

YOUTH COMMISSION MEETING
Westborough Youth and Family Services Office
Room 21, Forbes Municipal Building
45 West Main Street, Westborough, MA
February 13, 2012
7:30 PM to 8:30 PM

PRESENT: Michelle Grasso, Andy Rosenshine, Judith Tully, Christine Anthony, Patricia Ainsleigh, Cameron Mattheson, Ritika Lahoty, Oscar Najarian

ABSENT: Ali Strand and Casey Collins

WYFS: John Badenhause, Director
Cathy Cairns, Administrative Assistant

7:30 PM: MEETING OPENED/ MINUTES REVIEWED

Michelle called the meeting to order and the January minutes were reviewed. Judith made a motion to accept the minutes, Christine seconded, and the minutes were accepted unanimously.

7:35 PM: REVIEW STRATEGIC PLAN

Goal 1: Secure funding for the HSN program. Since HSN funding is now back in the Town budget, the wording could possibly be changed to "secure funding, as needed." Consider making the following changes to the wording:

1a - "continue discussion about HSN."

1b - "continue relationships with past funders."

1c - "be aware of possible grants, if needed."

1d - "consider "Buy a Bus" campaign if needed."

Goal 2: Raise the profile of the WYFS Dept. Strategies can remain the same. The board might consider inviting newly elected members of the Board of Selectmen after the election. Wording of Action Steps of Goal 2 could be changed to "invite liaisons annually." Currently, both the BOS and the FinComm liaisons are included in monthly YC packets emails. Add the WYFS newsletter to Action Steps 2a and 2b, and change the Timeframe to "ongoing."

Goal 3: Needs Assessment. The summary was written and the report was released. The group discussed whether or not this should remain a Goal. Questions were raised, such as: where is WYFS going? Maybe the YC needs a new goal? The idea was discussed of developing some sort of support group for youth whose needs are not currently being met in the community (foster kids, kids of divorcing parents, kids dealing with loss), and developing partnerships within the community to support isolated youths.

Goal 4: Collaborate with other town departments and communities to address youth needs through programs. The group discussed utilizing the youth members more to

meet this goal. Judith spoke about the former Westborough High School survey club where the students surveyed the student body every other week in order to present hard data to the school administration as to the students' opinions.

The YC could run surveys on specific topics with questions appearing in the WYFS newsletter and in online newspapers. It was also suggested that the Guidance Dept. at the Middle School might have ideas on this. The timeframe for the Action Steps should be "ongoing."

The group decided to remove Goal 3 from the Strategic Plan. Michelle offered to rework the strategy and action steps.

One suggestion was to have the YC recognize a high school student on a regular basis (Needham does it monthly.)

7:35 PM: REPORT FROM YOUTH MEMBERS

A hypnotist will be coming to the High School in March. Project Grad is being planned to celebrate the night of graduation at Teamworks to keep kids from drinking, etc. The winter Carnival wasn't as successful as hoped because Hastings School had their carnival on the same day.

8:30 PM: OTHER BUSINESS

Selectman Tim Dodd will attend next month's meeting to talk about the draft of The Open Space Plan. The group discussed how residents are not allowed to use the town parks and recreation areas for anything other than hiking (no Frisbee, pick-up sports games, etc.)

Next month, the group will begin the search for new youth members interested in joining the YC in the fall.

Kristin French sent an email about a statewide advocacy group that discusses the consequences should the medical marijuana law be passed.

8:40 PM: MEETING ADJOURNED

NEXT MEETING – Monday, March 12, 2012 at 7:30 PM