



## Meeting Minutes for Advisory Board Meeting – April 25, 2016

**Attendance:** Simone Greenberg, Arlene Kasarjian, Brad Pindel, Sophia Paravalos, Gioia Cianciarulo, Domenic Cianciarulo, Jan Midiri, Trish Tucke, Alicia Lamonda, John Loughnane, Sarah Baroud, 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:** Minutes from the March board meeting were accepted.

### III. Director's Report:

#### Clinical Services

\*There are currently **44 counseling clients** on the WY&FS caseload: 36 individual clients; 1 family client; 7 parent consultations.

\*There have been **4 new intakes** for counseling services so far in the month of April. There is currently a short waitlist for services, although residents are able to be placed with a clinician or graduate intern with an average turn-around time of two-three weeks. As always, referrals are triaged so that those residents in most immediate need are prioritized. Our graduate interns are assisting with consultations to more efficiently support the intakes.

\*The final round of weekly **Structured Play Groups** has begun and runs through May, with a total of **25 participants**. All of these groups take place off-site at either the Hanlon School or Martha Jones School to best serve students in Extended Day.

#### Program Updates

\*The final **Teen Center** event will take place on May 13<sup>th</sup> with our **Teen Center Mentors** and Y&FS staff acting as role models and chaperones for the event.

\*The **Friends Network** program wrapped up on April 6<sup>th</sup> with a celebratory "good-bye" party. Friends Network featured with two groups of 3<sup>rd</sup>, 4<sup>th</sup> and 5<sup>th</sup> grade students meeting with their 9<sup>th</sup>-12<sup>th</sup> grade Mentors each Wednesday night at the Senior Center.

\*The **Thurston Thursday Club** program also wrapped up for the year on April 7<sup>th</sup> with a celebratory pizza party. This program features middle school students and high school Mentors hanging out and playing games at the Thurston each week.

\***Sixteen (16) Mentor volunteers** are attending weekly rehearsals for the **Body Safety Theater** program. BST performances take place on May 10 and 12, as well as 2 Parent Information Sessions happening on April 26 and 27 at the ICC.

\*WY&FS is in the process of interviewing **Masters in Social Work Interns** for the 2016-17 school year. We have expanded our school network to include Simmons College and Bridgewater State University.

### **Community Connections**

\*On March 31<sup>st</sup>, Y&FS attended the **Regional Substance Abuse Prevention Coalition grant meeting in Westwood**. This grant, secured by the Boards of Health in Westwood, Norwood, Dedham and Needham, aims to reduce issues related to underage drinking and substance abuse in the region.

\*Y&FS staff, Sarah Baroud and Joanna Bengel, attended the William James College, “**Opioid Crisis: Thinking Outside the Box**” public forum on April 5. Governor Charlie Baker was in attendance to speak about new legislation.

\*Y&FS has been invited to support WHS in the implementation of their **Signs of Suicide (S.o.S.)** program and first-time (for WHS) depression screening with the 9<sup>th</sup> grade Wellness classes on May 4<sup>th</sup>, 2016.

\*Youth & Family Services continues to take a leadership role with the local community group, **Westwood Cares**. The group now has active Facebook and Twitter accounts, with a web page in development. On June 1<sup>st</sup> at 7 PM at the WHS Auditorium, Westwood Cares will host the Social Host Liability Event, featuring Kathi Sullivan presenting “Taylor’s Message.”

\*The work to support the families in **Emergency Shelter at the Budget Inn** is ongoing, primarily regarding food delivery, despite the efforts of the state to close isolated shelters. The state implemented a voucher program that provides families in Westwood with opportunities to move to more permanent housing between December 2015 and March 2016. There is still 1 family residing at the Budget Inn. The Transitional Assistance Group will be receiving the Roy London Humanitarian Award on April 28.

\*Y&FS staff applied for the **IAM Strong Spring 2016 Grant** for funds to support a marketing campaign for the William James INTERFACE Referral Service. Funds would go towards a town-wide mailing of magnets and information for the Referral Service to make residents aware of the resource and encourage positive conversation around mental health. Grant recipients should be made aware by May 1.

\*In April, Y&FS has attended or will attend meetings of the **WHS Site Council, Deerfield Site Council, Westwood Early Childhood Council, Westwood Cares, Islington Center Task Force, Child Study Team (CST)** and the **Westwood Community Chest**.

### **IV. Old Business**

WY&FS received 5 applications for the annual **Recognize-a-Youth (R.A.Y)** program that is run jointly with the Rotary Chapter. R.A.Y. awards are given to young people in Westwood who have shown an extraordinary commitment to community service and volunteerism. The applications are now being reviewed by Rotary members. An awards luncheon will be held on June 7<sup>th</sup>.

In March, a subcommittee of WY&FS board members interviewed fifteen WHS sophomores to join the advisory board as student board members. The subcommittee is happy to announce Zane Rahabi, Olivia Goldberg, Daniel O'Connor will be joining the board. Mary Ellen will invite them to the May meeting.

## **V. New Business**

**ICC Security/Safety Improvements:** Sarah shared information on two recent break ins at ICC. The town is working to address this and improve safety in the building.

### **Community Liaisons:**

**Westwood Police Department** – Brad shared that the police station was approved at Town Meeting. Brad has been working with 5<sup>th</sup> graders on the DARE program. He also visited with freshman and 6<sup>th</sup> grade Wellness classes on substance abuse.

**Elementary Schools:** Jan updated the group on various activities at the elementary schools including the “*Changing Bodies*” talk given to 5<sup>th</sup> graders. She also shared that DCF has had a number of new hires to combat caseloads. There is a shortage of foster parents and attorneys to help the department. Alicia asked a question regarding foster care requirements.

**Thurston Middle School:** John shared with the group an update on the recent Dodge ball/dance, an upcoming 7<sup>th</sup> grade field trip to University Station and PARCC testing.

**Westwood High School:** Gioia and Sophia spoke about an upcoming POPS concert where all performing groups at the WHS will come together for a performance. Students and Prodigy music teachers are featured on a CD that Tri M students are selling. Proceeds will benefit a music nonprofit organization in Myanmar. Simone shared the Jr./Senior Prom will be held in May at Lake Pearl. Many students will be making college decisions by May 1<sup>st</sup>.

**Westwood Cares:** John updated us on the regional grant initiative. The group will be hosting a Social Host Liability event for all Westwood parents at WHS on June 1<sup>st</sup>.

**Food Pantry:** Trish shared that the food pantry won six hours of organizing from the National Professional Organizers. They did an amazing job organizing the storage garage area. National Honor Society members and a WPD family member have been helpful organizing the pantry itself.

**VI. Adjournment** – The meeting adjourned at 7:53 p.m. Minutes respectfully submitted by Mary Ellen LaRose.