

**Poverty Committee Minutes
Russell County Government Center
Lebanon, VA**

October 17, 2007

Attendees

Members

Trudy Brisendine, Chairman
Peppy Linden
Maggi Luca
Nettie Simon-Owens

Staff

Anthony Conyers
Margaret Schultze
Pat Rengnerth

Guests

Mac Clifton
Michelle Heath
Ed Canter
Barbara Gregory
Mary Borelwise
Sandy Minton

Via Conference Call:

Eric Beecroft
Karin Clark
Marianne McGhee

Call to Order

The Poverty Committee was called to order at 11:00 a.m. by Chairperson Trudy Brisendine.

Minutes

MOTION MADE by Ms. Luca and seconded by Ms. Simon-Owens to approve the minutes as presented. Motion carried with all in favor.

Podcast Update

Marianne McGhee reported that the Charlottesville podcast site, “*Voices of Poverty*” would need a minimum of ten different podcasts on each selected topic. DSS capacity is new and still limited. We will not be able to meet that goal at this point. However, DSS has produced one podcast on the relationship of domestic violence to poverty. It was decided to air the podcast on the DSS website in the State Board section. Staff will continue to increase capacity and look for

additional options to broadcast the pods as they are available. At the conclusion of the meeting the committee listened to the first podcast which will be aired in late October 2007 and optimized through the use of news releases.

Future Podcast Themes

Staff suggested the following themes for future podcasts:

November	-Prison Reentry Program
December	-Poverty and the Elderly
January	-A Resolution- Steps and Services to Self-Sufficiency
February	-Social Worker Perspectives on Poverty
March	-EITC
April	-EITC
May	-Foster Care Awareness Month
June	-School's Out, Now What?
July	-Open
August	-Child Support Awareness Month
September	-Staying Warm, Staying Cool: Coping with the elements and resources for help.

Committee members approved the themes and added additional possibilities:

- Ms. Linden advised adoption would be a compelling topic to use in July. She asked if the heart gallery could coincide with one of the topics. Affordable housing is another subject that should be addressed.
- Commissioner Conyers mentioned that during the Roundtable the previous evening, substance abuse, kinship care and children coming into foster care as a result of substance abuse were addressed in depth. All are issues related to poverty.
- Ms. Simon-Owens noted that transportation is a challenge for people in poverty. Rural areas do not have mass transportation.
- Ms. Brisendine stated that few people understand what the Poverty Index is. Perhaps a podcast could discuss how it came to be the standard for eligibility for services, and how it compares to a living wage.
- April is Child Abuse Awareness Month. It's possible we can do something in conjunction with Family and Children's Trust Fund.

It was suggested that a "resource list" could be provided at the end of each pod cast.

Mr. Beecroft advised that volunteers could be mobilized through pod casts.

Ms. Linden felt the 1-800 number being used in the pod cast should use an acronym that people would remember when seeking assistance. (E.G. 1-800-FOR-HELP). Staff will explore this possibility.

Ms. Brisendine asked if the full Board needed to approve the suggested themes. Ms. Simon-Owens stated the Board had already authorized the Poverty Committee to develop podcast themes and report back to the Board. Ms. Luca agreed.

EITC Outreach

The committee revisited a prior wish to encourage wide dissemination of information about the EITC program. Suggestions were made to link DSS and VACAP outreach to maximize success.

They included:

- Board members to survey VACAP EITC Website (<http://www.vaeitc.org>)
- Schedule EITC Outreach presentation at December Board meeting
- Announce winners of VACAP EITC grants to all local DSS offices
- Prepare podcasts highlighting EITC program
- Offer DSS Broadcast and tool kits on EITC to all local DSS offices
- Ask VACAP to request all CAP directors to meet with local DSS directors to coordinate EITC Outreach activities
- Request local directors to train all customer staff to provide EITC information verbally and in written format to all DSS customers beginning in January 2008
- Participate in any EITC activities planned by the Governor

Staff suggested Peggy Friedenbergl is a good EITC resource at the VDSS central office.

Non Profit Considerations

Ms. Brisendine advised several nonprofits recently met to discuss their ideas about raising awareness of poverty in Virginia; however she had not yet received any feedback. Ms. Brisendine will send a memo to the committee relating any comments from the group.

Staff Appreciation

Ms. McGhee and her team; Erik Beecroft, and Karin Clark were commended for their hard work on behalf of the committee and the success of the first poverty-related podcast.

Adjournment

With no further business to discuss, the committee meeting adjourned at noon.

