

YOUTH COMMISSION MEETING

June 8, 2009

Minutes

PRESENT: Kristin French, Michelle Grasso, Andy Rosenshine, Nancy Tame, Oscar Najarian

WYFS: John Badenhause, Director
Doreen Rebh, Administrative Assistant

GUESTS: Rachel Bridge, Kasey Packer, Allison Shea

7:30 PM MEETING OPENED/MINUTES REVIEWED

Michelle called the meeting to order and the May meeting minutes were reviewed. Andy made a motion to accept the minutes, Kristin seconded and all were in favor.

7:35 PM INTERVIEWS - YOUTH POSITIONS ON YOUTH COMMISSION

The group welcomed rising Westborough High School senior, Allison Shea to the meeting. After introductions, Michelle asked Allison what interested her about the Youth Commission and what she thought she might contribute to the group. Allison explained that she believes keeping kids her age busy is important to keeping them safe. She's been to several leadership trainings including a recent one at Worcester State College through the Rotary Club. She's also very involved with SADD and feels she can be an effective voice for teens. She stated that she feels there are plenty of activities for kids her age but the problem comes when kids feel that these activities aren't cool.

Next the group welcomed rising junior, Kasey Packer to the meeting. After introductions, Andy asked Kasey what barriers she feels are in the way to getting kids involved. Kasey noted that kids seem less interested in school-related activities. She talked about the Mass Star Leadership Conference she attended last week and stated that one thing she's learned in leadership training is that "if you want to see a change then you have to be the change". She believes that youth involvement is important. She also noted that Westborough High School offers several presentations on drinking and other issues but that these presentations don't have the same impact as they would if the message came from a peer.

Finally, the group welcomed rising junior Rachel Bridge. Rachel noted that class spirit has dwindled at the high school and stated

that she's brainstormed about ways to get students involved. She thought having a teen center or teen café in town would be helpful. Rachel also mentioned that she'll be going to Africa this summer and would like to start an organization in which a town such as Westborough "adopts" another community. She wondered if that program was something that could tie in with this group. She's interested in being part of the Youth Commission because she feels she can be "a voice for the students and get their needs heard."

8:15 PM DISCUSSION – YOUTH POSITION

The group was impressed with each of the three girls and with their ideas. Michelle made a motion to accept all three candidates to be youth members on the Youth Commission. Kristin seconded and all were in favor. It was decided that Doreen would send the youth members emails informing them of the group's decision and inviting them to the Youth Commission meeting in September. It was also decided that the office would send an article to the local papers announcing the results of the Youth Commission youth member search.

8:30 PM OTHER BUSINESS

Michelle reported that John's evaluation had been completed. John agreed to sign it and then submit it to the Personnel Board.

Michelle reported that Cheryl Amey has decided not to commit again to the Youth Commission. John agreed to check with the Selectmen's office to see if a letter has been received from Cheryl and to make sure that the open position has been posted.

Michelle wondered if the office will begin looking into insurance billing this summer. John stated that he'd be looking into that and that he'd have a report in the fall. Michelle mentioned that the Whiten Community Center had received a grant from the Fallon Foundation and she also talked about the Rent a Kid Program. John stated that Youth and Family Services would start looking into grants over the summer and identify ones that are reasonable.

It was decided that the Needs Assessment should be revisited in the fall and that it would be helpful to publish some type of report or results for the community.

8:40 PM MEETING ADJOURNED

NEXT MEETING – 7:30 PM, MONDAY, SEPTEMBER 14, 2009

