

**WEST HARTFORD PREVENTION COUNCIL
REGULAR MEETING
THURSDAY, FEBRUARY 10, 2022 AT 5:00 p.m.
REMOTE**

MINUTES

1. Roll Call

a. Voting:

- **Present:** Carl Shields, Heather Alix, Howard Dashefsky, Bob Macca, Kadzo Kangwana, Patty Graham Chris Dutton
- **Absent:** Nordia Napier

b. Ex-Officio:

- **Present:** Megan Westcott, Tor Fiske, Melissa Hickey, Clare Nesperalla, Nichola Sanford, Joseph Hopkins, Natalie Gavalis, Derek Williams, Chris Dutton, Samantha Innis
- **Absent:** Helen Rubino-Turco, Derek Williams

c. Guests: Samantha Innis

d. Staff Liaison: Kelly Waterhouse

2. Approval of Minutes

- a. Minutes of meeting January 10, 2022
- b. Carl Shields made a point of clarification. The accomplishments of 2021 were sent out to the town council without a vote. A motion was made to remove them from last month's minutes. Patricia Graham seconded.

3. Old Business

- a. Vote on accomplishments. Carl made a motion to pass on the Accomplishments of the WHPC for 2021 to the Town Council. There were no objections.

4. New Business

- There is currently a lower infection rate in town and the state. There are changes in the mask mandate
- Megan suggested future meetings be in person since metrics are improving. The committee agreed. We will meet in person next month.

5. Standing Reports.

a. Social Services

- Kelly reported that referrals are on the rise for issues related to mental health, substance abuse, and financial hardship.

- Community Court is now open. Support group for hoarding sixteen-week sessions are peer-lead. Energy assistance calls are being responded to.
- Samantha Innis is working with the police department in her capacity as a social worker and responding to calls around mental health issues and other matters.
- Joe Hopkins added that there is peer support available for members of the police department who are dealing with daily challenges.

b. Public Health

- Megan Westcott reported that the Department is conducting a community-wide health assessment. Asking members of the community to prioritize their concerns. Data will be used to apply for grants. The survey is in print and digital form and is for over those over eighteen years of age.
- Covid rates are decreasing and positivity rate in the town is under five percent.

c. Police

- Nick Sanford stated there is an uptick in fentanyl use in schools in the area.
- Narcan kits are in Athletic Director's offices. There will be training for those who haven't had it yet.

d. WHPS

- Tor Fiske reported out. At Conard and other schools there continues to be an increase in emotional and mental health issues. There is a continued need to educate families about the resources in the schools and the community.
- Chris Herren training will be happening in April. Conard has an ongoing Chris Herren club. The school district is hoping to add training for parents.

e. YSB (The Bridge)

- Chris Dutton reported out. Counseling and mentoring continuing in the schools. Seeing lots of cases related to grief, loss, and Covid-related concerns.
- At The Bridge mental health clinics are running. The Leadership Committee is planning community service projects.
- Kelly provided QPR and Narcan training. The goal is to have all Bridge employees trained.
- The Bridge is sponsoring a diaper bank. They are taking donations and referrals. The Drive runs from February 14 through May 14. Donations may be brought to the Bridge office, 1022 Farmington Ave., or dropped off at the Family Resource Center at Charter Oak Academy.

e. Prevention Partnership Coalition

- Kelly reported out. She attended the Children's Behavioral Health Forum. The state is expanding the number of pediatric beds available. There is a new app. My DSS to explain benefits to community members. The new legislative session will focus on children's mental health.
- Application for SOR mini-grant focusing on prevention and response to opioids.
- April 30 National Drug Take Back Day at Charter Oak Academy from 10-2. The community leisure fair will have extended hours.
- Kelly has been trained to be a Narcan trainer. Looking to offer training to the community perhaps on April 30.
- Kelly reported that the next meeting of the West Hartford Prevention Partnership is Thursday, February 17 at 5:00. It will be virtual on WebEx.
- National Mental Health Awareness month in May.

6. Public Comment

No call-ins

7. Adjournment - Carl Shields moved to adjourn with no objectives. Motion passed.

Next meeting: Thursday, March 10, 2022, 5PM-6PM, In person

Any individual with a disability who needs special assistance to access the meeting should contact Suzanne Olander, Department of Social Services, 860 561-7580, at least three days prior to the meeting.