

Commission for Children and Youth

Regular Meeting Minutes

Monday, December 16, 2019, 5:30 pm
Weston Town Hall Meeting Room

Commissioners Present

Shara Kolodney, Chair
Denise Harvey, Secretary
Bridget Angus
Jane Hoeffner
Hilary Misiano
Michelle Tivey

Commissioners Absent

Michelle Albright
Denese Marshall
Knox Watson

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

Commissioner Kolodney called the meeting to order at 5:33 pm.

2. Approval of minutes

Motion: *Move to approve the minutes of the Regular Meeting on October 21, 2019 .*

Motion by Commissioner Tivey, second by Commissioner Kolodney. (Vote: 5-0-1; For - Kolodney, Harvey, Hoeffner, Misiano, Tivey; Abstain - Angus).

Motion: *Move to approve the minutes of the Regular Meeting on November 21, 2019.*

Motion by Commissioner Misiano, second by Commissioner Kolodney. (Vote: 3-0-3; For - Kolodney, Hoeffner, Misiano; Abstain - Angus, Harvey, Tivey)

3. Reports as needed

- Social Services (Allison Lisbon): Reported on food drive - PTOs at WIS and HES donate the food and Kiwanis provided the funds for the gift cards for the Holiday Program.

- WHS students (Bridget Angus, Emma Spaulding) - 26 days of Kindness ended on Friday. One of the Newtown victims' father and sister spoke at WHS - emotionally hard but rest of assembly focused on kindness. Ms. Spaulding noted that several kids were anxious afterwards - feedback was given to WHS. Ms. Spaulding also reported that Edward Scissorhands is the film being watched in English class for the film festival this year, which she noted is good for message of accepting people for who they are.
- WYS/Weston Coalition (Laura Cleary): No meeting since the last one.
- Weston Youth Services (Laura Cleary): See Appendix A. Laura and Charlene are working on the budget for 2020-21; also talking about whether need to change the website. Laura will preview Upstanders movie in January, which was done by same company that did Angst. Doing NAMI workshop on January 7 at Senior Center - open to anyone; will provide information about what NAMI offers and test interest in having a local group; increase interest in the workshop by reaching out to area mental health professionals, Positive Directions, faith groups, and social services clients, and posting in library and Peters.
- WOW report (Charlene Monn): Completed Fall session. This winter, offering 37 programs; trying to focus on WIS and WMS; offering programs from debate to marketing to sports management and fan favorites of karate and cooking.
- School Liaisons:
 - HES (Charlene Monn): Brief discussion followed.
 - WIS (Michelle Tivey): Nothing to report
 - WMS (Michele Albright): Not present.
 - WHS (Hilary Misiano): Met with Lisa Deorio to discuss the liaison role. Lisa mentioned that some DBT posters might be helpful, which she will discuss with the health teachers.
 - BOE (Denise Harvey): Tony Pesco is the new BOE chair. Been in contact and plan to get together to talk about the Commission.

5. Anti-Defamation League (ADL) World of difference Program (Shara Kolodney)
 Initial planning meeting will be on 1/13 at 3:00pm - those who have responded thus far are: Gayle Weinstein, Carol Baldwin, Julia Brennan, Ruth Glazer, Laura Cleary, Rabbi Friedman from Temple Israel, Hilary Misiano, Bridget Angus and Denise Harvey. Commissioner Misiano spoke with her friend at Darien Middle School - ADL did an assembly by grade and then school will be rolling out other things to support the program.

6. Member Roundtable

Commissioner Kolodney is working with Anne Hughes and other State representatives about enacting legislation to require schools to have at least one gender neutral bathroom. She is also working with Senator Haskell and a Hartford lobbyist to solidify the genocide and Holocaust bill in Connecticut. The legislation says the subjects are to be taught somewhere in K-12 without further specificity. By contrast, New Jersey has a very detailed bill. Now looking to create a new anti-hate bill - CT Department of Education already has a robust website for these subjects but no one knows it exists so Senator Haskell plans to send the information to schools. The lobbyist is writing the anti-hate legislation. Commissioner Kolodney is going to Hartford to testify. Senator Haskell thinks the first step will be to form a task force. Commissioner Kolodney further noted that there may be some financial support for Weston teachers to work on the curriculum for these subjects.

7. Subcommittee Updates (Laura Cleary)

Will be contacting mini-grant subcommittee again to review where the program stands; 4 grants have been given out thus far. Planning to meet with Jordan Gladstone, who is interested in creating a program in the arts for kids with special needs. Family Dinners are on the back burner right now. Discussed one town, one book type of idea - will discuss with the library.

8. New ideas/discussion

No other matters raised.

9. For the good of the order

No further business to discuss.

10. Adjournment

The meeting was adjourned at 6:37 pm.

Respectfully submitted,
Denise Harvey, Secretary

Youth Services Update

From Laura:

Recent and upcoming programs:

Parent Talk: Every third Wednesday at the Weston Public Library with various experts on a range of topics. This week, Hilary Misaino and I talk about calming and coping for the holidays and beyond.

Youth Mini Grants for WMS and WHS students: 4 Min grants awarded so far this Fall. Up to \$300 for youth led projects.

Intro to NAMI CT workshop: Jan 7th 6:30 PM @ Senior Center: Sponsored by Weston Youth and Social Services. Open to all, No registration needed.

Parent support groups: Drop-in casual discussion/support groups. 11:00-12:00 led by Laura for 10 and up. 2). 9:30-10:30 AM led by Kristen Ancker for 2-10 year olds. 4th Wed of each month.

Helping parents with anxiety: December 12th AM, plan for January PM workshops

Mental health: MH professional breakfast 3/29/ 2020 at Field Club

Bullying Workshop for parents at the Weston Field Club: March 4th evening. Food and childcare. Speaker: Joanne Freiberg, Educational consultant

Book Talk: Self-Driven Child- mostly remote with one in-person meeting late Feb. if interest.

Collaborative Problem Solving 5 week group for parents of kids with challenging behaviors, led by CPS certified provider Divinna Schmitt.

3). **Films?** Screenagers 2, previewed and probably not. Indieflix film Upstanders, pre-viewing in January

From Charlene:

It's a great winter WOW catalog for HES, WIS, and WMS. Registration for the winter WOW session started Tuesday Nov 12th, and is going well. A few programs at risk to cancel due to low registration.

Subcommittees:

Mini Grants: Laura, Hilary, Denise, Knox

ADL World of Difference community program: Laura, Shara, Bridget

Mental health: Laura, (Michele A?, Denese M.?)

Family Dinners: Laura, DeneseM)