

YOUTH COMMISSION MEETING
Westborough Youth and Family Services Office
Room 21, Forbes Municipal Building
45 West Main Street, Westborough, MA
July 12, 2010
7:30 PM to 8:30 PM

PRESENT: Kristin French, Michelle Grasso, Andy Rosenshine, Oscar Najarian, Rachel Bridge, Ritika Lahoty, Cameron Mattheson, Ali Strand

WYFS: John Badenhausen, Director
Doreen Rebh, Administrative Assistant

GUEST: Judith Tully

7:35 PM: MEETING OPENED/MINUTES REVIEWED

Michelle called the meeting to order and welcomed Judith Tully. The June minutes and March minutes were reviewed. Kristin made a motion to accept the June 14th and March 8th minutes, Andy seconded, all were in favor and the motion carried.

7:45 PM: INTERVIEW: JUDITH TULLY, Y. C. CANDIDATE

Michelle welcomed Judith again and thanked her for her interest in the Youth Commission. Everyone introduced themselves and explained their reasons for joining the Commission.

Judith explained that she's been a clinical social worker for nearly thirty years, and that she's lived in Westborough for fourteen years. She talked about her experiences volunteering in the Westborough Schools and more specifically with the Westborough Music Parents Association and as a liaison to the Westborough High School Drama Association, and also discussed her volunteer experience as a Troop Leader with Girl Scouts. She stated that she's followed what the Youth Commission does and that now that her children have grown, if there's room for her, the Youth Commission is where she'd like to contribute.

Michelle wondered what Judith's thoughts were in regards to what might be missing for youth in town. Judith stated that she feels there's not much for youth to do. She mentioned bullying, drug abuse and battering as issues in the schools that don't get addressed enough. She stated that options are limited for youth and she'd like to see more available. She also talked about how many of the kids in town are overscheduled and that she noticed as a Girl Scout Leader that each month her troops' favorite activity was a relaxed meeting where all they did was hang out, eat pizza

and talk. It became clear to her that the teens wanted times where they “didn’t have to perform”.

Andy talked about how the Youth Commission began a push to address similar issues but then had been forced to “retreat” and focus on budget issues. He noted that the Commission has recently included youth members and that it’s been a great sharing experience. It was mentioned that since the budget is no longer top priority, the group will work on utilizing the teens input.

When Kristin wondered what it is that brings Judith back to working with youth in the community, Judith explained that she loves kids and views them as an under-recognized, under-represented population. She reiterated that she’s heard good things about the Westborough Youth Commission and that she’d love to help out where she can.

When asked if she had any questions for the group Judith wondered if the WYFS budget would stay at the same level and also wondered if the organization could continue to function with that budget. John agreed that it is a bare bones budget and that he doesn’t foresee it getting any worse. He explained that he’s looked in to charging fees and that those fees would go back into a town general fund, not to the department. He stated that his preference is to not charge fees.

Judith’s second question to the group was, “What do you need help with?” The members mentioned advocacy, program development, needs assessment and self-promotion as areas they’d like to focus on. Kristin wondered if they might structure a meeting for September to discuss these areas and the members thought this was a good idea.

8:20 PM Andy made a motion to recommend to the Selectmen that Judith be appointed to the Youth Commission. Kristin seconded, all were in favor and the motion carried. John stated that he’d write a letter to the Selectmen requesting the appointment and that they will then schedule a time for Judith to go before them.

8:25 PM Meeting Adjourned

Next Meeting – 7:30 PM, Monday, September 13, 2010