

**Commission for Children and Youth  
Regular Meeting Minutes  
Monday, May 20, 2019, 5:30 pm  
Weston Town Hall Meeting Room**

*Future 2018-19 regular meetings, Town Hall Meeting Room, 5:30pm  
6/17*

Commissioners Present

Shara Kolodney, Chair  
Denise Harvey, Secretary  
Bridget Angus  
Maria Rowbotham (joined at 5:40pm via conference telephone)  
Michelle Tivey  
Knox Watson

Commissioner Absent

Michelle Albright

Other Attendees

Laura Cleary, Youth Services Director  
Laura Kaddis, HES Principal  
Allison Lisbon, Social Services Director  
Charlene Monn, Program Coordinator  
Emma Spaulding, 9<sup>th</sup> Grade Representative

1. Call to Order

Commissioner Kolodney called the meeting to order at 5:37pm.

2. Approval of Minutes from April 29, 2019 Regular Meeting

**Motion:** *Move to approve the minutes of the Regular Meeting on April 29, 2019.*

Motion by Commissioner Kolodney, second by Commissioner Tivey: Vote 3-0-2 (For: Angus, Harvey, Kolodney; Abstain: Tivey, Watson). Commissioner Rowbotham joined the meeting after the above vote.

3. Update Roles/Responsibilities and News/ideas/needs from Commissioners (formerly Agenda item 5)

a. Working

## b. Purpose

Laura Cleary opened discussion about redefining the role of the Commission. The Committees for some areas have already been established, but a project-based approach could be meaningful. Some preliminary areas Ms. Cleary mentioned were mental health, WMS activities and mini-grants for youth. Other programs discussed were Say Something, Sandy Hook Promise and Start with Hello. Ms. Kaddis stressed that it is important to focus on how to get the entire community involved. Commissioner Tivey emphasized the need to identify opportunities to fill gaps that the school district cannot fill and to take small steps to do activities to make the Commission's work better known.

Commissioner Rowbotham noted that the Weston Education Foundation posts information on a weekly basis.

Commissioner Kolodney mentioned having a monthly service initiative. Ms. Lisbon mentioned that Social Services has Weston Helping Weston, which is focused more around senior citizens. Discussion continued about doing something more family based, working with Social Services, and connecting services with a theme of kindness to one another.

Commissioner Kolodney talked about Wingman, which is a program started by a parent of a child killed at Sandy Hook. It stresses peer leadership, with students making programming about kindness in WMS.

Commissioner Angus mentioned establishing a buddy system, where students could sign up to be mentors for other students. This is something that can be done through a club.

Ms. Cleary talked about Best Buddies, which involves peer mentorship with kids with special needs but if that program does not work on a broader basis, then another idea would be community-based mentoring and support.

Ms. Monn suggested a community field day to bring people from different areas of the community together, with activities such as basketball or volleyball games.

Also mentioned was a Community Service Fair, which used to be done at WHS and involved community organizations assembled in the gym with information about their activities.

Commissioner Harvey suggested leveraging activities with local organizations, such as Lachat and the Weston Historical Society, so that multiple family activities could take place at the same designated place.

Commissioner Kolodney would like to meet a few times during the summer to get ideas in place for the fall. Commissioner Harvey suggested everyone sending a list of ideas to Ms. Cleary and Commissioner Kolodney in preparation for the June 17 meeting.

#### 4. News/ideas/needs from WHS Representatives

Knox Watson spoke to his Psychology teacher and arranged for a student survey about why students do not get enough sleep. In addition, all of the sophomores had to write essays about whether there should be later start times for school. A significant issue raised was time management after getting out of sports and clubs. He also emailed Patty Powers, the Curriculum Instructional Leader for Health, about having something on sleep in the curriculum, but is still waiting to hear back from her. Discussions are underway within the school administration and the Board of Education about moving school start times later, but no conclusions have been reached yet. Commissioner Angus reiterated that students have time management issues, and suggested starting skills with WIS students. Discussion ensued about having WYS sponsor time management/organization workshops a few times a year to maximize the opportunity for students to attend.

#### 5. Old Business

- a. Review of recent youth services events – see attachments
- b. Upcoming scheduled events – see attachments

#### 6. New Business

- a. Report/review from Youth Services Director
  - i. Programming – see attachments
  - ii. JRB – nothing reported
- b. Coalition contributions – nothing to report as another Coalition meeting has not taken place since the last Commission meeting. The next meeting is on June 3.
- c. Update on WOW and other ongoing programs – see attachments.

7. Marketing

Discussed within the context of other items on the Agenda. More work to do on Facebook.

8. Website

The Town website is not yet established but WYS can look to work within that.

9. For the good of the order

Discussion took place regarding WYS and school administration coordination regarding resources to address student and parent needs.

10. Adjournment

**Motion:** *Move to adjourn the meeting.* Motion by Commissioner Kolodney, second by Commissioner Watson. Vote 6-0 (Angus, Harvey, Kolodney, Rowbotham, Tivey, Watson).

The meeting was adjourned at 6:48 pm.

Respectfully submitted,  
Denise Harvey, Secretary of the Commission