

Tuesday, February 15, 2022
Mayor's Youth Council Virtual Meeting 6:00 PM in WebEx



**Members of the public may view the meeting on West Hartford Community
Interactive YouTube Channel**

<https://www.youtube.com/c/whctv5>

1. Meeting Opening

Staff liaison Kari Karp called the Mayor's Youth Council to order at 6:03 p.m. Present, via Town of West Hartford WebEx, were Council members Reese Berigan, Grace Furia, Jack Gold, Tziyona Goldfischer, Sarah Granquist, Kikoh Mordukai, Maya Palanki, Kris Rimal, Zaara Shahzad, and Priya Sinha. Guests: Carol Waxman, West Hartford Libraries Head of Children's Services

2. Approval of Minutes

A. No corrections were made and the January 18 minutes stand approved.

3. School Reports

A. Conard

i. Maya shared that a Black History Month panel will be speaking tomorrow (2/16) and that Conard recently got a new principal.

B. Hall

i. Zaara shared that Hall is also having a Black History Month panel tomorrow. On Valentine's Day, people in select music groups went around and sang to people in their classes. This is a major event at Hall that did not occur last year. Ten Minute Plays, which are student directed, also occurred last Friday (2/11). The Board of Ed voted to change the mascots of both Hall and Conard within the last week, and surveys have been distributed to students via email. The new mascot for each school will be voted on by June.

C. Kingswood Oxford

- i. Jack shared that Kingswood Oxford had its Symposium Author Visit. Tracy K. Smith, a poet from California, was the visiting author this year. Also, Kingswood Oxford's squash team recently won New Englands.

D. New England Jewish Academy

- i. Tziyona shared that the New England Jewish Academy will be having a break in a week. Also, the girls basketball team won a game yesterday (2/14).

4. Subcommittee Reports

A. Mental Health Action and Awareness Committee

- i. Shared that a Mental Health survey draft has been completed, along with the draft of an email to be sent to mental health professionals to ask if they would participate in a panel presentation. The survey and email drafts were presented to the council.
- ii. Shared that the survey draft may be presented to an AP Research teacher in the next few weeks to ensure that it is safe to share with students. The committee will also work on having the survey approved by administration at each high school. Sending out the survey during March would be ideal.
- iii. Shared possible speakers to reach out to. These include people from the Bridge Family Center, University of Connecticut, Trinity College, and other known professionals.
- iv. Shared that advertising could occur through posters around town and the help of the social media subcommittee. The presentation itself can be telecast in a program through WHCi TV.

B. Teen Social Events Committee

C. International Night/Diversity Night Committee

- i. Shared that a concert would take place in Blue Back Square on Saturday, April 23 at around 1 or 2 pm.
- ii. Shared that groups from Conard, Hall, and Kingswood Oxford would perform. Members of MYC in music groups were asked to reach out to their directors and inquire about participating in the performance. If possible, responses by March 1st would be preferred. Each group would select 2-3 songs written by BIPOC artists or music that represents different cultures and languages spoken in the West Hartford community.

A bio about the song and its meaning would be prepared to educate the audience.

iii. Compensation for expenses such as purchasing sheet music can be provided if necessary. Members shared that groups would be able to provide their own accompaniment, speaker systems, and other equipment.

D. Social Media Committee

i. Shared an idea for a post to share the MYC mission with the community. The post would include a slide representing each member of the council with information about each person's passions and goals. Each MYC member should send a bio to the social media committee to be used to create these Instagram posts.

ii. Shared that a post has been made for the logo contest. The committee is considering posters or a feature in the school announcements to further advertise the contest.

iii. Shared that the committee is looking into having other town Instagram accounts repost the MYC page and advertise the logo contest.

5. New Business

A. Proposed changes to subcommittees/work meetings

i. Tziyona contacted Mrs. Karp inquiring about making changes to the MYC subcommittee meetings structure. Tziyona shared the idea of electing 1 or 2 leaders for each subcommittee. The leaders would schedule, keep details of, and run subcommittee meetings. The goal would be to create smoother running meetings. Leaders could be elected within subcommittees or through the whole group.

ii. Mrs. Karp shared the idea of holding subcommittee meetings for 30 minutes directly after monthly MYC meetings. Mrs. Karp and Ms. Waxman would be there to work with subcommittees through breakout rooms or speaking in person.

iii. Motion to vote determining whether members would like to shorten the Mayor's Youth Council Meetings to 45 minutes and add a 30 minute work session to the end was made by Grace, Sarah seconded.

Vote: For: 10, Against: 0

iv. The motion passes and will go into effect for the March meeting.

B. Email waivers, town emails, social media guidelines

i. Any outstanding email waivers are needed from members so each person can be added to the MYC email distribution list.

- ii. Each member will be receiving their own town email with their first name.last name@westhartfordct.gov that they will be able to use until June 30. The emails are only to be used for MYC related communication.
- iii. Content that is derogatory, sexual, political, offensive, unlawful, or reflect negatively on the town may not be posted on the MYC social media accounts. These terms are explained on the email waiver form shared with members.

C. MYC publicity for 2022-2023

- i. Mrs. Karp shared possible changes to the MYC for next year. These ideas include 2 meetings a month, increasing the number of members in the MYC, shifting the focus from impact projects to community collaboration, and increasing the term limit to 2 years. These proposed changes will be discussed further at the March 22 meeting.

6. Announcements

A. Witness Stones Project Update 2/8

- i. Tziyona shared that the current focus is changing a street name in West Hartford to honor an enslaved person who lived in the area. The goal is to rename a street in West Hartford to “Dinah Road”. To do so, 100+ signatures are needed from people over 18 who live in West Hartford.
- ii. To acquire these signatures, MYC members will canvas the Blue Back Square area. The West Hartford Libraries may also display an informational poster. An education video explaining the Witness Stones Project and a newspaper article will also be created to spread awareness.
- iii. Currently, members are working on writing the script for the video.

B. In-person MYC meetings

- i. With COVID numbers declining locally, MYC has received permission from the West Hartford-Bloomfield Health District to hold in-person meetings again.
- ii. Meetings will take place in person in Town Hall Room 400 starting in March.

7. Adjournment

A. Adjourn

- i. Motion to adjourn was made by Grace, Jack seconded.
- ii. The vote to adjourn the meeting was anonymous.
- iii. The meeting was adjourned at 6:50 pm.

Next Meeting: Tuesday, March 22, 2022 6-7pm Town Hall Room 400