

**CITY OF NORWALK
YOUTH SERVICES
REGULAR MEETING
OCTOBER 19, 2010**

ATTENDANCE: Shirley Sarkin, Betty Karkut, Lt. Ashley Gonzalez, Michael Mocciae, Darlene Young, Cassia Fletcher; Jessica Fogg (4:05 p.m.); Candace Mayer (4:13 p.m.)

STAFF: Linda Wilock, Youth Services Director; Jason Getner, Juvenile Review Board; David Walenczyk, Youth Services Advocate

CALL TO ORDER

Ms. Sarkin called the meeting to order at 4:03 p.m.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES OF JUNE 8, 2010

**** MS. YOUNG MOVED THE MINUTES OF JUNE 8, 2010.**

**** MS. KARKUT SECONDED.**

**** THE MOTION TO APPROVE THE MINUTES AS SUBMITTED PASSED UNANIMOUSLY.**

DEPARTMENT UPDATES

Ms. Wilock informed the Board Members that Mr. Wien has officially resigned as chair due to relocation.

Ms. Fogg joined the meeting at 5:05 p.m.

Ms. Wilock also welcomed Ms. Cassia Fletcher, who has been officially appointed, to the Advisory Board.

The Youth Services Department currently has two part time positions open; a part time counselor position and a part time assistant to work with Mr. Getner Both positions have been posted online. All applications must be made online.

An extension has been approved for the Juvenile Review Board (JRB) grant to next September.

JRB UPDATE

Mr. Getner reported that a statistical compilation of data is being worked on. The youngest client, age 7, has just been submitted. A number of the cases are shoplifting cases from Bob's Store.

The discussion then moved back to the details of the youngest client. Lt. Gonzalez said that the school reached out him and he recommended that the case be sent to the JRB. Lt. Gonzalez said he is hoping that this case will be able to be resolved without sending it to court.

Ms. Mayer joined the meeting at 4:13 p.m.

Mr. Getner said that the JRB may become regional and that Westport has expressed interest in referring their cases to the Norwalk JRB. The details of this are still being discussed. Ms. Wilock pointed out that Statewide, the emphasis is on regional concepts. Westport does have a staff member in place, and Mr. Getner would be performing the intake interviews and supervising the Westport staff member. Mr. Getner said that he currently has between 40-50 active cases.

Ms. Karkut asked if having the School Resource Officer located at Briggs was an asset. Lt. Gonzalez said that it was working out well. Officer Murray is at NHS and Officer Scanlon is at BMHS.

Ms. Sarkin asked if the Board members have seen the publicity in The Hour about the JRB. She said that there had been a number of articles that have neglected to mention the Youth Services Department by name, and only refer to Youth Services in general. She added that she had called the paper and requested a correction and that The Hour has included a correction in another edition.

AGGRESSION REPLACEMENT TRAINING GRANT

Ms. Wilock said that this was the new grant, which had been announced in the paper. Ms. Pytleski in the Mayor's Office had discovered this Federal Grant from the Department of Justice. The grant is focused on offering on a science based program to deal with anger. Ms. Wilock then distributed a document that outlines the program. This grant is for 18 months and which addresses the underlying anger in today's youth.

Mr. Walenczyk then gave an overview of the aggression study findings. Youth who are aggressive often lack positive social choices and have mistaken beliefs. Mr. Walenczyk was trained in and worked with this program at another facility.

There are three facets to the program: Structures Learning Techniques (SLT); Anger Control Training (ACT) and Moral Reasoning (MR). The groups run ten weeks and are segregated by age and sex. The items addressed in the course include: dealing with peer pressure, making pro-social complaints, and controlling impulsiveness in one hour sessions three times a week. Research has revealed that the students that are aggressive

tend to have a lower level of moral reasoning. The students have homework for each session and there is a “hassle log” where the students note down when they feel hassled.

Ms. Karkut asked about the logistics on this, such as when the services would be provided and where. Mr. Walenczyk replied that the students would have to choose to participate. Since the teaching is cumulative, students who do not regularly attend do not fare well. The discussion then moved to how the students would be transported to the location. Ms. Karkut asked when the program might be starting up. Ms. Wilock said that she was looking at a start up in the new year.

Ms. Young asked how many students would be affected by this grant. Mr. Walenczyk said that the assumption was that there would be four groups of 8-10 students running for a ten week period. In a calendar year, 120 students could conceivably take the course. However, there is some set up and training time to be factored in, also.

Ms. Wilock said that the goal was to strengthen the relationship between the JRB and the Police Department. She then reviewed the details of the JRB grant and the ART grant timelines and how these programs would be handled monetarily.

Ms. Karkut asked if there were numerous arrests at school. Lt. Gonzalez said that there had been a fair amount, but some schools were reluctant to deal with a student because they didn’t want them to be arrested. However, that left the student without any resources. Now, by referring the student to the JRB and the student has some support. Mr. Walenczyk said that BMHS has a program called “Better Choices” and now the principal has asked for him to come to one In School Suspension session a week to talk to the students. He added that there were a number of parents who were looking for a structured program for their child. Mr. Walenczyk pointed out that if the program works out well, there may be a possibility of a sliding scale charge if the grant funding ends. Lt. Gonzalez pointed out that this program would be less expensive than going to court one time with an attorney, which could cost around \$1,000.

OTHER

Ms. Young said that the Mentor program was getting closer to having the Administration supporting a Mentor Challenge for the City employees. She then explained that there were some contacts with a few churches and another corporation. Currently, there are about 10 matches. Ms. Sarkin asked if there was a waiting list. Ms. Karkut said that the school based program always has a waiting list. Currently there are about 250 mentor matches.

Ms. Wilock said that Maura Brennan announced that there may be a chance to have a probation officer in Norwalk, which will make this easier on the families involved, but the students will still have to go to Bridgeport when they need to see a judge.

NEXT MEETING

The discussion then moved to when the next meeting would be. It was decided that the next meeting will be scheduled on November 30th at 4:00 p.m.

ADJOURNMENT

**** MS. KARKUT MOVED TO ADJOURN.**

**** MR. MOCCIAE SECONDED.**

**** THE MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY.**

The meeting adjourned at 4:58 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Sharon L. Soltes
Telesco Secretarial Services