

Youth Advisory Board
Minutes
November 5, 2014

Present: Barbara Ruhe, Kathy Bagley, Rachael Sunny, Eric Knapp, Colleen Keane, Todd Willard, Gerri Roberts, Maria C. Alfonso, Erica Texeira, Leslie Esoian, Ken Lesser, Rachel Bahouh, Kim Bobin, Alex Bobin, Jeanine Berasi, and Ryan Berasi

The meeting was called to order at 7:03 PM.

Introductions:

- New Assistant Director of Social and Youth Services
 - We welcome Erica Texeira, the new Assistant Director of Social and Youth Services. Erica is a LMFT (Licensed Marriage and Family Therapist) and comes to us from Wellmore Behavioral Health in Waterbury.

Prospective New Youth Representatives:

- We welcomed Alex Bobin, Ryan Berasi and Rachel Bahouh as prospective new youth representatives on YAB. We currently have 2 vacancies that need to be filled.

Approval of September Minutes:

- No edits were noted. Ken Lesser made a motion to accept the minutes as submitted and Maria C. Alfonso seconded. All approved.

Financial Report:

- Rachael Sunny noted that there is currently \$7,588.1.01 in the Youth Advisory Board account

Old Business:

- Youth Advisory Board Composition
 - There is no update at this time. Currently the proposal is in the hands of the Town Manager.
- Friday Night Hang Out
 - 95 6th graders signed up for Friday Night Hangout which is started on Friday, October 10th
 - The first night 72 students came and the second night 50 students came (Hanmer and Highcrest Halloween events were also happening that night)
 - Students have been playing wiffleball, dodgeball, soccer, and basketball in the gym with only a handful hanging out in the lounge socializing and playing cards
 - Rachael Sunny hired 4 staff to run the program
 - Rachael Sunny thanked the YAB again for donating \$500 which allowed for purchasing off soda, candy bars and pizzas to fuel the start-up cost of the refreshment stand

- Alex Bobin noted that we should be sure to include the 6th grade Corpus Christi students in the next round of registrations – Rachael Sunny will be sure to send flyers over to the school in January to send home with students. Still need to decide whether we will only allow Wethersfield residents who attend Corpus Christi to participate or whether will open to all of their 6th grade
- Alex Bobin and Ryan Berasi both noted that they think that it should remain an every other week event so that is more “enticing.”
- CASAC recognition
 - At the annual CASAC meeting in October Officer Bridget Camara was recognized for the work that she does in town towards substance abuse prevention. She, along with her family, attended the ceremony that was held at CASAC headquarters in Windsor.
 - For being in compliance with their 2013-2014 CASAC grant, Wethersfield Social and Youth Services was awarded a \$250 check. Need to determine who to use that money.
- Youth Volunteer Manual
 - YAB members were reminded to submit any organizations in the Wethersfield vicinity, which they know accept volunteers under the age of 18, to Rachael Sunny. Contact information, preferably including a person’s name, should be emailed to Rachael.

New Business:

- New YAB Youth Members
 - Alex Bobin, Ryan Berasi, and Rachel Bahouth each provided a brief background about themselves and why they would be interested in joining YAB.
 - Alex Bobin is in 7th grade and attends Hartford Magnet Trinity College Academy. He serves on the school’s student council and is active in the Boy Scouts.
 - Ryan Berasi is in 7th grade and attends SDMS. He is active in baseball and football. Ryan also had some ideas of ways Mill Woods Swim Area could be improved. They included having a game area for football and wiffleball, a special “teen only” event, diving board, and concession bar.
 - Rachel Bahouh attends WHS (am unsure of grade) and is active with swimming, basketball, and golf.
- CASAC Grant
 - Wethersfield Social and Youth Services still needs to submit its CASAC grant for 2014-2015. The state is requiring more evidence based programs which makes it a little more difficult.
 - Potential grant ideas that YAB members shared:
 - Ken Lesser and Leslie Esoian both talked about Project Purple. Chris Herren, NBA star, used to be a drug addict and he now provides motivational speeches regarding drug abuse.
 - Leslie Esoian also mentioned the organization Graphic Truth which is local.
 - Ryan Berasi mentioned that bullying is a problem at the middle school so maybe a program that addresses bullying would be of use.

- Survey
 - Wethersfield Social and Youth Services would like to find a way to determine the needs/wants of the town's youth
 - Could conduct a survey just specifically related to drugs and alcohol (CASAC's mission) or could conduct a survey addressing school climate
 - Kim Bobin and Rachael Sunny are participating in a workshop towards the end of the month focused on how welcoming your school is. They will report out on the workshop at next month's meeting.
- Other Potential Projects
 - Rachael Sunny wanted to make the YAB aware of some upcoming awareness/recognition weeks in case members were interested in organizing an event.
 - National Volunteer Week (April 12 – 18)
 - April is Alcohol Awareness Month
 - May is Mental Health Awareness Month

At 8:24 pm Barbara Ruhe made a motion to adjourn the meeting which was seconded by Leslie Esoian.

Next meeting is December 11th (note it is the second Thursday of the month and not the first) at 7:00 PM.

Respectfully submitted:
Rachael Sunny