



CAN Community Council Meeting Notes, 8/19/19

Community Council Members in Attendance: Ara Merjianian, Caroline Reynolds, Hunter Ellinger, Jenny Jensen, Kirsha Haverlah, Laura Griebel, Myneeka Holloway, Nora Comstock

Guests in attendance: Dr. Susan Webb

CAN Staff: Raul Alvarez, Justin Hale, Jelina Tunstill

Call to order & announcements: Hunter called the meeting to order at 6:13 pm. There were no announcements.

Citizens Communication: None

Communications Committee Report: Laura explained that the communications committee met directly before the regular meeting at 5 pm. They discussed specific roles and responsibilities and how to get the Child Poverty report out to the community. She stated that she will send notes out with the proposed task list and those assigned to those tasks. She stated that the date will always be the same as our regular meeting, but it will start at 5 pm. Ara added that it might be worth seeing what United Way is doing relating to Child Poverty and see if there is an area for collaboration.

Discussion and Possible Action: Community Council Member Nomination Process: Hunter discussed the draft directive for the nominations process that was included in the packet. He stated there are two different ways to approach recruitment: what do the bylaws require; and what does the council want to require for recruitment beyond what is in the bylaws. The Membership Nomination Committee will manage the recruitment process. The big change will be the emphasis on a nomination process and not so much an application process as it has been in the past. We want a better connection between the council nomination/recruitment process and the CAN Board. The CAN board may listen more if they know some of the members and feel connected. One of the ways of doing that is asking specifically for nominations from board members.

There isn't clarity in the role of the Community Council. We need to come up with a description of our mission that will help us to sell this opportunity to prospective members. Mapping out the background of current membership and the background of the applicants will also help to fill holes and meet demographic targets. Having committees that specialize on certain issues (like children or seniors) or groups that take advantage of individual expertise may also help with recruitment.

The Community Council replaced a set of working groups that were similar to the dashboard areas. Raul explained that there were 12 issue area groups and each created a report and FAQ. What they created would go through the Community Council as part of the approval process. This set up wasn't allowing time for staff/partners to focus on action. The board decided to create the Dashboard which ended the issue area groups. This greatly changed the role of Community Council and it became much more autonomous. This is why it probably feels like there's no directive for the group, because there isn't. Raul suggested working in a three-year cycle that includes: assessing an issue, developing/publishing a report, and then acting on the report recommendation.

Executive Director's Report: Raul drew attention to the CAN CC Roles by Bylaws document. He discussed how we divided the activities that Community Council has done over the past 3-5 years into the bylaws description of the Community Council. Maybe as a council we can look at the dashboard and hold a state of the safety net. In regards to how the tasks are divided it can be assessment, planning or implementation and the Community Council doesn't have to do everything, but just deciding where we want to be.

Spending more time around number two (collaboration) is what CAN is about and should be what the council is about too. We've spent the most time around 3, 4 and 5 (assessing, making reports and recommendations to the board, and raising awareness). We only went back to 2015 just to see what our activities have been and where they fall within the bylaws, but this isn't what is communicated to people applying to be a part of the council. Raul added that the ED report is attached and lists the Safety Net Forums and dates as well as the Regional Summit. It also gives an update on Strategic planning, we've started the one on one visits with partners. We also have a survey that went out, but we can set aside time to plan as a council if that's desired. We started a book study on "What Truth Sounds Like" by Michael Eric Dyson.

Approval of Minutes: A quorum wasn't present so 8/19/19 meeting minutes could not be adopted.

Community Council Chair's Report: Hunter invited members to get involved with the Membership Nomination Committee. He warned that it would be an extensive amount of work. Caroline volunteered to participate in the Membership Nomination Committee. Raul wanted to clarify who would be creating the short description of what the Community Council's function is. Hunter stated that the nomination committee wouldn't be responsible for that. He said that the materials would be created through informal email communication.

Hunter gave an update about the community accountability information project that was proposed earlier this year stating that more has not been done on it, but that he expects more to be done this year. As CAN continues down the road of developing its strategic planning, this kind of project can help to show the value of Community Council and how we can be helpful to the community. We could develop tools that explain the pathways for accountability. Hunter stated that by the September meeting he would try to complete a couple more examples. Ara added that this would be a good assignment for individual council members to build leadership.

Presentation by Dr. Linda Webb (Garza Independent High School): Dr. Webb began her presentation by describing that Garza High School is very high level. Stanford University has an independent education center and a few years back they were asked to look at alternative schools that were successful with at risk kids. They only found 45 in the United States that were truly successful with at risk kids and Garza was in the top five. Success is defined by: amount of drop outs; college admittance; if they were still alive. UT did a study just two years ago and the study was about students that were in danger of hurting themselves to the point of death. The study found that students that went to Garza had a higher chance of living and being successful than if they went to treatment, returning to their homeschool, or being taken out of school altogether.

Garza high school uses a solution focused education which is a hybrid of social work and psychology. She has a book called solution focused brief therapy in alternative schools that has been recognized internationally and has been able to present in other countries about the success at Garza. Garza is the only school in the district that doesn't use Social Emotional Learning (SEL) because they have found great success with solution focused brief therapy.

In order to go to Garza, the student has to be federally at risk, which doesn't include poor. The student has had to have just left a treatment center within the last 2 years, attempted suicide and stayed overnight at a center, had to have a child, failed 2 core subjects, or been homeless. Garza has 84% at risk. What happens is the students have an interview that is solution focused based to see what works and doesn't work for the student. This conversation includes the parents. In order to get into Garza, they must also have 10 credits, because of the rules for alternative schools. Garza has demonstrated success in students graduating in three year graduates and also with regard to SAT scores. Garza is self-paced and doesn't

function off of cohorts. There is also a Garza Online option for taking courses, which was created from scratch. It's meant for students to get ahead or to catch up. The online high school has technology where teachers can still have relationships and give constructive feedback online. This summer Garza has 1,400 students online. Dr. Webb stated that have developed a partnership with University of Texas because of their solution focused programming. Garza has 3 counselors and Communities in Schools on campus. Another unique aspect of Garza is that they require students to do 20 hours of volunteering, which they call "Garza Gives Back" to show appreciation to their community.

Adjournment: The meeting was adjourned at 8:00 pm