



Meeting Minutes for Advisory Board Meeting – March 28, 2016

Attendance: David Russell, Olivia O’Shea, Simone Greenberg, Robbie Antonucci, Austin Bushey, Brad Pindel, Sophia Paravalos, Gioia Cianciarulo, Domenic Cianciarulo, John Loughnane, Jan Midiri Sarah Baroud, Mary Ellen LaRose

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:** Minutes from the February board meeting were accepted.

III. Director’s Report:

Clinical Services

*There are currently **37 counseling clients** on the WY&FS caseload, the same number as in February (but with some ending and some new intakes): 30 individual clients; 2 family clients; 5 parent consultations. The clients that Danielle was working with have either taken a break or have been transferred to other WY&FS clinicians.

*There have been **8 new intakes** for counseling services so far in the month of March. 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 next round of weekly **Structured Play Groups** has begun and will run 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 next **Teen Center** event will take place on April 1st with our **Teen Center Mentors** and Y&FS staff acting as role models and chaperones for the event. The students will be participating in a dodge ball tournament.

*The **Friends Network** program continues, with two groups of 3rd, 4th and 5th grade students meeting with their 9th-12th grade Mentors each Wednesday night at the Senior Center. The final week will take place on April 6th, celebrating the participants with an ocean themed “good-bye” party.

*The **Thurston Thursday Club** program continues, with middle school students and high school Mentors hanging out and playing games at the Thurston each week. The final week will take place on April 14th with a celebratory pizza party.

***Sixteen (16) Mentor volunteers** are attending weekly rehearsals for the **Body Safety Theater** program. BST began in the first week of February and will continue until the performances at all elementary schools in May.

Community Connections

*On March 31st, Y&FS will attend 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 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 9th grade Wellness classes on May 4th, 2016. WY&FS staff will also attend a training with WHS faculty and staff on March 30th, featuring a presenter from the Riverside Trauma Center.

*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 and plans for a spring speaker event for Westwood parents around the issue of Social Host Liability.

*The work to support the families in **Emergency Shelter at the Budget Inn** is wrapping up given that the current families are expected to move out by the end of March. 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. However, we will continue to support these families as long as they are at the Budget Inn.

*Y&FS staff is applying 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.

*Y&FS staff attended the first **Community Crisis Intervention Team (CCIT)** meeting on March 17th at the Westwood Police Station. The CCIT is a collaborative community group that helps provide alternatives to the criminal justice system for people with mental health issues. Officer Pindel attended the meeting as well and stated it was a good conversation. The group will be part of the decision making process on how the data is used.

*In March, Y&FS has attended or will attend meetings of the **WHS Site Council, Westwood Early Childhood Council, Westwood Cares, Islington Center Task Force, The Roy London Humanitarian Award Committee** and the **Westwood Community Chest**.

IV. Old Business

WY&FS is continuing to accept nominations for the annual **Recognize-a-Youth (R.A.Y)** program. R.A.Y. awards are given to young people in Westwood who have shown an extraordinary commitment to community service and volunteerism. The deadline to submit a nomination is March 31st. So far 5 applications have been submitted.

In March, a subcommittee of WY&FS board members interviewed fifteen WHS sophomores to join the advisory board as student board members. The subcommittee will make their final decision by the end of the month and will notify the students.

V. New Business

Small Group Breakout – The board broke up into small groups to review and give feedback on a draft of a Westwood parent survey. WY&FS plans to send the survey via WPS listserv in late April 2016. The department’s goal in administering the survey is to give us insight into the community needs in regards parenting resources, programs and services. The data will help us plan future WY&FS programming.

Community Liaisons:

Westwood Community Chest – David Russell gave an update on campership application.

Westwood Police Department – The WPD is continuing to host public meetings on plans for a new police station. The department is investigating a number of car break ins at Lifetime Fitness.

Elementary Schools: Jan updated the group on various activities at the elementary schools including the 5th grade moving up ceremony at Downey.

Thurston Middle School: Austin talked about PARCC testing window is longer this year and the schools will use paper rather than electronic testing. This led to a short group discussion on standardized testing. Simone noted that the WHS legislative council recently took a non-binding vote on PARCC vs. MCAS testing.

Austin shared that Lynette Owens, the global director of Trend Micro’s Internet Safety for Kids and Families recently spoke to 6th and 7th graders and their parents on internet safety.

The TMS *Choose to Be Nice* after school group led by Austin has over 30 members of 6th, 7th, 8th graders. They recently held their first community service event in conjunction with the math department and square root day.

TMS will be putting on *Cinderella* April 7th, 8th and 9th.

Westwood High School: Gioia gave the group an update on the recent Encounter with the Arts event at the school. Sophia spoke of the Tri M Society fundraiser. The student council held a “whisker wars” fundraiser between the faculty and students. Olivia shared the spring sports season has begun. Olivia and Robbie discussed juniors are attending college fairs and meeting with WHS guidance counselors. Sophia talked about the Music Underground group holding their 2nd open mike event at the Fisher School.

VI. Adjournment – The meeting adjourned at 8:03 p.m. Minutes respectfully submitted by Mary Ellen LaRose