



**MINUTES**  
**REGULAR MEETING**  
**Children's Needs Task Force**

Thursday, September 27, 2007 4:00 PM  
Huntington Beach Civic Center  
2000 Main Street, Room B-8  
Huntington Beach, CA 92648

Chair Collins called the meeting to order at 4:07 PM.

**I. Roll Call**

**Members Present:** Stan Cohen; Ian Collins; Broc Coward; Pat Guidotti; Robert Hart; Erica Salisbury; Kecia Van Mechelen

**Members Absent:** Alison Baskin (excused); Adam Buttons (excused); Robert Dettloff (excused); Carol Kanode (excused); Phyllis Lembke (excused); Nicolette Schindler (excused)

**Staff:** Janeen Laudenback; Mary Loadsman

**II. Presentations:** Laudenback welcomed new CNTF appointee's; Stan Cohen; Broc Coward; Erica Salisbury and Kecia Van Mechelen, thanking them for their willingness to serve. Chair Collins welcomed the new CNTF members and asked that each member introduce themselves, and provide some background information on why they chose to serve.

**III. Approval of Minutes:** Minutes of August 23, 2007.

**MOTION: Moved by Guidotti, seconded by Hart, that the minutes of August 23, 2007 be approved.**

**AYES: Guidotti, Hart**

**ABSENT: Baskins, Buttons, Dettloff, Kanode, Lembke, Schindler**

**ABSTAIN: Cohen, Collins, Coward, Salisbury, Van Mechelen**

**Motion passed.**

**IV. Public Comments:** No comments.

**V. Introductions and Opening Comments:** Chair Collins again welcomed the new members and provided a brief history on the CNTF. He included information on the Youth Character Awards (YCA) noting that the program had been introduced in 2000 and was based upon the principals of the Josephson Institute, Character Counts! Program. He explained that the CNTF provided a mailing during the fall to youth groups, schools (public and private) and youth organizations inviting them to participate in the annual Youth Character Award Program. He further explained that it was one of the few recognition programs

that encouraged the community to nominate an individual youth strictly on their character, or good deeds, and not for educational or athletic prowess.

Laudenback went on to provide additional details of the program noting that all of the nominees receive a certificate of recognition, the YCA inductees receive medals and the opportunity to ride on a float in the 4<sup>th</sup> of July parade. Additionally, the winners are recognized by the Mayor at City Council, and have their name on a bronze plaque that will hang at Bella Terra, on the Youth Character Award Wall of Fame.

With the background information complete, Chair Collins deferred to the discussion items.

## **VI. Discussion Items:**

Grading Criteria for Youth Character Awards – Focus Group III presented options for grading criteria during the May 2007 meeting. Members completed an open discussion on the criteria presented and concluded that it would be continued at the next meeting. At the August 2007 meeting, members reviewed the minutes from May and discussion ensued on the criteria presented. It was agreed that the criteria would be presented to the members at the September meeting along with recommended actions and open to vote. The proposed criteria is as follows:

- a. The nominations must be by an adult but not an immediate family member.

Hart commented that perhaps a family member may be the only person that would know the good deeds a child performs, i.e., caring for an invalid neighbor, family member, etc. He asked that if this situation occurs, how would this be handled or evaluated. Collins asked how the criteria limitation would be presented on the nominator's application. Coward asked how "home schooled" children would be eligible. Laudanback responded that should a nomination be received from a family member, or a general inquiry regarding any of the criteria, staff would remind the nominator of the guideline that limits the nominators to non-family members, and encourage them to have a non-family member re-submit the application.

**Motion: Moved by Cohen, seconded by Guidotti to accept the grading criteria for the Youth Character Awards to limit the acceptance of applications to those persons that are not family members.**

**Ayes: Cohen, Collins, Coward, Guidotti, Salisbury, Van Mechelen**

**Nays: Hart**

**Motion passed.**

- b. Although character takes a lifetime to develop, emphasis for selection will be placed on acts of good character displayed during the past year.

Cohen asked if the children that are nominated go through an interview process. Collins responded that the CNTF does not conduct candidate interviews. Coward asked how the group controls the selection process. Collins explained that any CNTF member that desires to participate in the selection process is welcome. He said that the children are nominated via an application and a letter that the nominator writes. He noted that there is a limitation on the number of words for the nomination letter. He said the review group reads each letter and evaluates each candidate independently. He noted that after everyone has read and evaluated each candidate application, they hold an open discussion, and come to an agreement for the final award winners. Guidotti confirmed that the group has not any issues with determining the final winners, that the percentage "winners per year" and "across the age groups" has been consistent.

**Motion: Moved by Guidotti, seconded by Hart to accept that accomplishments of character for the current year be weighted with a higher emphasis.**

**Motion passed unanimously.**

- c. Given that the nominee possesses the characteristics of good character, they should demonstrate an *individual* strength of character or deeds.

**Motion: Moved by Coward, seconded by Van Mechelen to accept that an individual accomplishment or deed be weighted with a higher emphasis rather than a group or organized activity.**

**Motion passed unanimously.**

- d. The nominees should be Third Grade through High School.

Collins explained that the current nomination criterion is open for age groups K through 12. Discussion ensued and noted that many of the acts by the younger age groups were more of expected behaviors, rather than true acts of character. Guidotti acknowledged this to be the case, and commented that each nomination is viewed, based on the candidate's demonstrated character traits relative to their age.

**Motion: Moved by Guidotti, seconded by Cohen to accept that the Youth Character Award eligibility is limited to school years three through twelve.**

**Motion passed unanimously.**

e. Added: The number of inductees will vary from year to year, and will only be limited by the size of the plaque.

Collins reiterated that the selection committee generally has around the same number of inductees each year. He explained that the selection committee recommends students to be inducted, but approval of the recommendations is required by a majority of the CNTF.

**Motion: Moved by Salisbury, seconded by Van Mechelen to accept that the Youth Character Award inductees each year will be limited by the number of names allowed on the plaque.**

**Motion passed unanimously.**

Added: Youth Character Award Nominee's may only be inducted one time.

**Motion: Moved by Cohen, seconded by Hart to limit the number of times a nominee can be inducted to one time.**

**Re-define Focus Groups** – At the August meeting, the CNTF members agreed to present year end focus group reports at the September meeting, and to re-define the focus groups for the 2007 / 2008 year.

Chair Collins moved to table this item to the next meeting, and asked staff to distribute the year end reports to the new members via e-mail, prior to the next meeting.

**VII. Unfinished Business:** None.

**VIII. New Business:**

Holiday Social - Determine or confirm the date and place for the Holiday Social tentatively set for 12/27/07. Chair Collins explained that the holiday social is usually held during hours of the regularly scheduled CNTF meeting. He offered to host a pot-luck at his home, and asked that outgoing student representatives and CNTF members be invited to attend. He suggest that the holiday social be held either the first week, or second week in December, and asked that this item be bought forward to the next meeting to confirm the date. Laudenback added that this social would need to follow Brown Act posting requirements, as she anticipates it will be a quorum of the membership.

**IX. Comments:**

Hart welcomed the new members and said that he was looking forward to a productive year.

Coward noted that he was excited to be a part of the group and hoped that his service in government would be of benefit.

Guidotti welcomed the new members and thanked them for their support.

Cohen thanked the group for their service. He said has served on many boards and commissions and looks forward to working with everyone.

Van Mechelen thanked the task force for the opportunity to participate and help children in the community.

Salisbury commented that she enjoys working with children through her church group and thanked the members for the opportunity to serve.

Collins commented what a great asset it is to have everyone focused on a common goal.

**X. Items to agendaize for the next meeting:**

- Re-define Focus Groups.
- Confirm Holiday Social for 1<sup>st</sup> or 2<sup>nd</sup> week in December.

**XI. Adjournment:**

Meeting adjourned at 5:10 p.m.

***The next Children's Needs Task Force meeting is scheduled for:***

***4:00 PM Thursday, October 25, 2007***

***2000 Main Street (lower level City Hall) in Room B-8.***