

Child Care Center at Norwich  
Board Retreat June 16, 2008  
Minutes

**In Attendance:** Neil O'Dell, Jessica Hamblen, Marlene McDonald, Allison Colburn, Deanna Denault, Katie Willard, Julie Stevenson, Carol Schoenig, Bristol Rayno, Rick Canning, Sarah Stewart Taylor, Glennis Gold, Laura Scott  
**Absent:** Sarah McGinley Smith, Jodi Wenger, Jennifer Letendre  
**Quorum present?** Yes

### **Outgoing Board Member Retrospective/Future Vision**

Neil asked outgoing board members to comment on the issues they feel are most important for the center and where they hope to see the center in 2 to 5 years.

Deanna identified that in lean years, the board's focus is centered internally - "bumping along" and managing financial hiccups. In richer years, the board is able to do more work on long term strategic planning both internally & externally. She feels that there is a real need for the board to identify the CCCN in the community and build a foundation of awareness & financial support that will reduce the impact of lean years in the future. To do this, the board must also answer questions about the role of the board, the importance of community presence and how best to build a foundation for the CCCN to draw on in the future. Deanna's feeling is that community awareness is the key to building that foundation.

Jessica expressed her feeling that the CCCN maintain its focus on being the highest quality, best care, warmest environment for children playing and learning in the Upper Valley. Capital improvements are great additions, but the focus should always remain on maintaining the highest quality childcare.

Glennis focused on the importance of communication amongst the board and between the board & CCCN staff. She argued the importance of having frequent, formalized communication channels: perhaps staff meetings, board at staff meetings, staff at board meetings, etc.

### **Immediate Tasks/Priorities**

There was discussion on the top 4 items requiring board attention in the next year. Committees will be developed by the July board meeting.

1. Communication: one of the key issues that came out of our Annual Meeting was the need for improved communication between the board and the staff of the center. Ideas presented under this topic were:

- Staff Reps on Board and/or Board member at Staff meetings
- Potential for Staff Reps to have stronger voice w/o limits of voting

membership

Staff Meetings on a regular basis – adding to staff cohesion

Have a regular wish list – a way to communicate staff needs to the director and the board.

Invite staff members to board meetings to speak on specific issues

2. ByLaws Review/Revision: our ByLaws need to be thoroughly reviewed and revised. We plan to solicit legal counsel during the process. This review will also encompass board role, responsibilities, composition, communication, and schedule.

3. Finances - Fundraising/Tuition/Salaries/Benefits: this continues to be an ongoing and important focus of the board. Ideas under this topic area included:

Do market analysis to see where CCCN fits in tuition range

Do analysis of salaries & benefits vs. other area centers (including education level of staff)

Discuss our tuition philosophy incorporating goals of diversity, etc.

Identify different/better/more efficient ways to raise \$

4. Finances - appropriation of funds: for the money that we do have, how is it best used. Suggestions included:

Have staff prioritize benefits (salary, health, vacation, etc)

Identify non-monetary factors that make staff happy working at CCCN

Brainstorm capital improvement projects & prioritize

**Next Meeting** – Monday July 7<sup>th</sup> from 4 – 5:30