

Commission for Children and Youth
Regular Meeting Minutes
Monday, October 21, 2019, 5:30 pm
Weston Town Hall Meeting Room

Commissioners Present

Shara Kolodney, Chair
Denise Harvey, Secretary
Jane Hoeffner
Denese Marshall
Hilary Misiano
Michelle Tivey (arrived at 5:45pm)

Commissioners Absent

Michelle Albright
Bridget Angus
Knox Watson

Other Attendees

Laura Cleary, Youth Services Director
Allison Lisbon, Social Services Director
Charlene Monn, Program Director
Gillian Donovan, Visitor

1. Call to Order

Commissioner Kolodney called the meeting to order at 5:36 pm.

2. Approval of minutes

Motion: Move to approve the minutes of the Regular Meeting on September 16, 2019.
Motion by Commissioner Kolodney, second by Commissioner Hoeffner. Change in minutes to correct that Commissioner Misiano was present. Vote 3-0-2 (For: Hoeffner, Kolodney, Misiano; Abstain: Harvey, Marshall). Commissioner Tivey joined the meeting after the above vote.

3. Introductions/welcome new member Denese Marshall

Attendees introduced themselves and welcomed Commissioner Marshall to the Commission.

4. Reports as needed

- Social Services (Allison): Department has been very busy with energy assistance and getting ready for Thanksgiving; SRO has reached out regarding youth in need and connecting families with Social Services; youth minister from Norfield Church also has reached out and is looking at ways to work with Social Services.
- WHS students (Bridget, Knox, Emma) - Absent from meeting.
- WYS/Weston Coalition (Laura/Denise): Schools are talking about DBT and security workshops for parents (2 nights in November); PTO doing vaping presentation with SRO on 11/1 - Ms. Cleary will talk about Youth Services and how parents can talk to kids about vaping; Tricia Dahl will speak on vaping on 11/6; also working with ADAP about vaping cessation. Commissioner Marshall noted that parents want to know what to look for when it comes to vaping - Ms. Cleary suggested that Commissioner Marshall might consider subcommittee work on vaping.
- Commissioner Harvey summarized other topics covered at the last Weston Coalition meeting: kindness initiative, climate survey, Norfield Church focus on anti-Semitism and issues affecting male youth aged 18-25, ADAP-sponsored mental health survey at Kiwanis Reservoir Run this weekend, WMS kickoff of Wingman program on 10/17 and district task force work underway on school start and end times.
- Ms. Cleary noted other items: looking into Ben's Bells program focusing on kindness; Access Weston (special needs group meeting for first time next Monday; will have Freida Hecht from Circle of Friends talk to them about mentorship and support); youth mini grants - have a few applications to review with subcommittee; successful 6th grade ice cream social; continuing with parenting programs; would like to start another subcommittee focusing on mental health. Discussion ensued about having a NAMI facilitator host a discussion group locally - Commissioner Hoeffner will look into it.
- Also see Appendix A (Youth Services Update)
- WOW report (Charlene): Currently in the middle of the Fall program; working now on winter WOW programs, including a game program and another program with the Smart Business Academy. Discussion took place about the possibility of partnering with Lachat.
- School Liaisons: Role
 - HES (Charlene)
 - WIS (Michelle Tivey) - Speaking with Pattie Falber about whom to liaise with at WIS; attended joint PTO meeting at which social/emotional learning at the schools was discussed.
 - WMS (Michele Albright) - Absent from meeting.
 - WHS (Hilary Misiano) - Meeting planned with Lisa Deorio and Michelle Albright about DBT

- BOE (Denise Harvey) - Nothing to report

5. Possible programs/initiatives to promote tolerance

Commissioner Kolodney handed out a description of a sample Anti-Defamation League program entitled “Strengthening the Bonds of our Community”. Cost of the 3-hour sample program is \$2000. Discussion ensued about how such a program would benefit the community in terms of understanding differences and reducing bias. The general consensus was to continue looking into it.

6. Member Roundtable

Commissioner Tivey suggested developing a program under Youth Services that would enable students to get credit for being mentors for younger kids. Ms. Cleary noted that Circle of Friends already does that, but will inquire further. Commissioner Hoeffner also suggested looking into what Ridgefield already does. Commissioner Kolodney suggested that such a program should be as inclusive as possible.

7. Subcommittee Updates

Nothing additional.

8. New ideas/discussion

Ms. Cleary invited people to view “Screenagers” with her on Wednesday and is looking into the movie “The Upstanders” (about resilience and ending bullying) and possibly a movie series that would include the other movies, “Angst” and “LIKE” done by the same foundation. Commissioner Harvey mentioned that she had spoken with Helen de Keijzer from the Weston League of Women Voters about the idea that had been raised at the September meeting about a teen forum - the League would love to partner with the Commission on a program, but the Commission first needs to determine the content and parameters of what it would like to do. It’s also possible that the League would be interested in helping out on the ADL program summarized in paragraph 5 above.

9. For the good of the order

No further business to discuss.

10. Adjournment

The meeting was adjourned at 6:46 pm.

Respectfully submitted,
Denise Harvey, Secretary

Youth Services Update

From Laura:

Recent and upcoming programs:

Positive Discipline: The Early Years- for parents of 2-8 year olds Facilitated by Kristen Ancker , M.S. Sat workshop was canceled, Wed was 15 people and went well. Considering future PD workshops possible collaboration with Field House.

Parent Talk: Every third Wednesday at the Weston Public Library with various expert speakers/facilitators. Fall schedule is set; working on Winter/spring and welcome ideas!

Saturday Family Workshops: ~~This program was canceled For child grades 1-8 plus one or more adult family members. 10/19: Mindfulness with Hilary Misiano & 11/16: yoga with TBD \$10 per family. Not yet advertised~~

Youth Mini Grants for WMS and WHS students are live: details on our website. Up to \$500 for youth led projects.

Vaping Speaker: Tricia Dahl from Yale Tobacco Research. Nov. 6th evening, collaboration with WPS, WHS PTO and ADAP

6th grade ice cream social: sponsored by WMS PTO and WYS. 60+ kids attended

Access Weston: first meeting 10/28. Circle of Friends Frieda Hecht visiting to discuss COF at WHS and how we can support/expand

Middle school social events: YMCA youth night?

Parent support groups: Possible drop-in casual discussion/support groups led by Laura and possibly one for 0-6 led by Kristen Ancker. Starting in Winter 2020 Details TBD

Helping parents with anxiety: Plans for winter/spring workshops led by Laura Cleary

Mental health: MH professional breakfast Winter 2020

From Charlene:

We're in the middle of Fall WOW programs and they're going well. Charlene is working on finalizing some fantastic programs for the Winter session at HES, WIS and WHS

Volunteer: Laura, Knox

Mini Grants: Laura, Hilary, Denise, Knox

Promote tolerance: Laura, Shara, Emma?

Proposed committee: Mental health