed concern that the enforcement data did not differentiate whether the offenders were WWU students, and she felt that was important information for meaningful evaluation, including that of late-night programs. Mike Sledge described how he determined how many WWU students living in residence halls received off-campus citations by monitoring the online police logs. He found that very few BPD citations were issued to residence hall students.

Lara said that to her knowledge obtaining that information would require cross-referencing the list of names of cited persons with the student list. Sgt. Bianca Smith said that there is an “employer” section of a citation, but frequently students give their employer’s name so this is not a reliable way to determine student status. Elva Giddings noted that she has a list of students with first offense minor in possession citations in her Alcohol and Drug Consultation and Skills (ADCAS) database. Lara said that she would follow up on the logistics of ways to determine how many people receiving citations are students.

Erwin Lloyd addressed the issue of dealing with non-student minors and how it might be best to prioritize enforcement. He also inquired if the fines that are paid for alcohol-related citations could be filtered to the Coalition to help fund its programs. Lara reflected that WWU does this with the fees that sanctioned students pay to take the Alcohol and Drug Consultation and Skills course, so it would be a similar approach.

Sandi Jones asked if the revenue from sales tax on alcohol could be fed back to the community. Tom Dixon explained that there are four or five different allocations for the money at the state and local levels. Malcolm Fleming stated that he thought the City of Bellingham receives 1% out of the 8.4% sales tax, and most of the money goes to the State.

John Purdie addressed the issue of the Coalition’s focus. He asked if the Coalition is doing what it says it will, but also what it is trying to achieve? The actions that the Coalition undertakes can be quantified, but the achievement results are more nebulous to ascertain. Lara commented that the recently-submitted grant proposal does include specific measures to monitor results.

Erwin Lloyd said that the Coalition has a general goal of lowering alcohol abuse, but that knowing what strategies are the most effective to accomplish that goal is a bit fuzzier. He suggested small group work to study that and bring their findings to the larger group. Lara agreed that it was not always clear which strategies are most effective to achieve a specific outcome. She pointed out that the NIAAA has an effective strategies list based on current

research in the field of alcohol prevention, but it does not specifically indicate the relative “bang for the buck” for each strategy.

Sandi Jones stated she felt that it is important to look at the community as a whole. She commented that alcohol abuse is not a problem of only WWU, nor does it require a WWU-only solution. Lara returned to Dick Conoboy’s comment about whether the enforcement data was showing results of the Coalition’s work, or perhaps only trends in the community as a whole. Lidia Tillman-McAdoo reinforced Marie Sather’s earlier point that it is important to separate out data regarding Western students in order to see the changes specific to students. Lara pointed out that both the community emphasis and the student-specific emphasis are important ways of understanding the alcohol problem, and they do not have to be mutually exclusive.

Christine Burkhart stated that it was important to continue the OffCampusWWU website, since more students live off-campus than on. She suggested more incentives for those who use the site, such as coupons for grocery and other stores.

John Purdie asked about the Coalition’s focus on “party houses” in town, another activity that was deemed lower priority by the Coalition Steering Committee. Lara commented that the City of Bellingham has the lead role in determining ways to address “party house” problems, and emphasized that the Coalition is interested in working with the City on addressing that problem.

Malcolm Fleming stated he was surprised to see that activity as a lower Coalition priority. He explained that the City has a very full agenda and has looked at many approaches with the legal department, but it is a lower priority than other big issues. While addressing party houses is important, it is one of more than a hundred important things on the City’s agenda. Lara pointed out that dealing with the problem involves policy change, which takes a large investment of time and energy initially, though it can prove very effective in the long term. Malcolm noted that it is essential to prioritize, since if you try to do everything, you do nothing very well.

Lara thanked the members for their comments and discussion. She announced that the next general meeting would be in May, and invited people to contact her with any questions, concerns or suggestions in the meantime. She said that if she received any notification concerning the Department of Education grant before the next meeting she would notify the members.