

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

ATTENDANCE: Peter Wien, Chair; Shirley Sarkin, Co-Chair, Candice Mayor, NHA; Jessica Fogg, Spinnaker; Sgt. Ashley Gonzalez, NPD Youth Bureau, Darlene Young, Mentoring Coordinator

STAFF: Linda Wilock, Youth Service; Jason Getner, Youth Services JRB Case Manager

OTHER: Cassia Fletcher, Brien McMahon Student

CALL TO ORDER

Mr. Wien called the meeting to order at 4:00 p.m. He said that he appreciated everyone's help during his job transitions. Ms. Fletcher said that she was working on the city's youth website.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES OF DECEMBER 1, 2009

**** MS. SARKIN MOVED THE MINUTES.**

**** MS. MAYER SECONDED.**

**** THE MOTION TO APPROVE THE MINUTES OF DECEMBER 1, 2009 AS SUBMITTED.**

The Advisory Board members then introduced themselves.

BUDGET ISSUES.

Ms. Wilock said that last time she had just submitted and now the in house review with the Finance Department, and a general department meeting with the Mayor have taken place. She said that the Mayor had directed the various departments to submit flat budgets and this was basically being done by all the departments.

REPORT ON MEETING WITH THE MAYOR

Sgt. Gonzalez reported that he and Ms. Fogg had met with the Mayor about Ms. Wilock's position after the 1st. He reported that there was no clear answer on the issue and the budget is a challenge for everyone. Ms. Fogg said that Youth Services being moved to the Health Department would not happen. However there will be changes, but what they are is not clear at this point in time. Discussion followed.

Mr. Wien suggested that Ms. Wilock send the Mayor regular reports on what the Youth Services Department is doing.

UPDATE ON PEER OUTREACH

Mr. Getner gave a brief overview. He said that in the last round of budget cuts, one of the Youth Service positions had been cut. Due to this, the staff member who had been one of the coordinators for the Peer Outreach group was no longer available. Ms. Young had stepped in to help coordinate the Peer Outreach group that meets regularly on Mondays. Ms. Young said that there were 21 students that come regularly and there is a waiting list of students waiting to get in. Ms. Young said that the waiting list speaks to the need of the youth for this program. Mr. Getner said that a few students had tried to sneak into the program but they had regretfully had to turn them away. Ms. Wilock explained that this program had originally been orientated to high school, but over the years, the attendance has dwindled. This past September was the first time that the program was opened to all five of the Norwalk middle schools. Now there are enough kids on the waiting list to have a second night if facilitators were available. Mr. Wien asked how much it costs. Ms. Wilock said that it costs about \$100 per session. Discussion followed about the level of enthusiasm and the parental interest in the program.

JUVENILE REVIEW BOARD ISSUES

Westport Interest – Sgt. Gonzalez said that there was great success with the JRB and recently the Westport Police Department called about the program. They are still in the discussion stages, but are very interested in having their own Board or possibly joining with Norwalk for a regional approach.

Mr. Getner said that the male/female split was very close to 50/50 and that there was no major cluster in terms of age. The crimes have a broad spectrum for misdemeanor offences. When asked about the follow-up, Mr. Getner said that he had followed a case for more than a year because the need is clear. He said that there were a few cases that had to be referred back to the court. Once there is a re-arrest, it goes directly back to court. In school suspensions or other trouble can be addressed. Mr. Getner said that out of 42 cases, the number that ends up being referred back to court is very small.

Ms. Young asked what the impact of the Juvenile Court moving to Stamford would be. Mr. Getner said that the JRB would not be impacted very much, but the families that do have to go to court will be seriously impacted.

Ms. Wilock said that the families are very appreciative of Mr. Getner's work. He gave an example of an incident that might involve three students, but each one would need

specific counseling to deal with the various issues going on in their lives. Therefore, the interventions may be different for each client.

Ms. Wilock then distributed copies of a report that was sent to the Department of Justice as follow-up on the grant program.

Website - Ms. Fletcher said that the In-Zone had been featured in BMHS newsletter. She said that there had been a lot of interest by the students as to how they could be involved. Currently there is a Facebook page that has over 200 members. She said that she had interviewed both the Mayor and the Interim Superintendent of Schools about the closing of Wright Tech. Ms. Fletcher said that she said that the In-Zone was starting to take off.

Ms. Young said that Ms. Fletcher was doing this by herself. The young man that was working on this is now at NCC. Ms. Fletcher has continued to move this forward and spent time in contact with Mr. Getner.

OTHER

Ms. Young announced that she had recently taken on the position as the mentoring coordinator for a three year grant. She will continue to do the Summer Youth Employment Program. The mentoring program will have 60 pairs of mentors/mentees and it is partnered with the YMCA, the FCA and other organizations. It is National Mentor Month.

Ms. Wilock said that the Board had been meeting on the first Tuesday of the month, but the holidays had thrown the schedule off. The next meeting will be on March 2nd.

ADJOURNMENT

Mr. Wien adjourned the meeting at 5:00 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Sharon L. Soltes
Telesco Secretarial Services