



Meeting Minutes for Advisory Board Meeting – June 12, 2023

Attendance: Katy Colthart, Mary Ellen LaRose, Adina Swan, Shea Lonergan, Gioia Cianciarulo, Trish Tucke, Jan Midiri, Christy McKenney, Nyla Bacchus, Lucy Park, Meaghan Greally, Ella Xu, Daniel Tryder, Brad Pindel, Issac Chan, Andrew Alex

I. Call to Order: The meeting convened at Wentworth Hall at 7:08 p.m.

II. Acceptance of Meeting Minutes: A motion was made by Gioia Cianciarulo to accept the 5/22/23 minutes. Trish Tucke seconded the motion. All were in favor of approving the meeting minutes.

III. Welcome New Board Members/Farewell to Departing Board Members: Andrew Alex, Isaac Chan, Meaghan Greally and Ella Xu, the incoming student board members were welcomed and introduced. Katy thanked the departing board members and student board members for their service to the department and the town.

III. Department Report:

Administrative Updates

Later this month, Adina will celebrate her 1-year anniversary with Youth & Family Services

Clinical Services

There are currently **50 counseling clients** on the WY&FS caseload, 49 individual clients; and 1 family client.

There were **5 new referrals** since our last report and we anticipate more referrals due to recent school progress reports and IEP meetings.

There are currently **17 individuals or families on our “waitlist” for counseling services** and we are **offering services to 10 this summer.**

Whenever there is a waitlist, we also share the William James INTERFACE Referral Service information as another option for residents and offer a one-time meeting with a Y&FS clinician so that families might have some initial resources while waiting. As always, referrals are triaged so that those residents in the most immediate need are prioritized.

All Groups have ended for the year and we will be using this summer to assess our group programming and planning for next year’s group offerings. From September 2022- May 2023, **62 children participated in 11 group programs.** This includes the K/1 Structured playgroups we offered at Sheehan and the Calm and Cope groups we ran at Hanlon.

Program Updates

School-year programs that ran this year and are expected to run next year include:

- Be SMARTT

- Body Safety Theater
- Friends Network
- Teen Scene @the Library
- Westwood Writes
- Recognize-A-Youth
- Holiday Giving
- Birthday Giving

We partnered with WHS to be a part of a **J-Term offering** at the high school this year. We will welcome 12-14 students to Wentworth Hall, introduce them to Youth & Family Services, and have them work on projects meaningful to the department.

Community Connections

WY&FS staff participated in local and regional groups in FY23, including

- **BIDMC-Needham Community Benefits Advisory Committee**
- **Community Chest**
- **Community Crisis Intervention Team**
- **Deerfield Site Council**
- **Early Childhood Council**
- **Human Services Function Group**
- **Internship Collaborative**
- **MMA Human Services Council**
- **MMA Women Leading Government**
- **WHS Child Study Team**
- **WHS Legislative Council**
- **WHS Site Council**
- **WPS Wellness Review Committee**

IV. Old Business:

Advisory Board Vacancies: Katy encouraged board members to spread the word about openings to the board for the upcoming school year.

V. New Business

Program Spotlight: “Summer Programming”: Shea gave an overview on a side by side Child/Caregiver Group that will run this summer in response to a notable number of children particularly in kindergarten- 2nd grade in need of social support. The children will work with clinicians on learning coping skills and tools for emotion regulation while parents will meet separately to learn how to reinforce these skills at home.

Open Discussion on Potential Community Needs: Katy asked board members to continue sharing ideas and thoughts on unmet community needs. She discussed the importance of board members being a resource that WY&FS can tap into on any issues they are seeing within the community. She stated that we can continue to keep this topic on the board’s agenda as a placeholder for future discussions.

Community Liaisons:

Westwood Community Chest: Katy gave an overview for the new board members on the mission of WCC.

Early Childhood Council: Katy mentioned that the department has enjoyed partnering with the ECC on the parent series this spring.

Food Pantry: Trish reported that 69 families are currently being served by the pantry with the vast majority being Senior Citizens. Clients will be given vouchers this summer to use at a local Farmers Market.

Westwood Police: Brad mentioned that the DARE program has wrapped up for the year. He provided an update on the recent All-Night Grad Party that was held for graduating seniors. He reported that the department is looking to hire additional crossing guards for the next year and asked board members to spread the word.

Schools Update:

Westwood High School: Nyla spoke about the later start time for all grade levels beginning next school year. There was continued discussion about how the time change will impact youth and high school athletes, traffic patterns, etc.

Thurston Middle School: Christy informed the board upcoming field trips and field day activities at Thurston.

Elementary Schools: Brad spoke about the Clap Out that held for graduating seniors at each elementary school recently.

VI. **Public Comment:** None

VII. **Adjournment** - The meeting was called to adjournment at 8:06p.m.

Minutes respectfully submitted by Mary Ellen LaRose