

COMMUNITY RESOURCE CENTER
Of the Cape & Islands, Inc.
The Way of the Future
Strategic Plan 2014
APPROVED 6/25/14

Executive Summary

Community Action Committee of Cape Cod and Islands, Inc. (CACCI) retained the services of Rosemarie Resnik, President of Rosemarie Resnik and Associates, Inc. to assist with the strategic planning process. Working in collaboration with the Executive Director, the Chief Operating Officer, and the Board of Directors, Rosemarie Resnik sought input from internal and external stakeholders (Board members, non-profit leadership, funders and volunteers, customers, staff and childcare providers) on critical issues internally and externally impacting the non-profit's ability to sustain high performance and measurable community impact. In addition, stakeholders were asked for their input on the non-profit's mission, vision and values and if the non-profit's work is in alignment with those principles. From this input emerged a strategy to move the non-profit toward having a greater impact on the lives of those we serve.

Eighty-eight Board members, external key stakeholders, the management team, staff members, customers, community leaders provided input to assess the non-profit, future needs for our customers and the non-profit, and the measurable community impact CACCI should strive to accomplish over the course of the strategic plan, which is defined as FY2015 (October 1, 2014- September 20, 2015) through FY2019 (October 1, 2018- September 30, 2019).

Early in the research determined that various stakeholder groups were using differing and sometimes-conflicting definitions of self-sufficiency. Focus group input resulted in the development of the following definition:

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Self-sufficiency:

The ability to meet family basic needs without public assistance, and to have sufficient discretionary income for savings and emergency expenses.

This definition acknowledges the need for individuals and families have a support system, but also recognizes that the goal is for reducing government assistance and being able to meet your standard needs. It does not imply that self-sufficiency is an on-again-off again state, but rather is a process, meaning that an individual or family may move toward self-sufficiency over time.

Key Findings

- The name of the non-profit does not reflect the mission or the work.
- The Non-profit is focused on stabilization rather than on self-sufficiency.
- Interactions with customers are more likely to be transactional than transformational.
- Despite the thousands (5,000) of individuals and families the organization serves annually, it is not well known in the community.
- There isn't a nucleus that ties all the programs the Non-profit currently offers together.

Strategic Goal:

We assist individuals and families with their immediate emergent need; however, our primary purpose is to assist our customers in attaining or retaining self-sufficiency.

2014 Strategic Planning Process

The planning process for the FY 2015-2019 periods reviewed the history, culture, and funder mandates. The current fiscal environment and federal

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budget challenges put services at risk concurrent with an increase of funder expectations of impactful results. Unrestricted Community Service Block Grant (CSBG) funding, which makes the organization a Community Action Agency, is now being tied to self-sufficiency outcomes and there is talk of CSBG dollars being distributed based on merit and need, rather than the traditional service area. Restrictions have been placed on the use of CSBG dollars over recent years, including limitations on lobbying and certain forms of traditional community organizing. The tactics and operating principles that worked fifty years ago at the organization's formation and the initiation of the War on Poverty no longer match today's climate, expectations, or restrictions.

Beyond the funding challenges, there is new emphasis on outcomes. Funders disfavor safety net services. It is no longer sufficient to stop with relieving a crisis in an individual or family's life. The funders expect that the assistance result in a lasting impact, and they expect the ability to document and demonstrate that improvement.

Finally, there is a new emphasis on non-profit competency. Not only does staff need to be qualified for their particular jobs, but the non-profit must also be competent to manage funding, personnel, regulatory, business components, reporting, governance, and community participation components of its work. Funders expect non-profit competency to achieve outcomes for individuals and families while government funders are placing greater emphasis on compliance. These two, often competing, trends are impacting non-profit operations, financially, programmatically, and administratively. In addition, Department of Housing and Community Development is requiring an assessment process for agencies that determines eligibility for Community Service Block Grant funding.

Key stakeholders were asked their impressions of the non-profit, its role in the community, and its effectiveness toward serving the region and its at-risk

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individuals and families. Several themes emerged in these stakeholder discussions:

- CACCI is best known for its Childcare voucher program and Safe Harbor and less known for services that lead toward self-sufficiency.
- CACCI's customers want a higher degree of satisfaction with the services the non-profit provides, asking that staff be more helpful, caring, and supportive.

Key Findings

- Participant used phrases like “able to provide home, health and subsistence” and “having the self-confidence to handle their personal affairs,” and “able to manage the priorities in their lives” while “decreasing repeated reliance on social services as way of getting through their lives.”
- The vast majority of customers agreed that navigating their way through the system was confusing and bureaucratic. Customers further described the services offered in the Community as resembling a “mouse wheel pushing them back onto public assistance rather than getting off of it.
- The non-profit needs to take full advantage of opportunities to increase its impact through collaboration with other organizations.
- The need for addressing “the challenge to overcoming generational poverty” was repeatedly cited in the focus groups. With poverty and, in particular, generational poverty they cited an erosion of learning the basic life-skills.
- The immigrant population isn't necessarily in poverty but can't always afford high-priced attorneys. Therefore, sometimes they turn to an uncertified underground market for immigration paperwork assistance. Individuals promising a pathway to legal status prey upon undocumented immigrants.
- The cost of child-care is expensive and there is a great demand for the

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services offered.

- Child-care providers wanted more training and interaction with upper level management.
- Safe Harbor is more focused on finding rehousing rather than on the mission of the non-profit.
- Stakeholders repeatedly emphasized the need for one-on-one coaching and mentoring, exclusive of case management.
- The funding for advocacy programs has been eliminated and there are further legal restrictions on the use of public dollars for such purpose.

The Non-profit Name

The recommendation is to change the name of the non-profit to Community Resource Center of the Cape and Islands, Inc.

Our Mission

Provide resources and skills to individuals and families in the region to attain and retain independence and economic self-sufficiency through personal growth, family stabilization, life skills and employment readiness.

Our Vision

A community where people are self-sufficient.

Our Values

Respect
Trust
Commitment
Dignity
Compassion
Dedication
Professionalism

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Key Result Areas

As a result of the work and the decision to focus on the key need of moving individuals and families from in-crisis to self-sufficiency, the non-profit's Leadership Team developed five goals that will move the non-profit toward that result.

Action plans will be developed for each department that includes the goals, strategies, and Objectives of the Key Result Areas. An annual five-year action plan with annual operational plans will be developed.

Organizational Goals FY 2015 – FY 2019:

- A non-profit committed to assisting people to become self-sufficient.
- Individuals and families are provided with opportunities to achieve self-sufficiency.
- Remain a sustainable funded non-profit.
- Develop new areas of expertise and service deployment to reach those in need across the service delivery areas.
- Rebuild the non-profit's reputation in the community.

Operating Principles FY 2015 – FY 2019

- Strategy supports the mission.
- Remain the only provider of childcare vouchers in the region.
- Remain a DHCD funded domestic violence shelter.
- Remain an advocate for our customers and providers rather than a political advocacy non-profit.
- Provide programs and services that move our customers to self-sufficiency.
- Strengthen nonprofit community engagement and collaboration.
- Provide high-quality customer service.

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- Ensure that recruitment of new board members reflects the mission and the needs of the non-profit.
- Enhance our facilities to make them more attractive to our customers and more comfortable for our staff.
- Work closely with volunteers to assist the non-profit with life-skills training and the mentorship program.
- The non-profit adopts a philanthropic culture.
- The non-profit operates within a brand management and marketing plan.