

**Meeting Minutes**  
**Levy County Coalition Against Tobacco**  
**March 8<sup>th</sup>, 2011 - 3:30 pm- 5:30 pm**  
**Capital City Bank Chiefland, Florida**

**Agencies and Members in Attendance:**

1. Levy County Health Department	Kristina Zachry
2. Levy County Health Department	Swain Strickland
3. Levy County Health Department	Barbara Locke
4. Levy County Health Department	Janet Hart
5. Community Member/SWAT Parent/Chair	Boyd Belnap
6. Community Member/SWAT Parent /Secretary	Cheryl Belnap
7. Suwannee River AHEC	Manette Cheshareck
8. Community Member/Cedar Key Lions Club	Luke Sresovich
9. Levy County Housing Authority/Guest Speaker	Bob Williams
10. CMS SWAT Advisor	Mary Phillips
11. CMS SWAT Member	Katy Belnap
13. CHS SWAT Member/ Co-Chair	Ansley Pentz
14. CMS SWAT Member/ Vice-Chair	Christian Aracena

**Welcome, Introductions, and Updates:**

Becky Magwood of Capital City Bank was presented with a community partner Certificate of Appreciation from Ansley Pentz on behalf of the Suwannee River AHEC & the Levy Coalition Against Tobacco.

The meeting was called to order by the Chairperson, Boyd Belnap. Handouts included the current meeting agenda, meeting minutes from January 18, 2011 and an “In-Class Homework” assignment provided by Mr. Belnap. Ansley Pentz made a motion to approve the prior meeting minutes and Mary Phillips seconded the motion. The minutes were approved with no changes.

Emma Belnap presented a “Two Minute Motivator” and read an article about a university in Kansas that adopted a tobacco free policy after a youth suggested a total ban of smoking on campus.

Kristina stated that she and Ansley had attended the Tobacco Use and Prevention Advisory Council meeting on March 7, 2011, where they viewed a presentation from a former employee of the tobacco industry, who was a contract manager for retail stores. Ansley stated that youth are targeted by the tobacco retailers, who display their tobacco products below 3 feet so that they are at the eyesight level of youth. Kristina, Swain, and SWAT youth in the county will be visiting local tobacco retail stores and will be assessing ads on the outside of the stores and taking pictures to document the types of ads and their placement. Kristina also thanked the Coalition members for participating in the Partnership Assessment survey. Results will be shared with the Coalition at our next meeting.

Mr. Belnap stated that the Levy Coalition Against Tobacco website will be [www.levycat.com](http://www.levycat.com). He explained the “in-class homework” assignment, and stated that the results would be shared at the next meeting. Also, he asked that the group be thinking about nominations for new officers for the upcoming fiscal year. Nominations will be placed at the next CAT meeting.

Kristina discussed the Preemption Clause of the Florida Clean Indoor Air Act. Because of the preemption clause, tobacco can still be used in outdoor public areas, such as beaches and parks. The preemption clause makes it illegal for any local law to be passed that is more stringent than the state law. Jimmy Smith, a representative of Lecanto, Florida, has sponsored a bill that would clarify preemption as only applying to indoor spaces.

Kristina also shared some information about the impact the Tobacco Free Florida campaign has had on Florida, including: since 2008, adult smoking prevalence in Florida has decreased, resulting in 497,306 fewer adult smokers in Florida, and the adult smoking prevalence has dropped to its lowest ever, at 17.1 percent. Additionally, annually, there are approximately 300 fewer smoking related deaths among Floridians age 35 and older. Finally, Kristina announced that Ansley Pentz was elected as the State Vice-Chair for the Youth Advocacy Board.

Ansley announced that March 23<sup>rd</sup>, 2011 is Kick-Butts Day, a national youth anti-tobacco advocacy day. The Chiefland Middle and High School SWAT members will be participating in a street marketing campaign. Ansley stated that they will be holding signs about candy flavored tobacco on the road in front of Chiefland High School. She also said that the SWAT members are going to be making dioramas to represent the candy flavored tobacco products that have dangerous ingredients in them. These displays will be in the shared cafeteria for the week of Kick Butts Day. For example, they are going to be placing a frog in a jar of formaldehyde that is decorated to look like an apple, to show that the tobacco industry masks dangerous chemicals in their tobacco products by using fruit and candy flavorings. Ansley also spoke about the SWAT website: [www.gen-swat.com](http://www.gen-swat.com) and welcomed everyone to check-out her tobacco prevention blogs.

### **Special Guest: Bob Williams, Levy County Housing Authority**

Kristina introduced Mr. Bob Williams from the Levy County Housing Authority. Mr. Williams opened his presentation by thanking the Coalition for inviting him to the meeting. He stated that he had once lived in a residence in which a former tenant had smoked, and how the smoke was saturated in the carpet, curtains, and air ducts. He recognized that it is also very costly to try to remove the odor. He stated the problem with some of the rentals in Levy County is that the owners live elsewhere and don't know that their home is being smoked in and don't see the damage being done to their property. He recommended that Barbara and Kristina attend the meetings with the landlords and owners that are held in January and August. Mr. Williams also has a Driving Traffic School, and he says as part of traffic school students learn about tobacco. He feels

strongly that the tobacco industry targets low-income people. In his housing program, they charge people that smoke in their unit to cover the cost of rehabilitating the unit. If the people don't pay, then the charge goes on their credit report and their rental history and it can affect them in the future when they seek housing. Mr. Williams feels that it isn't legal to designate low income housing as smoke-free because it can be perceived as discrimination, however, if it is private housing, then it would be legal. If it is in the lease agreement and the tenant signs it, then they have to abide by it. Mr. Williams feels that it is fine to make these demands for private housing.

Mr. Williams also stated that he would be glad to put literature about tobacco in his owner/landlord packets and that this might encourage owners to rent to tenants that do not smoke and would also attract smoke-free tenants. He would be glad for Kristina to put tobacco-free pamphlets in his office. Mr. Williams will also hand them out at his Traffic School Classes. Kristina asked if Mr. Williams provides sample leases and he said that he can't but the Landlord-Tenant Act would help with this. Mr. Williams felt that the landlords would be very receptive to a tobacco-free policy. Section 8 housing is private – there are 124 for Levy County. Mr. Williams explained that private landlords can say “No Smoking” to their tenants, however Section 8 and subsidized housing cannot be told “No Smoking”. He stated that 142 vouchers are mailed out monthly to Levy and Gilchrist County Public Landlords.

Kristina thought this would be a good idea to attend the landlord/owner meetings so that she could inform them of the benefits of renting to smoke-free tenants that include cost savings for cleaning and reduced fires, which in turn reduces the cost on insurance for a rental. Kristina then thanked Mr. Williams for attending the meeting and for the information he gave. She also welcomed him to attend future meetings.

### **Breakout Groups:**

Mr. Belnap asked for the homework assignments to be turned in as the group separated into their breakout groups. Also, due to time, groups should take about 20 minutes for discussions and then return to discuss together.

### **Group 1: Organization and Membership:**

Mrs. Papadi wrote a welcome letter to be included in the membership packet. Christian and Ricky put together a statistics and fact page for the packet. Ansley & Christian are putting together a draft pamphlet which Ansley showed to the members. She asked that everyone be thinking of colors for the logo. Kristina suggested having two breakout groups at the next meeting so that this group can have more members. We'd like to have the packet ready to go by June/July. Boyd thinks it needs to have a color theme – Kristina suggested a colorful and neat front, on glossy paper.

### **Group 2: Identity and Branding:**

Ansley would like to be in charge of blogs and polls for the CAT website. There will need to be a news updater – maybe Emma or Katy? Also, there will need to be a technical person – maybe Boyd or Christian? Discussion about what types of polls should be on the site. Should list Tobacco Free Landlords – acknowledge local folks in the community – we'd need a person to be in charge of this. Goals: Boyd and Ansley will get together to discuss the website. Katy has been working on converting the logo to another computer program so that we can alter it better. Ansley suggested having a picture of the officers and bios.

Mr. Belnap would like for the members to get together to work on the Levy CAT website and update the blog with current events news and create a calendar of events and a brief bio of the 4 officers. Mr. Belnap would be the IT man and stated that they can meet at the school in the computer room, those involved in working on this thought that would be a good place to meet.

### **Group 3: Policy Change Support:**

It was decided that Swain Strickland would continue to look into public housing rentals in Levy County and that we would try to find out how many private rentals are in the county by contacting local realtors. Christian is going to find out who the Legislators are in our area. Barbara asked Janet if she can get in touch with the realtors on her tobacco time. Kristina will work on getting together the fact sheets for the owners/landlords. Boyd suggested sending out a hand-signed letter to private landlords in an effort to get their thoughts on going smoke-free. Kristina suggested sending a postage paid return postcard for those who are interested in learning more. Boyd suggested publishing a list of tobacco free housing on the Levy CAT website.

### **Review and Comment:**

Breakout groups reconvened and gave updates on their progress.

Mr. Belnap stated that he would like to send a letter as a community citizen to the editors of the local newspapers to draw attention to the readers about the dangers of tobacco. He shared a draft of his letter for comments. Kristina thought this would be a great idea to do during the Tobacco Free Florida Week.

A unanimous vote decided to hold the next meeting at Capital City Bank in Chiefland. Janet will make reservations for this date.

**Next Meeting:** Tuesday, May 24, 2011; 3:30PM-5:30PM, Capital City Bank, Chiefland.

**Wrap Up:** The meeting was adjourned at 5:35pm.