

Sampson County Meth Task Force
Meeting July 23, 2007
Minutes

The Sampson County Meth Task Force met on July 23, 2007 at Sampson Community College in the Warren Student Center Board Room.

Chair, J.W. Simmons, called the meeting to order at 2:00 pm. Rev. Dennis Newton gave the Invocation.

Present: J.W. Simmons; Amber Cava; Sarah Bradshaw; Oscar Rodriguez; Gary Connolly; Rev. Jennifer Slade; Pat Green; Sara Boyer; Renee' White; Rev. Dennis Newton; Rev. David Chestnutt; Paulette King; JC Boykin; Terry Miller; Chris Brandt; Mary Margaret Hobbs; Ken Jones; Jimmy Thornton; Kenneth King; Wanda Robinson; Joni Fetterman; and Janet Rosenberger.

Special Visitor introduction: Rev. Newton introduced Rev. David Chestnutt who is with Open Door Ministries. Rev. Chestnutt addressed the Task Force informing them of his past. He is a former drug user and has been in several treatment centers over the years leading a very rough life. At one point, he was so depressed that he contemplated suicide. He decided to go to the ER and ended up in Cherry Hospital's detox center. It was not until he turned his cares to Jesus that he finally became a whole, new person. He was tired of being an addict and wanted to help other people. Open Door Ministries is a 45-day program for addicted men. They have 4 full-time staff members. Rev. Newton added that there have been 88 men who have successfully completed their program.

NOTE: They're located at 199 E Magnolia-Lisbon Rd; Magnolia 28453.... Phone #910/532-2175

Meth Summit 2007: JW stated that there were 400+ attendees at the various programs of the May summit presented by Dr. Holley. Pat Green pulled things together and everything went very well. Pat stated that it was a group effort and especially thanked Gary Connolly and Ken Jones with Eastpointe with funding assistance. JW added that the auditorium was full at Hobbton and several students talked with Dr. Holley after her presentation to the student body.

Special Recognition: On behalf of the Meth Task Force, Sarah Bradshaw presented JW Simmons with a special plaque of appreciation. She reminded the group that JW was the driving force behind the development of the Task Force. On April 4th, 2004, he made contact with several area business people bringing them together for the first time. He's been instrumental in the growth and progress and is the reason we're together as a group now. JW accepted the plaque and stated that the Task Force is successful due to the efforts of the entire group. He is well aware of the impact Meth has on the community and the upcoming battles that will be necessary to bring about positive change and prevent this highly destructive disease from continuing to destroy lives and families.

Ken Jones informed the group that County Commissioner Jefferson Strickland had approved funding for \$1,000 to be spent to purchase Dr. Holley's DVD's for the schools, libraries and Sheriffs Department. Eastpointe has budgeted more funding for Task Force projects. JW added that groups can access this available information. He also mentioned that the HBO Addiction series is at the library as well for use.

OLD BUSINESS

We need to work on getting contact cards with a resource list and phone numbers. Private organizations could use this information for referring someone with questions for assistance. Sarah stated that the Event & Community Relations Committee was planning to work on this endeavor. Ken added that Eastpointe could assist in funding for this as well. Stewart Hobbs also stated that the schools would help in anyway they can. Sarah mentioned that we are collecting information for the biography's of the members. We need to have those completed and bring them back to the September meeting.

NEW BUSINESS

SUBCOMMITTEE REPORTS:

- 1) **Schools**: JW stated that the SASSY program has been extremely successful and is a unique project for drug testing. Additionally DeLeon Wilks is working on other projects. Stewart Hobbs added that a lot of parents have taken advantage of the voluntary drug testing and have picked up the kits. They appreciate the videos and DVD's that have been provided for the schools. He feels it would be beneficial for some of the Task Force to speak at parents' night to provide them with more education about Meth.
- 2) **Faith Based**: Rev. Jennifer Slade feels that the group can assist in educating the public about addiction as a disease to help prevent their prejudices.
- 3) **Event and Community Relations**: Pat Green stated that we could do more radio spots for constant awareness as well as use Star Communications public service announcement channel. Sarah added that the Task Force could do more outreach, possibly conducting the bi-monthly meetings in community centers publicizing for others to attend. Gary Connolly stated that there needs to be more education in the medical community about assistance for addictions. There are medications out there that help with most all addictions but, due to lack of information, pharmacies don't have them readily available for distribution. These treatments do work.
- 4) **Business & Industry**: Amber Cava stated that the various businesses need to be separated and educated differently since they deal with addicts differently.

Ken Jones informed the group that there is funding available for the prevention side. We could put together a team to work on doing an application for funds. This three-year grant has \$100,000 available per year. One of his suggestions was to possibly lease a billboard to get the message out.

With no further business, the meeting adjourned at 3:45 upon a motion by Pat Green and a second by Rev. Newton.