



Meeting Minutes for Advisory Board Meeting – February 27, 2017

Attendance: Domenic Cianciarulo, Austin Bushey, Brad Pindel, David Russell, Trish Tucke, Dan O'Connor, Sophia Paravalos, Alicia Lamonda, Janica Midiri, John Loughnane, Danielle Sutton, Mary Ellen LaRose

I. **Call to Order:** The meeting convened at the Islington Community Center and was called to order at 7:07 p.m. David moved to accept the January minutes, Brad seconded.

II. **Acceptance of Meeting Minutes:** Minutes from the January 23rd board meeting were accepted.

III. Director's Report:

Clinical Services

*There are currently **44 counseling clients** on the WY&FS caseload, 36 individual clients; 3 family clients; 5 parent consultations.

*There were **7 new intakes** for counseling services in February. There is not currently a waitlist for services, and 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.

*The second round of the **Girls Group program** began in February, along with three **Structured Play Groups** taking place each week, for a weekly group total of **24 participants**.

Program Updates

***Bullying Prevention Theater** performances took place following our January Board meeting on **Tuesday, January 24th and Thursday, January 26th at the Thurston Middle School**. The sixth grade classes gathered in the auditorium to see the excellent performances from the high school Mentors and then had the opportunity to have those same high school volunteers visit their classrooms to lead related discussion and activities. Survey results from the sixth grade students have been positive. Thanks to the staff at Thurston for their help in coordinating and implementing BPT, especially our point person, Austin Bushey! Thank you to Sarah Baroud for directing the program and to all of the Y&FS staff for their efforts in bringing everything together for another successful year of BPT! Our staff put out a survey to 6th grade students asking for feedback on the performances and classroom piece. We received a few pieces of helpful feedback that we will use to "tweak" the program next year.

***Body Safety Theater** kicked off on Thursday, January 26th with an informational session and auditions for the high school Mentors. We have **24 Mentors in the BST cast** and they will be rehearsing weekly until the performances at elementary schools in May!

***The Dub Club**, formerly known as Thurston Thursday Club, held its **final session on February 16th**. Due to the consistently low numbers of middle schoolers in attendance at the program this year, and

declining participation over the past few years, we will be moving forward with a **new version of this Mentor program beginning in March.**

***Friends Network**, which began in the first week of November, continues with two weekly sessions on Wednesday evenings at the COA and **over 60 participants** between the Little Friends and Big Friend volunteers.

*February 3rd was the most recent **Thurston Middle School Dance** event. There were approximately **140 students in attendance** and a great group of high school Mentors acting as role models and interacting with the middle school students. The next dance will be held on Friday, March 17th.

***NEW MENTOR PROGRAM:** In February WY&FS worked with the Library to create a new volunteer opportunity for high school aged residents. The “**Teen Scene @ the Library**” will take place after school hours on Early Release Wednesdays and Fridays, and high school Mentors will hang out with the middle school students who gather at the library, chatting, playing games and acting as positive role models with the younger students. The Teen Scene @ the Library begins on March 1st.

*Nominations have begun to come in for the annual **Recognize-A-Youth awards**, a collaboration with the Westwood Rotary. The nomination deadline is March 31st, and the award ceremony will be held at a Rotary meeting in later spring.

Community Connections

*In the month of February, WY&FS staff attended meetings and/or participated in the work of the following community groups:

-Community Crisis Intervention Team (CCIT), Early Childhood Council and the Kathy Scales Memorial Preschool Scholarship Subcommittee, Islington Center Task Force, Westwood Cares and the Opioid Task Force, Westwood Community Chest, Westwood Finance Commission, Westwood High School Child Study Team (CST), Westwood High School Legislative Council, Westwood High School Site Council

IV. Old Business

Student Board Members Interview Process-Mary Ellen explained the Student Board Member interview process. Interviews will be held on Monday, March 27-28th.

Residential Employment Match Program – Danielle gave a brief explanation of the proposed program for the group. The group discussed and came up with further questions and ideas. Danielle will reach out to other Y&FS directors in the area to see what towns other than Needham have a similar program.

V. New Business

Food Pantry - Trish reported that a WHS Senior as part of his SIPP project has been assisting the pantry with organization and developing software. A few new clients have come to the pantry this past month.

Westwood Cares - Brad and Danielle mentioned plans are in the works for a spring speaker.

Police- The station is moving along with no delays. Recent vandalism at fire station has delayed the construction further.

Islington Center Task Force - Trish reported the task force has recommended two options to the Selectmen. Danielle added that WY&FS provided a usage plan to the task force and to the developer so each has a good sense of our current space needs.

Middle School – Austin reported Bodi, the Thurston therapy dog started six weeks ago and continues his training. He will primarily spend time in the Learning Center. Recently during the students advisory period learned about a campaign titled “spread the word to end the word”. The goal of the program is to spread awareness of how hurtful the work “R” word is to those with mental impairments and their families. Austin mentioned it was a good discussion and the day ended with students signing a banner pledging not to use the word. The Signs of Suicide (SOS) prevention screening program will take place in grade 7 on March 22nd. Danielle mentioned the department’s involvement with the screenings for 9th graders and an upcoming “booster” program for 11th graders.

High School – Dan mentioned juniors are meeting with guidance counselors regarding college preparations. Sophia mentioned graduation will take place on Sunday, June 4th.

VI. Adjournment - The meeting adjourned at 8:35 p.m.

Minutes respectfully submitted by Mary Ellen LaRose