

Colchester Youth & Social Services

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Youth First Coalition Minutes

November 1, 2023 | 5:30 PM – 7:00 PM | In Person Youth Center, 40 Norwich Ave.

ATTENDEES : Craig Scheel, Val Geato, Marquis Lawson, Luren Ostrot, Sam VanZillen, Blair Windsor, Chris Bennet, Michael Mal, Michelle Millington, Carol Wikarska, and BA Students - Kiera Stewart, Chase Goulet, Tyler Pugh

1. CALL TO ORDER

5:33pm

2. CITIZEN'S COMMENTS

NONE

3. APPROVAL OF MINUTES – October 2023

Unanimously approved

4. OPIOID SETTLEMENT SUBCOMMITTEE

Val stated that the State is not pushing for this to be used for youth prevention. Mostly intended for abatement of the current crisis. Craig suggested that funds could be used for diversion programs and first responder wellness programs. Russ asked if we should seek community input in terms of proposals and use the advisory board to evaluate them. Students present felt that youth in Colchester have been sufficiently educated about opioids. Discussion around what structure should we put around seeking proposals – should we conduct a survey to solicit input? Craig Scheel presented a proposal from Sean Shoemaker to utilize opioid settlement funds for a K9 Wellness program. Questions about liability, ongoing costs, utilization, deployment, expectations. Unanimously approved motion to invite Sean to a future meeting to present more details.

5. RESOLUTION RUN

Motion by RMelmed-Second by SVanZillen to increase registration fees to \$35 pre-reg, and \$40 same-day reg. Unanimously approved. Decision to purchase Dry-wick performance t0shirts this year in medium and large. Still must decide who will do the screen printing. Mr. Mal suggested Barker Specialty to do the medals. No response received yet from the race timer. Volunteers needed – discussion around identifying people who need to fulfill service hours. Discussion around finding sponsors.

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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6. SCHOOL SURVEY

Val discussed the developmental asset survey from Search Institute. Discussion around whether improving Dev Asset scores should be the goal of the coalition. Marquis asked if we should use the combined A and B surveys to correlate assets with risk factors? Chris Bennet suggested that older kids probably can do a 30 minutes survey but younger kids may not be able to. Tabled until next meeting. Coalition asked to review the surveys. Must be sent to BOE for 1/9/2024.

7. YAC UPDATE

Marquis gave an update on a Social Media campaign to promote more visibility for CYSS and Coalition and content creation to increase conversation about youth substance abuse or wellness. Gift cards as incentives. Grand prize for all entries at the end. Scaffold/build interest over the course of the year.

8. NEW HIGH SCHOOL PROGRAM IDEA

See YAC update above

9. PROGRAM RECAP AND UPDATES

None

10. NEW MEMBER RECRUITMENT

Emily Luffberry has been recruited from UCFS to participate in the coalition.

11. LPC GRANT

None

12. Other

Marquis will send A&B survey out

Craig will send OSAC input form

Val and Marquis will determine what types and how much value is allowable under the grant to use as incentives for social media program.

13. NEXT STEPS

None

14. CITIZENS' COMMENTS

None

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15. ADJOURNMENT

Adjourned at 7:05PM

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