

Colchester Youth & Social Services

127 Norwich Avenue, Suite 205, Colchester, Connecticut 06415

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Youth First Coalition Meeting Minutes

February 1, 2023 | 5:30 PM – 7:00 PM | Youth Center, 40 Norwich Ave, 2nd Floor

MEMBERS PRESENT: Lauren Ostrout, Anne Marie Maffuid, Russell Melmed, Carol Wikarska

MEMBERS ABSENT: Dave Koji, Samantha Van Zilen, Sophie Melmed

OTHERS PRESENT: Charity Benedict, Craig Scheel, Janet DePratti, Jeff Rodman, Kylie Fontaine, Valerie Geato, Blair Windsor, Michael Mal, Chris Bennett, Michelle Millington, Iris Tomasino

1. CALL TO ORDER

Russell Melmed called this meeting to order at 5:34 pm.

2. CITIZENS' COMMENTS

None.

3. REVIEW AND APPROVAL OF PREVIOUS MINUTES FROM 2/1/23

Minutes of the February 1, 2023, meeting presented for review and approval.

Motion by: R. Melmed

to approve the minutes of February 1, 2023, meeting as presented.

Second by: A. Maffuid

Vote: Unanimous to approve

4. RESOLUTION RUN REVIEW

It was decided to have this topic as a standard item on the agenda to keep focus for budgeting and planning purposes.

5. NOMINATIONS/APPOINTMENTS FOR SECRETARY & VICE CHAIR

Jan DePratti is acting secretary. She is not an official member. No nominations for vice chair.

6. LPC FUNDING – VAPE DETECTORS

Answers to additional questions about the Soter Technology Vape Detectors were forwarded to Bacon Administration. Administration is working with the Board of Education to develop a policy.

7. DFC UPDATES - YR 4 PLANNING

- The year four budget proposal, due March 15, is in progress.
- The Youth Voices survey, produced by B. Weyland Smith Consulting, LLC is being considered instead of SERAC. The services and products from B. Weyland Smith are considered to be a better value and the survey reporting is easier to understand and utilize. Prices include \$7000 for the survey and evaluation. An additional monthly \$1000 for Evaluation Services would provide ongoing program evaluation, coalition capacity assessment, focus groups, a Community Survey, a Coalition Assessment Survey, and Sustainability Planning.

The Youth First Coalition functions as the Youth Services Advisory Board and fulfills the requirements of the Drug Free Communities Program. The goals of the Drug Free Communities Program are to strengthen and enhance the functioning of the Coalition and to reduce youth usage of Marijuana and Alcohol. The Coalition does this by developing culturally appropriate substance use prevention and education initiatives based on local data collected annually from Colchester Youth and Parents.

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- The Core Measures Youth Survey was last conducted in 2022, due in February 2024. The Developmental Assets survey was last conducted in 2021, due in October 2023.

8. YSAB UPDATES

- Blair Windsor has filled the vacant position at Social Services. Blair also works at Bacon Academy.
- The open Social Services position has been filled.
- The JRB Case Manager position has also been filled.
- Youth Services summer trip planning is underway.
- Youth Services is deciding, with the help of the Board of Selectmen, how to use the \$42,000 from the federal and multi-state opioid settlement with Janssen Pharmaceuticals.

9. COMMUNITY CONVERSATIONS

Discussion included how to move Community Conversations forward:

- Charity will distribute the Marijuana Education presentation on social media which was held on January 31st.
- More Tik Tok visibility was discussed. Charity noted that the Youth Action Council (YAC) has produced Tik Tok videos focused on drug prevention messaging.
- Chris offered to talk with student ambassadors about creating mental health and substance abuse Tik Tok skits.
- Craig offered to Invite a representative from the Bacon Academy drama club to discuss the idea of creating skits to educate parents/youth on mental health and substance abuse.
- Podcasts were suggested, breaking them into meaningful segments and distributing on social media.
- Charity discussed Dave Koji's ideas of daily mental health messaging to students created by coalition and distributed by teachers to the google classroom pages. She also talked about Dave's mental health video concept focusing on parents' and children's similar experiences.
- It was suggested to use Google Classroom Messaging to collect ideas from youth on educational topics.
- Drug messaging or Developmental Asset education could be possible student capstone projects.
- It was agreed to formally table the current approach to community conversations due to poor attendance and focus on moving forward to solidify our new ideas.
- Russ Melmed and Blair Windsor and Ann Marie Maffuid will be joining the Marketing and Media subcommittee to help work on this initiative.

10. COMMITTEE UPDATES

- CYFC Data Subcommittee will start meeting for the upcoming survey.

11. NEXT STEPS

Charity: distribute the Marijuana Education presentation on social media which was held on January 31st.

Charity: add Russ Melmed, Ann Marie Maffuid & Blair Windsor to the Marketing and Media subcommittee invitations.

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Craig: Invite a representative from the Bacon Academy drama club to discuss the idea of creating skits to educate parents/youth on mental health and substance abuse.

Chris: Talk with student ambassadors about creating mental health and substance abuse Tik Tok skits.

12. CITIZEN'S COMMENTS

- Iris Tomasino spoke about her struggles to get mental health services in town. She asked about the town's commitment to mental health and inclusion of the adopted family, single parent, non-traditional family in classroom initiatives and language used in schools. Current social services and UFCS support were discussed, along with what else is needed was part of the discussion.
- Michelle encouraged all town residents to vote March 7th on the Board of Education upcoming budget proposal. The meeting will be held in the Town Hall.

13. ADJOURNMENT

Meeting adjourned at 7:08 pm.

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