



## Meeting Minutes for Advisory Board Meeting – September 25, 2017

**Attendance:** Domenic Cianciarulo, Zane Rahabi, Nora Sinno, Madeline Medina, Talia Pincus, Austin Bushey, Danielle Sutton, Olivia Goldberg, John McKinnon, Alicia Lamonda, David Russell, Brad Pindel, John Loughnane, Mary Ellen LaRose

**I. Call to Order:** The meeting convened at the Islington Community Center and was called to order at 7:00 p.m.

**II. Acceptance of Meeting Minutes:** Danielle made a motion to accept the June 12, 2017 minutes and Domenic seconded. All were in favor. Minutes from the board meeting were accepted.

### III. Director's Report:

Danielle announced that Youth Services Counselor, Sarah Baroud is expecting her first child in January.

#### Clinical Services

\*There are currently **39 counseling clients** on the WY&FS caseload, 32 individual clients; 2 family clients; 5 parent consultations. (*This total is compared to 52 at our last meeting in June of 2017 and compared to 36 in September of 2016.*)

\*There have been **6 new intakes** for counseling services so far in September, and there were also 6 intakes over the months of July and August. (*This total of 12 intakes since our last meeting in June is comparable to 15 across the same time period last year*). 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.

\***Girls Groups** and **Structured Play Groups** are up and running with 27 participants across three weekly groups.

#### Program Updates

\*Y&FS is happy to announce the expansion of our **Graduate Internship Program** from two to three interns for the 2017-2018 academic year. With some creative use of space and scheduling, we were able to take on a third Masters level intern which will allow us to see more clients and run more programming over the course of the year at no additional cost to the town. We are happy to welcome from Simmons College School of Social Work, final year students, **Lindsey Jennings** and **Li Wigren**, and first year student (and Westwood native), **Casey Smith!** David asked for clarification on how the staff would manage the additional workload of overseeing and providing supervision. Danielle explained that the staff was open and excited about this new arrangement and she shared how the process would work.

\*Over the summer, Sarah and Nina developed and ran two six-week sessions of a new program, **Craft Club**, which provided an opportunity for elementary school-aged residents to get together and create crafts along themes that are important to healthy development such as mindfulness, goal setting, communication and, of course, creativity!

\*All high school students received notice of the **Mentor programs** for the 2017-2018 academic year at the beginning of the month. We are happy to be offering a large selection of volunteer opportunities for high school-aged residents across six different programs this year: **Body Safety Theater; Bullying Prevention Theater; Friends Network; Teen Scene @ the Library; Thurston After-School Programs; Thurston Middle School Dance Events.**

\*The auditions for this year's **Bullying Prevention Theater (BPT)** program will take place this Thursday night right here at the ICC from 7:00PM-8:30PM, with rehearsals following weekly at the same time. We are excited to welcome **Sarah Spinello, LICSW**, a Westwood resident, as this year's Bullying Prevention Theater Director!

\***Friends Network** will begin in the first week of November and we could use a few more Mentors to match with the ~30 3<sup>rd</sup>-5<sup>th</sup> grade students who have registered so far. There are two sessions of Friends Network that will run each Wednesday evening from November-April, and it is open to volunteers in the 9<sup>th</sup>-12<sup>th</sup> grade. We are excited to welcome our very own **Mary Ellen LaRose** as the staff facilitator for this year's Friends Network program! Registration is still underway. John encouraged board members to spread the word about openings. Zane shared how much he enjoyed the program last year and highly recommends it. Nora and Madeline will be big friends this year as well.

### **Community Connections**

\*If you haven't been to the **Y&FS webpage** in a while, please check it out! Mary Ellen and Nina made fantastic updates over the summer that includes a picture carousel, additional program photos and an overhaul to the page structure that makes it more attractive and user-friendly. Between the webpage updates and our online presence on **Facebook, Twitter and Instagram** (thank you, Mary Ellen☺), we are in great shape! Mary Ellen noted that this summer wifi was installed in the building and is available to all visitors to the ICC.

\*In an impressive show of teamwork and design savvy, the Y&FS staff created magnets *and* a mailing postcard for the **William James College INTERFACE Referral Service** over the summer. We were able to purchase a first round of these magnets/postcards that have been distributed among school and town departments, as well as with community groups and at Westwood Day this past weekend. Our next step is to secure funding and to do an all-household mailing, which we plan to do before the end of the school year. John asked Danielle to explain again how residents can connect to the service and how the process works. Danielle explained the process and shared that 85 + residents have contacted with the service this year and that number is comparable to other towns of a similar size. Austin noted it has been a positive resource for Thurston families that are in need of assistance and he shared that families that he has referred to the service have commented that they had a positive experience. William James follows up with each caller after the initial contact to make sure their needs were met and that they are satisfied. Danielle shared that this service is one of multiple ways the Town of Westwood shows that they care about the residents' mental health. One area for growth of the program would be with the senior population. William James data shows that this population accesses the service the least.

\*In August we were happy to welcome a representative from **OUT Metrowest** who provided us with information about their resources for LGBTQ+ youth and families and educated us on appropriate language and terminology for our clinical forms and in-person meetings.

\*Y&FS staff is participating in the following local groups, boards and committees this fiscal year:

**-Community Chest**  
**-Deerfield Site Council**

**-Community Crisis Intervention Team**  
**-Early Childhood Council**

- Executive Function Group
- Islington Center Task Force
- Opioid Task Force
- Regional Youth Commission Meetings
- WHS Child Study Team
- WHS Site Council

- Human Services Function Group
- Municipal Facilities Task Force
- Regional Internship Collaborative
- Roy London Humanitarian Award Committee
- WHS Legislative Council
- Westwood Lodge Task Force

## V. New Business

**CORI Process:** Mary Ellen passed out CORI paperwork to be filled out by Board Members.

**Department Position Review** - Danielle explained that she is working with the town administration to review the positions in our department. The last time the department was reorganized was in 2014. Items being reviewed include a pathway for employees to rise and grow professionally within the department.

**Employment Program Update** - Danielle shared that Sarah worked this summer to rework how the program could work if implemented. To protect children's privacy she switched the service from students seeking employment listed on a web page to adults "in search of" of a provider listed i.e: babysitters, yard work, etc. Danielle mentioned this could also be a site to share job interview skills, etc. Board members had questions on how the process would work and expressed concern about liability and would a disclaimer be necessary. Sarah will come to a future meeting to share additional details on how the program would work along with a rough draft of a webpage.

### Community Liaisons:

**Westwood Cares** - John described the mission of Westwood Cares to new board members. This year they will be looking for a few WHS students to join the group. On October 25<sup>th</sup>, Westwood Cares will be bringing Dr. Ruth Potee to WHS to talk about the physiology of addiction and the developing brain.

**Westwood Community Chest** - Alicia shared news that applications for WCC financial assistance increased this past summer. Assistance with essential utilities and taxes seem to be biggest need that WCC is seeing.

**Food Pantry** - Olivia serves as a student board member and shared that the annual scouting for food event will be held in mid-November.

**High School** - Students shared updates. The group discussed a recent incident at a football game and steps the school is taking in response.

**Middle School** - Austin shared that the new school year has started smoothly. The search for a new principal begins again in January. This is the first year all students at the school have Chromebooks. A new peer leadership program with a curriculum from the Anti-Defamation League is beginning this school year. The program is open to 7th and 8th graders.

**Westwood Police** - The Police Department will be moving into the new station in the next few weeks. He mentioned the new station has meeting space that we could explore as a possible meeting location in the future.

VII. **Adjournment** - The meeting adjourned at 8:30 p.m.

Minutes respectfully submitted by Mary Ellen LaRose