

**Commission for Children and Youth  
Regular Meeting Minutes**

Monday, April 20th, 2020

5:30 PM – 6:30 PM

Virtual Google Meet

Commissioners Present

Shara Kolodney, Chair  
Bridget Angus  
Denise Harvey  
Jane Hoeffner  
Denese Marshall  
Hilary Misiano  
Michelle Tivey  
Knox Watson

Commissioners Absent

Michelle Albright

Other Attendees

Laura Cleary, Youth Services Director  
Allison Lisbon, Social Services Director  
Charlene Monn, Program Director  
Emma Spaulding, WHS At Large Student Representative

1. Call to Order

Laura Cleary called the meeting to order at 5:30 pm.

2. Approval of minutes

**Motion:** *Move to approve the minutes of the Regular Meeting on February 24, 2020.*

Motion by Knox Watson, second by Shara Kolodney. (Vote: 6-0-2; For - Kolodney, Angus, Hoeffner, Misiano, Marshall, Watson; Abstain - Tivey, Harvey).

3. Member check-in: How are you and what do you notice?

The participants on the call shared how they were doing during this pandemic.

4. Reports as needed:

- Social Services (Allison): Very busy for last 5-6 weeks, primarily focusing on food security. Giving people gift cards because pantry was closed. Started accepting food donations today and hope to open pantry in two weeks. Participating in programs to see what funds and food are available. Anticipating issues with people paying utility bills. Also coordinating with Weston Helping Weston, making sure senior citizens get deliveries. Added

- four households in last few weeks but seeing increased needs among households already in need. Social services resources are in Town newsletters and Senior Center newsletters.
- WOW report (Charlene): Ran over 30 programs in the winter session. If instructors couldn't fulfill remainder of session virtually, refunded parents for the remainder. Currently continuing 15 programs through online access. Plan to offer spring programs online for K-8th. As of today, there are 6 programs that definitely will run. Checking with instructors on whether they will run with a minimal number of students. On hold for the summer for now. Also see attachment.
  - WYS update (Laura): Created new pages on website with resources, such as coping skills ideas, NAMI, recovery groups. Most of planned programs are not occurring. See attachment for Laura's report.
  - WHS students (Bridget, Knox, Emma): Bridget: meeting with Mrs. Deorio and the Assistant Principals, working on alternatives for the senior class. Came up with a self-design, independent study project in lieu of internships so seniors either can reflect on time at WHS or work on area of interest. Maybe do a senior week in the beginning of August for some of the traditional senior events. Knox: contracting with about 15 people to work at Peter's - delivering groceries, and checking in people so they can shop during reserved times. Emma: from what she has seen, everything is going smoothly with classmates.
  - NAMI liaison (Jane): NAMI doing a lot of virtual support groups and providing contact information for people. Group discussed different ways to get information to people in Town. Laura will coordinate ideas with Jane and Denese M. to avoid overlap.
  - School Liaisons:
    - HES (Charlene): Laura Kaddis is aware of the WOW programs and HES kids seem to be doing well.
    - WIS (Michele T.): Prior to school closing, spoke with Patti Falber about a program supporting the transition from WIS to WMS, but discussions have not occurred for end of year events for the 5th grade. Reached out to WIS PTO President; Michele has ideas to run past them. The group discussed having an ice cream social for the incoming 6th graders and parents. Michele hearing concern from parents about kids not being ready for WMS. Shara assured her that the teachers are aware of this and will work with students. Laura would like WYS to be involved in addressing issues with coming off isolation and the transition to WMS. Laura has already sent an email to the principals reminding them of the support WYS can provide.
    - WMS (Michele A.): Not present.
    - WHS (Hilary): Nothing to report.

- BOE (Denise H.): Conveyed email received from Tony Pesco, Chairman of the BOE. The group discussed ways of support that students could provide to other students. Tutoring already being done by Weston Against Cancer and the WHS National Honor Society. Shara will contact guidance counselors about reaching out to Knox if students need tutoring. Another way to reach students has been through the WHS student government's weekly broadcast.

5. New ideas/discussion

Shara noted parent concerns about kids not social distancing. The group discussed ideas for getting the message across about the importance of social distancing, including having a contest for students to create a PSA, poster or video or adding the message to the student government weekly broadcast. Also discussed asking kids to send in video clips of what they are doing during this time to collect in an online video or having a contest for short videos on the same topic.

6. For the good of the order

Charlene suggested a baking or cooking idea, giving students the opportunity to make something with secret ingredients that other students have to replicate. She also noted that WOW is doing a debate club after school.

7. Adjournment

The meeting was adjourned at 6:43 pm. Motion by Denise Harvey, second by Shara Kolodney.

Respectfully submitted,  
Denise Harvey, Secretary

**Next Meeting is May 18<sup>th</sup> at 5:30 PM.**

## Attachment

### Youth Services Update

#### From Laura:

##### Ongoing and upcoming programs:

**Youth Mini Grants** for WMS and WHS students: Youth Mini grants are still open. We just awarded a grant for Weston Against Cancer.

**Parent support groups:** Kristen Ancker and I have been doing a weekly parent support group for preschool parents at St. Frances, with the help of their Director, Marianne Keith. We plan to offer this type of remote small group support to the general community and see if there's interest.

**Collaborative Problem Solving** This 5 week group for parents of kids with challenging behaviors was scheduled for Tuesdays in March. We finished it remotely. We started with 12 parents and ended on a March 31<sup>st</sup> Zoom with 6 attending consistently.

**Covid-19 resources:** We have updated our Westonyouthservices.org website with two new pages- one for calming and coping resources and one for Remote Help Resources. We're also sharing resources and information on FB regularly. We are also contributing to the Town of Weston's new Everbridge Covid-19 newsletter.

Many of our planned or in-the-planning process programs and events are canceled or on hold- including the family dinner project, Kindergarten Ice Cream Social, and MS transition program.

#### From Charlene:

Thanks to Charlene's hard work, we are offering **virtual Spring WOW! Classes beginning the week of April 27<sup>th</sup> through the week of May 25<sup>t</sup>**. Not every WOW! Instructor is able to offer a virtual class but we have many dedicated and creative instructors. Online Registration Opens Wednesday, April 15<sup>th</sup> at 10:01 p.m.