

# Vermont Drug and Alcohol Coalition

**Mission Statement:** *The Vermont Drug and Alcohol Coalition exists to continually improve access to quality prevention, intervention, treatment, enforcement and recovery services and programs for all Vermonters.*

December 2, 2009 Minutes

**Present:** Emma Rowe, David O'Brien, Christine Peterson, Patty McCarthy, Patrick Martin, Kathy Martin, Ken Libertoff, Kim Martin, Mary Fletcher, Mark Ames, Carol Rose, Glen Gross, and Debra Herbst

By phone –none

## Action Steps:

- **Ken** will send list to VDAC members of key legislative people that we can talk to regarding proposed funding cuts
- **Ken** will set up rallies at statehouse for VDAC
- **Kim** will send out complete survey results to members through email
- **Patty** will email Raise the Tax, Not the Ax graphic to Emma
- **David** will ask Julie Tessler to come to January meeting
- **Emma** will invite ONE VT member to attend next meeting
- **Kim** will call Sergeant at Arms at Statehouse at 8am on January 4<sup>th</sup> to reserve the card room for a day in 2011
- **Patty** will ask Ken to set up a hearing for the afternoon of February 24<sup>th</sup> after the VDAC meeting
- **Kim** will send out a SAVE THE DATE announcement before the end of December
- **Emma** will ask Connie for the comprehensive coalition list that she worked on
- **Emma** will ask Dennis Menard to come to January's meeting
- **Mary** will ask Franklin County Lieutenant to come to one of our meetings
- **David** will send treatment list to Kim

**Review and approve minutes from October 09 meeting:** Minutes were sent out via email and were not brought to meeting. Group will approve October and December minutes at next meeting.

**Treasurer's report:** Mark reported that as of November 30<sup>th</sup> we had \$1,957. Next month we will have a better account after receiving current bank statements. Because of administration changes all correspondence has not come in.

**Legislative Update from Ken:** Ken reported a projected 20 million cut from mental health. There is no word on ADAP yet, but they have been working on budget scenarios with a 20% reduction in funds. It is looking bleak and he encouraged the group to start talking NOW (this month) to legislators and potential gubernatorial candidates. Once programs are eliminated it is hard to get them back down the road. A meeting is scheduled for December 16<sup>th</sup> from 1-3 at the City Center in Montpelier to begin to outline how to deal with these cuts and develop a strategic plan. He suggested that a few members from VDAC attend to participate in this planning process.

Christine asked if there was anything that the governor said that would be helpful to know before he comes to the Vermont Alcohol and Drug Advisory Council January meeting. Ken explained that since he is leaving his job there is not much to report. He will present a very harsh budget in January.

**Membership report:** Kim reported that the membership letter and application was sent via email and there have been no new members yet.

**Old Business**

**Review survey results:** We received a total of 128 responses to the survey. Patty pointed out that after reaching out to the missing sectors we received 10 responses from enforcement compared to 0 before and treatment went from 3 to 39. The more complete survey responses will be teased out by sector and reported on at a later date.

**Choose priorities for 2010 session:** Mark talked about not knowing what cuts will look like and David and Patty suggested that we advocate for maintaining funding as our priority. David reminded us how important it is to talk to legislators now while they are home and before budget is released. Mark feels that we should continue to advocate for alcohol tax this year as revenue will need to be raised. This is a perfect year. Talked about getting materials ready now that say “Raise the Tax, Not the Ax! We will revise the material Patty prepared last year from the Center of Public Interest.

We discussed planning a rally, or hearing for February after the VDAC meeting to respond to funding cuts. The Substance Abuse field needs to be organized and ready with a response like Mental Health. We also discussed inviting key partners to the next meeting. Julie Tessler, ONE VT and Diversion were mentioned. It will help strengthen our unified voice and build a broader base of support. Law enforcement will be very concerned and affected by these program cuts. One issue that VDAC can work on with law enforcement is the changes in the public inebriate law. Mary mentioned that there is no place for people to detox in Franklin County; they need to go to Chittenden County if picked up by the law.

Group decided to send out a SAVE THE DATE notice before the end of the year to announce the February hearing. We discussed how to get more people involved; sending out our mission statement, setting up and using a facebook page, getting the list serve/coalition spreadsheet that was created by Connie Beal and using multiple approaches to reach people.

*The group decided that broadening membership and strengthening the structure of VDAC, creating a unified voice, advocating for continued funding for programs and raising the alcohol tax are priorities for this coming legislative session.*

## **Next meeting: January 27th 12:30 - 2:30PM at the Pavilion, Montpelier, 4th floor**

February 24<sup>th</sup> 12:30 - 2:30PM at the Pavilion, Montpelier, 4th floor

March 24<sup>th</sup> 12:30 - 2:30PM at the Pavilion, Montpelier, 4th floor

April 21<sup>nd</sup> 12:30 - 2:30PM at the Pavilion, Montpelier, 4th floor

May 26<sup>th</sup> 12:30 - 2:30PM at the Pavilion, Montpelier, 4th floor

June 23<sup>rd</sup> 12:30 - 2:30PM at DLC

July 21<sup>st</sup> 12:30 - 2:30PM at DLC

August 25<sup>th</sup> 12:30 - 2:30PM at DLC

September 22<sup>nd</sup> 12:30 - 2:30PM at DLC

October 27<sup>th</sup> 12:30 - 2:30PM at DLC

November/December combined meeting TBA

Adjourned: 2:20

Respectfully submitted: Kim Martin