

Minutes for 6/16/2015
Norwalk Youth Services Advisory Board Meeting
4:10pm-4:55pm Room 231 City Hall

Present:

Jasen Getner – Juvenile Review Board Coordinator
David Walenczyk - Director Youth Services
Ed Green – State of CT Juvenile Probation
Elizabeth Murdoch – Family & Children’s Agency (FCA)
Lt. Ashley Gonzalez – Police Dept.
Joseph Russo – Board of Education
Theresa Argondezzi – Health Dept.

Absent:

Mike Moccaie – Parks & Recreation Dept.
Sharon Preston – Dept. of Children & Families (DCF)
Darlene Young – Mayor’s Office (Summer Youth Employment Program)

The meeting began promptly at 4:10pm. David Walenczyk acted as chair for the meeting.

A copy of the minutes previously submitted to the Board electronically was presented for acceptance. Ashley Gonzalez made a motion to accept the minutes, seconded by Jasen Getner, unanimously approved.

David Walenczyk shared about the last ART groups being run over the summer until additional funding can be identified as the State of CT OPM grant (Right Response) supporting this activity will be ending in September.

Jasen Getner reported a great deal of female social media related incidents were being experienced of late (bullying). He also reported approximately 6-7 youth were slated to attend the Wilderness School this summer as the Dept. has previously sent youth there via DCF scholarship grants. Thus far, this fiscal year, 54 JRB cases were turned back to Court due to lack of capacity and 156 JRB cases were accepted by the Dept. The JRB also has two (2) Juvenile Justice Interns working this summer and the Police Dept. has been very helpful in providing Juvenile Justice Intern candidates as needed.

David Walenczyk reported there are not wait list for counseling services at this time but the Dept. has experienced a waitlist earlier in the year and case loads are near full. Starting July 1st he reported the weekly hours for part-time paid counseling staff will be expanded to 19 hours per week from the current 16 hours per week due to additional approved budget.

Mr. Walenczyk reported a primary budget objective for next fiscal year is to expand the part-time Assistant Juvenile Justice Coordinator position from part-time to full-time.

Ed Green reported all FWSN referrals to the Court or Probation are automatically being sent to the Family Support Centers, but they are well beyond capacity (except Norwalk) and this is an issue that will eventually need to be addressed by CSSD. He also shared about a program at Bullard Havens in Bridgeport that will teach youth & young adults (ages 16-21) a trade who are over age but under credit. This program takes place in the afternoons from 3-6pm. And he also shared about "Park City Pride" which is modeled after Project Longevity and aims to identify the most at-risk young adults in the community. A request was made to Ed Green to see if Norwalk CSSD stats could be segregated as aggregated from the larger LIST catchment statistics. Ed reported he would pass request along.

Elizabeth Murdoch reported no new updates but inquired to Theresa Argondezzi (Health Dept.) about opportunity for a nutritionist to work with clients in the community. Ms. Argondezzi responded that health nutrition educators are available for this service

Theresa Argondezzi shared about the Data Haven community surveys being administered in the Community and recommended that as many community members participate as possible. Fairfield County Community Foundation and Norwalk Hospital are partnering on the needs assessment survey. She also shared about a summer meals program for youth 18 and under available at the Norwalk Schools. This program will provide breakfast and lunch to youth who typically qualify for free lunch during the school year. She also shared that the Briggs H.S. voice youth engagement program will be picked up by the Human Services Council via the School Based Health Centers.

Joe Russo reported a search was being conducted for a new Special Education Director and Supervisor. He shared 11% of the school population draws on some Special Ed. Services via the B.O.E.

Ashley Gonzalez reported on a Juvenile Justice conference that the N.P.D. participated in and took two (2) youth along to participate as well. He also confirmed the increase in social media bullying cases and a large number of mental health referrals as well by the Dept. He also shared about two (2) summer D.A.R.E. camps and the activity based field trips they include.

Ed Green made a motion to adjourn the meeting, seconded by Joe Russo; unanimously approved. The next meeting is proposed for October, 2015 4:00pm. Room TBD City Hall.

The meeting was adjourned at 4:55pm.

Respectfully submitted,

David Walenczyk – Director Youth Services / Staff to Youth Services Advisory Board.