

Colchester Youth & Social Services

127 Norwich Avenue, Suite 205, Colchester, Connecticut 06415

P: 860-537-7255 F: 860-537-1731 E: youthservices@colchesterct.gov



Youth First Coalition Meeting Minutes

Mar 2, 2022 | 5:30 – 6:45 PM | Zoom Meeting

MEMBERS PRESENT: Russel Melmed, Ann Marie Maffuid, Sam Van Zilen, Carol Wikarska

MEMBERS ABSENT: Dave Koji, Lauren Lorincz

OTHERS PRESENT: Charity Benedict, Chris Bennet, Valerie Geato, Kylie Fontaine, Craig Scheel, Denise Turner

1. CALL TO ORDER

Russell Melmed called this meeting to order at 5:31 pm.

2. ADDITIONS/DELETIONS TO AGENDA

None.

3. CITIZENS' COMMENTS

None.

4. REVIEW AND APPROVAL OF PREVIOUS MINUTES

Motion to approve Feb 3 2022 meeting minutes: Sam Van Zilen

Second by: Ann Marie Maffuid

No Discussion, Unanimous to approve

5. YOUTH SERVICES UPDATES

- a. Valerie stated that Youth Services submitted three applications to the ARPA Committee for consideration: Funding for a Part-Time Case Manager for Juvenile Review Board cases, Funding for Additional Counseling Services to be provided, and funding for a new Youth Center utilizing the land where the current Senior Center is located. The Youth Center project would exceed the \$1.5 million request but if awarded, could be used to leverage additional funding. The building itself is not a viable option for the same reasons it is no longer suitable as a Senior Center.
- b. Kylie provided an update on current youth programs being offered.

6.DFC UPDATES

6.a. SUB COMMITTEE UPDATES

Data Committee finalized the edits/revisions to the SERAC Youth and Community Surveys. The committee also reviewed the Survey Reports from the SEARCH Institute's Developmental Assets Survey which was administered last fall in grades 6-12. Next steps were identified for creating a summary report that can be used to share survey results with the community.

The School Committee completed work on Mental Health Awareness Week which took place at both WJJMS and Bacon Academy from Feb 7-11. The committee also planned for the SERAC Youth survey

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.

Colchester Youth & Social Services

127 Norwich Avenue, Suite 205, Colchester, Connecticut 06415

P: 860-537-7255 F: 860-537-1731 E: youthservices@colchesterct.gov



administration at WJJMS and Bacon Academy in March and April. Chris Bennett shared that all 7th Graders at WJJMS received a prevention program called Signs of Suicide (SOS). Youth Services staff will also be presenting to the WJJMS Staff Meeting with information on mindfulness techniques for the classroom as part of the project utilizing Local Prevention Council funding.

The Marketing Committee received various templates from Miranda Creative for Social Media posts, agendas and minutes, powerpoint and flyers. The committee continues to add to and refine the social media content schedule. A press release was sent to the River East for coalition member recruitment. The committee began its next campaign which is community member education on the Developmental Assets. A game plan was created for filming video shorts introducing and explaining the 40 different assets. Youth Action Council filmed the first asset video. Dave Koji will film the first video in the series with an overview of Developmental Assets and an introduction to the video project. This campaign will be the focus for the upcoming month as well as the social media content schedule.

The Education & Training committee has not begun meeting yet. Due to overlap in the focus of this committee and the School Initiatives Committee, it was decided to combine these two committees.

6.b. ACTION PLANS

Charity showed the group the Action Plans in draft form for each of the four Core Measures that we report to DFC on which are: Reduction in 30 Day Use Rates, Increase in Perception of Harm, Increase in Perception of Parental Disapproval and Increase in Perception of Peer Disapproval. Discussion occurred on the best way to utilize coalition members in providing feedback and recommendations for strategies and activities within each Action Plan. The group also discussed the original intention of the DFC planning committee was to identify programming or curriculum that could be purchased using DFC funds for implementation in the schools and the funding of training for teachers/staff to implement the program or curriculum. It was decided the School Initiatives & Education Sub Committee would focus on reviewing options for programming that would meet the schools needs and fulfil the goals of the DFC grant program.

6.c. SPF – SEVEN STRATEGIES

Charity shared that the strategies or activities in the DFC Action Plans are broken down by the Seven Strategies for Change identified in the Strategic Prevention Framework. The group discussed the need to brainstorm and identify activities that fit in all seven types under each of the four Core Measures. The Seven Strategies for Change are: Providing Information, Enhancing Skills, Providing Support for Prevention Activities, Enhancing Access/Reducing Barriers, Changing Consequences, Changing Physical Design, Modifying/Developing Policies.

7.DFC COMMITTEE MEMBERSHIP

This agenda item was tabled to the next meeting due a lack of time.

8.REVISIONS TO BY-LAWS

This agenda item was tabled to next meeting due to a lack of time.

9.NEXT STEPS

1. Charity will send out a meeting invite for the School Initiatives & Education Sub Committee.

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.

Colchester Youth & Social Services

127 Norwich Avenue, Suite 205, Colchester, Connecticut 06415
P: 860-537-7255 F:860-537-1731 E: youthservices@colchesterct.gov

**10. CITIZEN'S COMMENTS**

None.

11. ADJOURNMENT

Meeting adjourned at 6:47 PM

NEXT MEETING

April 6, 2022 at 5:30 pm, Zoom

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.