



Meeting Minutes for Advisory Board Meeting – February 26, 2018

Attendance: Austin Bushey, Zane Rahabi, Tailia Pincus, Madeline Medina, Danielle Sutton, Nora Sinno, Olivia Goldberg, David Russell, John Loughnane, Trish Tucke, Domenic Cianciarulo, Mary Ellen LaRose

I. **Call to Order:** The meeting convened at the Islington Community Center and was called to order at 7:06 p.m.

II. **Acceptance of Meeting Minutes:** David made a motion to accept the January 22, 2018 minutes. All were in favor. Minutes from the board meeting were accepted.

III. Director's Report:

Clinical Services

*There are currently **55 counseling clients** on the WY&FS caseload, one more than at our last meeting in January, consisting of 50 individual clients; 2 family clients and 3 parent consultations.

*There have been **6 new intakes** for counseling services in February, as compared to 8 intakes in January. There is not currently a waitlist for services and, depending on their availability; residents are able to be placed with a clinician or graduate intern with an average turn-around time of two weeks. As always, referrals are triaged so that those residents in most immediate need are prioritized.

***Two Structured Play Groups** are running in February, a Tuesday 2nd/3rd Grade group and a Wednesday Kindergarten/1st Grade group with a total of 14 participants.

Program Updates

*Thanks to our Graduate Intern, Li, the **Bullying Prevention Theater (BPT)** collage, containing all of the 6th grade students' ideas of how to "be the change" and take action to prevent bullying, was installed at the Thurston and will be on display for the remainder of the school year.

***Body Safety Theater (BST)** started up with an Information Session and Auditions in January and rehearsals have been taking place weekly since that time in preparation for the elementary school performances in mid-May.

*The **R.A.Y. (Recognize-A-Youth) Award program** is currently being marketed and nominations are being accepted. WY&FS manages the marketing and acceptance of nominations, and the Westwood Rotary picks the winners and hosts an event to honor recipients in the spring.

***Teen Scene @ The Library, Friends Network and the Thurston After-School Activities** collaboration all continue to run on a weekly basis thanks to our fantastic high school Mentors!

*Interviews have begun for the **2018-2019 Graduate Internship program**, and we are happy to announce that we have accepted our first (of two) interns. Emily Greco, M.Ed., a student at Simmons School of Social Work, will be joining us next year for her final year field placement.

*Y&FS has **partnered with the Sheehan elementary school to offer social-emotional education**, a collaboration that began in October, with our graduate interns, Li and Lindsey, visiting all of the 2nd and 3rd grade classrooms every Monday and hosting a lunch-time group every Thursday for six weeks. A new six-week session began in January and continued through February with Danielle, Li and Lindsey visiting the 1st grade classes, and Li and Lindsey visiting 4th grade classes and hosting lunch-time groups. The final six-week session of the year will include visits to the Kindergarten and 5th grade classes and therapeutic lunch-bunch groups.

Community Connections

*Staff and Graduate Interns will be providing open office hours in our satellite office at Westwood High School this week, following a request earlier today from WPS Administration for additional mental health support for students and faculty who might be affected by increased security measures at the high school and/or the issue of school violence at the national level.

V. Old Business

WY&FS has received a very early draft of potential plans for office space in one of the scenarios for Islington Center redevelopment. Danielle, along with the Library Director, have had two meetings with the architectural firm that is pricing out the cost of relocating the existing branch library (Wentworth Hall) across Washington Street and including an addition for Y&FS offices, as well as a multi-use community space in the basement that could house group programs. This level of plan is just meant to show how space needs would be met, and looking at the square footage and layout, we are happy and confident that the Y&FS department would be able to have our space needs met and that the new layout would allow for improved service delivery to residents.

VI. New Business

Recognize A Youth Award – Mary Ellen gave an update on the application process. The deadline to submit nominations is March 31st.

2018/2019 Student Board Member Interview Process – A sub group of board members will be meeting on March 26th to interview sophomore candidates to serve as WY&FS student board members over their junior and senior years. Olivia expressed that going through the interview process for sophomores is a good opportunity to practice interviewing skills. It might be the first time for many to have that experience and even if they aren't chosen they will have that experience and it could help them later.

Community Liaisons:

Westwood Cares: John mentioned the next meeting is March 29th. The group is looking into speakers for the fall focusing on mental health, stress and substance abuse.

Early Childhood Council: Danielle let the group know WY&FS has agreed to co-sponsor a Strong Beginnings program. The Council is working on combining programing efforts with other towns.

Food Pantry – Trish reported an uptick in need from University Station residents.

Westwood Community Chest – WCC is accepting applications for summer 2018 Campership scholarships. Applications can be found online and are located in the WY&FS lobby.

Elementary Schools – Danielle spoke of the department's ongoing collaboration with Sheehan Since October our graduate interns have lead social-emotional curriculum groups. These groups assist Sheehan with meeting school district goals of providing additional curriculum and support around the social and emotional needs of students.

High School – Student board members gave an overview of Mental Health Week at WHS. Some noted events and activities including therapy dogs, a corn hole game, gratitude wall and a presentation from a *Minding Your Mind* speaker on anxiety and substance abuse. Olivia noted that some students found it hard to attend the presentation which was held while classes were going on. Other students noted they overall liked and appreciated the week (especially the "Westwood Connects" – no homework night) but noted there are still some kinks to work out to make it even better for next year. Austin and John encouraged the students to share their feedback with the administration and guidance.

Middle School – Austin noted the trimester wraps up in mid-March. 7th graders will go through the Signs of Suicide (SOS) program on March 20-21st. High school guidance counselors have visited 8th grade classroom to discuss course selection for WHS. This is the first time online course selection is available to 8th graders. Thurston counselors have met with 8th graders regarding college and career exploration. The hope is to give them a bigger lens than just prepping them with skills as they transition to the next face of their education career. Team leaders and security personnel are

having discussions regarding safety protocol in response to recent school violence in Parkland, FL. The administration and school committee will announce their decision on a new middle school principal in the next few days.

VII. **Adjournment** at 7:57 p.m.

Minutes respectfully submitted by Mary Ellen LaRose