



Meeting Minutes for Advisory Board Meeting – May 21, 2018

Attendance: Danielle Sutton, Madeline Medina, Trish Tucke, Domenic Cianciarulo, Kevin Cote, Zane Rahabi, John Loughnane, David Russell, Jan Midiri, Olivia Goldberg, Talia Pincus, Samantha Nelson, Mary Ellen LaRose, Nora Sinno, Diana Bezdedeau

I. **Call to Order:** The meeting convened at the Islington Community Center and was called to order at 7:04 p.m.

II. **Acceptance of Meeting Minutes:** John made a motion to accept the April 23 minutes. All were in favor. Minutes from the board meeting were accepted.

III. Director's Report:

Clinical Services

*There are currently **54 counseling clients** on the WY&FS caseload, the same number reported at our meeting on April 23rd and three fewer clients than in May of 2017(57), consisting of 49 individual clients; 2 family clients and 3 parent consultations.

*There have been **4 new intakes** for counseling services so far in May. This is comparable to 5 intakes in the previous month of April (and 11 in the month of March) and 4 intakes in the same month of May 2017. As of March 26th, we reached maximum capacity for counseling clients, and currently have a 7-person waitlist with an expected four-six week turnaround (versus the typical two-week turnaround from time of intake to therapist assignment). Residents who are waitlisted are directed to INTERFACE Referral Service and are offered an option for a one-time consultation with a Y&FS clinician to provide support while they wait. As always, referrals are triaged so that those residents in most immediate need are prioritized.

***Two Structured Play Groups** ended in April, leaving us with one group to wrap up before the end of the school year, a Wednesday Kindergarten/1st Grade group with **6 participants**.

Program Updates

***Body Safety Theater (BST)** performances took place at each of the five elementary schools on May 10th and May 11th and post-performance classroom visits will conclude this week. Thank you, as always, to our amazing BST Mentors, to the elementary PTO's for their donations to fund the BST program, to our partners at the elementary schools and high school who work to coordinate all of the classroom visits and performance days, to the Recreation department for the use of their van to transport the bulk of the high school volunteers, and to the amazing WY&FS staff who bring the program together so seamlessly each year! A special thanks to Nina Banozic, Youth Services Counselor, and to Sarah Spinello, BST Director/Interim Youth Services Counselor, for their leadership of the BST program, and to our Graduate Intern, Casey Smith, who co-led weekly rehearsals.

*The **R.A.Y. (Recognize-A-Youth) Awards**, a collaboration between WY&FS and the Westwood Rotary, took place on May 15th at the Main Library. This year's recipients were Ali Fleischer, Olivia Goldberg, Sasha Marino, and Caroline McDonough.

*The last **Thurston Dance Event** of the year took place on Friday, April 27th with ~120 middle school students in attendance. This program earned a total of \$5600.00 over the 2017-2018 academic year, split evenly between the Thurston Middle School and WY&FS. The \$2800.00 that went to WY&FS is funneled directly into the Joan Courtney Murray Mentor Scholarship that distributes the money, in full, to graduating seniors who have shown an outstanding commitment to the WY&FS Mentor program.

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

*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 weeks of the school year will include Li and Lindsey leading therapeutic lunch-bunch groups every Monday and Thursday through the week of June 11th.

*The **Graduate Internship program** continues to receive applications for the 2018-2019 academic year. We have already filled one of our two open positions, and have two interviews scheduled over the next couple weeks to see if we can find a match for the remaining open position.

*For the second year, WY&FS will be offering a free summer **Creative Craft Club** program for 1st-3rd and 4th-6th grade residents. This brainchild of Youth Services Counselors, Sarah Baroud and Nina Banozic, allows children to participate in crafts on themes that promote health and wellness.

Community Connections

*On Friday, May 18th, Nina and Mary Ellen attended a full-day **Youth Mental Health First Aid** training in Norwood. This was our first participation in a Mental Health First Aid program and is part of our department's ongoing research into Mental Health First Aid and ways in which we might consider helping to bring this educational program to a wider audience in Westwood.

*On Thursday, May 17th, Danielle attended a **Marijuana Forum** for local government employees in Canton, where research was presented on current trends and issues related to the legalization of marijuana in Massachusetts. Members of Westwood's Health Department and Police Department were also in attendance.

*On May 15th, Danielle attended a regional **System of Care** meeting at Riverside Community Center in Dedham, the focus of which was trauma-informed care using a treatment model that focuses on Attachment, Regulation and Competency.

*On May 2nd, Danielle attended the annual **Roy London Humanitarian Awards** and was happy to present the Westwood Young Women's Club with an award for their long-standing commitment to doing good works in the community.

*WY&FS continued to participate in several local and regional groups, including the **Town of Westwood's Executive Function Group; Human Services Function Group; Community Crisis Intervention Team; Early Childhood Council; Westwood Community Chest; Deerfield Site Council; WHS Child Study Team; WHS Legislative Council; WHS Site Council; Regional Internship Collaborative; Roy London Humanitarian Award Committee; Westwood Cares.**

V. Old Business

Recognize A Youth Award - Mary Ellen told the group about the RAY Award Ceremony held at the library on May 15th. Three Westwood High Students (Caroline McDonough, Ali Fleischer, Olivia Goldberg) and one elementary student (Sasha Marino) were honored for their volunteer work in the community. Mary Ellen encouraged the board members to view the video of the event on Westwood Media Center.

Islington Center Redevelopment/WY&FS Concept Plans (handouts) – Danielle shared concept plans of the proposed Islington Center Redevelopment including renderings of a proposed Town Community Building that would house Westwood Youth & Family Services along with shared space used by WY&FS, Recreation, the Library and Community Groups. Danielle also mentioned the letter to the Planning Board that she wrote on behalf of the department supporting the project. In the letter, she expressed that the the new space will allow WY&FS to serve residents better. WY&FS is happy that there will be multiple options for how residents can access the space into our department. John explained that at Town Meeting the Redevelopment Articles will need a 2/3 vote to pass on all 3 articles.

VI. New Business.

Discussion of Executive Board Nominations . Danielle encouraged the group to think about membership to the advisory board going forward and if they know of residents who may be interested in joining the board to speak to Danielle.

Panda Express Launch Day Partnership

Danielle shared that Panda Express, which will be opening soon in University Station, reached out to WY&FS with an offer to have us be the beneficiary of a promotion they are running highlighting a non-profit in the community. The promotion will be a one day event on Friday, July 13th. Panda Express will give 20% of the sales from the day to the department. WY&FS will need to promote the event and encourage residents to visit the restaurant on the 13th. Danielle will be going before the Selectmen to ask for their approval to partner and accept a donation from the restaurant before we agree to the partnership.

Community Liaisons:

Westwood Cares: Danielle shared that the group is collaborating with Norwood, Needham and Dedham for a regional event on opioid addiction to be held in Norwood in the fall.

Westwood Food Pantry – Trish reported that the numbers of residents visiting the pantry are up. This includes new residents at The Gables apartments. The USPS' Stamp Out Hunger Event brought in six and ½ tons of food for Norwood and Westwood. The Food Pantry will be participating in a Walk For Hunger event in September.

High School – Student board members shared details regarding the recent Prom. Students also discussed the offerings for the inaugural J term in June.

VII. Adjournment at 8:30 p.m.

Minutes respectfully submitted by Mary Ellen LaRose