



Meeting Minutes for Advisory Board Meeting – February 25, 2019

Attendance: Samantha Nelson, Domenic Cianciarulo, Kevin Cote, Trish Tucke, Diana Bezdedeanu, Brad Pindel, Tom Viti, David Russell, Talia Pincus, Jan Midiri, John Loughnane, Mary Ellen LaRose, Sarah Baroud

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:** David made a motion to accept the 1/28/19 minutes, Dom seconded. All were in favor of approving the minutes.

III. Director's Report:

Clinical Services

*There are currently **52 counseling clients** on the WY&FS caseload, 46 individual clients; 3 family clients; 3 parent consultations.

*There have been **7 new intakes** for counseling services so far in February. There is a short waitlist for services, but residents are typically able to be placed with a clinician or graduate intern with an average turn-around time of two or three weeks. When there is a waitlist, we share the William James INTERFACE Referral Service information as another option. As always, referrals are triaged so that those residents in most immediate need are prioritized.

*There are **2 Structured Play Groups** running currently (both are K/1st grade) with 14 participants across these weekly groups. The final two groups of the school year are scheduled to begin in March. We've seen a lower level of participants this year (lower enrollment and higher number of participants who do not complete the 8 week group), something to consider in program planning.

Program Updates

***Body Safety Theater** is running with weekly rehearsals taking place on Tuesday evenings. The program has a record-high 29 mentors participating!

*The **Friends Network** program will continue through early April. For Valentine's Day, participants enjoyed making cards for "Meals on Wheels" deliveries in coordination with the COA.

*The next "**Thurston Friday Night Out**" will take place on March 8th. The theme is yet to be decided by the Thurston MS Student Council.

Community Connections

*WY&FS Staff supported WHS with their **Signs of Suicide (SOS)** program for 9th graders on February 12th. As is the case each year, the program was successful in identifying students who were in need of additional supports, feeling like an important use of school-allocated time and resources.

*Sarah attended a regional Youth & Family Services Department **Director's meeting** on February 1st in Burlington. Directors from towns including Holliston, Harwich, Westborough and Needham were in attendance. Topics ranged from electronic medical record platforms to anti-vaping programming to language access plans.

IV. Old Business

Advisory Board Membership Process: John recapped the group regarding the nominating committee's recent meeting. Diana had prepared a list of potential candidates. The rest of the committee also gave input and names. Sarah

and Mary Ellen reached out to a targeted list and found three interested candidates. The candidates have been invited to a future advisory board meeting. If they continue to be interested they will submit a statement of interest and have a brief interview with the Town Administrator.

Recognize A Youth Award – Mary Ellen mentioned that the department has received five nominations thus far for the Award and will continue to accept nomination forms until the deadline on March 31st.

V. New Business:

Comprehensive Plan: Tom Viti, former library director and resident spoke to the board regarding his role as a member of Town's Comprehensive Plan facilities sub-committee. He gave the board an overview of the full committee's goals. The eighteen member full committee is tasked with gathering input from residents, concerned stakeholders, town boards and departments on what they envision for the next 20 years for the town and how we can make Westwood an even better place to live, work and play. The plan will provide a general road map for where the town would like to proceed. The facilities sub committee's job is to review the facilities in town and assess needs. Tom noted that there is already a plan in place for a new space for WY&FS in the addition to Wentworth Hall. Sarah shared with the board the document she prepared for the committee regarding WY&FS' building and space needs. John thanked Sarah for submitting the report for the department. Tom and facilities sub-committee will take the department's report along with those from other departments and share this with the Committee, Town Administrator, Select Board and Planning Board. Tom encouraged the board to complete the town wide comprehensive survey that will be administered in the coming weeks and to attend an upcoming visioning session later in the spring.

2019 Student Board Member Application Process: The department has sent out letters encouraging sophomores to apply to join the board as student advisory board members for their junior and senior years. Interviews will take place in March during our March board meeting date. An additional night will be added if the department has a large applicant pool.

Community Liaisons:

Westwood Cares: Sarah and John shared that the group is planning a spring event on Thursday, April 25th on Vaping. A presentation will be made by Edgar Duran-Elmudesi of the Metro Boston Tobacco Free Organization. The board had a group discussion regarding new vaping detection devices to be installed at WHS, anecdotal information regarding WHS vaping habits, and wellness class curriculum on vaping at Thurston and WHS.

Food Pantry: Trish noted that 64 households are accessing the pantry. She encouraged student board members to run food drives in the spring.

Westwood Police Department: Brad mentioned he will soon be visiting 5th grade classrooms to share the DARE Program, The department has had in service trainings in CPR, legal rights and firearms. The board also discussed the lack of parking at the high school and recent concerns the department has heard from residents of the Maze neighborhood regarding parking and speed enforcement before/after school hours.

Thurston Middle School: Jan shared with the group an update on the 8th grade trip to DC and the musical 42nd Street performance

Westwood High School: Students discussed that they are in the midst of choosing schedules for next school year. Other topics discussed included the Prom at Lake Pearl on May 17th, Jterm, Substance Abuse Awareness Week, the SIPP program and the upcoming drama department performance of the musical Freaky Friday.

VI. Adjournment - The meeting was called to adjournment at 8:21 p.m.

Minutes respectfully submitted by Mary Ellen LaRose