

West Hartford Prevention Council
Regular Meeting
Thursday, February 9, 2023, at 5:00 p.m.
West Hartford Town Hall, Room 217

MINUTES

1. Roll Call-Nordia Napier, Christopher Dutton, Carl Shields, Howard Dashefsky, Gretchen Levitz-Kimball, Bob Macca all present
2. Approval of Minutes-minor corrections were made to last months minutes. With these minor corrections, minutes were approved.
 - a. Minutes of meeting December 8, 2022,
3. Old Business
 - a. Finalized Accomplishments and Recommendations report to Town Council-Helen Rubino-Turco had added a few minor, very helpful suggestions to document, which was then circulated and submitted. Document goes to Human Services Subcommittee on the 12th, then to Town Council on the 13th.
 - b. Results of December 9 Opioid Settlements Funds/Prevention Planning Meeting-discussion held that the Wellness/Needs Assessment would be essential for planning purposes for the community. Since receiving opioid settlement funds, and enormous work done on creating Prevention Coordinator job description and discussions with DMHAS OOC and Social Services, not much has changed, so we will wait until Coordinator is hired, then proceed from there. This will include looking at becoming Recovery Friendly Community.
4. New Business
 - a. New council member-Introduction of Gretchen Levitz-Kimball. Appointment by Town Council. Swearing in process. We had one new member who withdrew. Welcome to Gretchen, who introduced self again, has extensive Prevention experience. There was a mix up regarding Heather Alix, who was reappointed, did not volunteer for second term, is not here tonight to clarify. Carl will follow up and clarify. There is another school counselor who is on line for being approved next Tuesday by Town Council, may be here next month. Her name is Jessica Evans. Also, a student representative from Conard, Megan Jo. Each of these people have been put in touch with Tiana Pelletier at Town Hall .
5. Standing Reports

- a. Social Services-Internal movement on Prevention Coordinator position, still in process. There has been a 17% increase in number of referrals around energy assistance and rent. There are some American Rescue Funds available, other funds if COVID related in nothing able to pay for housing. Also can get up to 3 months paid for from another fund. Karen Duquette has taken Assistant Director, taking Astrid's former position. Social Services is seeking to refill a social worker position. Truancy, JRB, training is a very difficult issue, difficult and complex, referral to DCF, ICAPS, trying to figure out next steps often problematic and complex. Students refuse but extend services to parents. Reasons are layered for not coming to school or leaving the house.
- b. Public Health-Ongoing, multiple, QPR trainings, now more so at the request of various organizations themselves. Schools are contacting for trainings. Susan Walsh will be contact person for Health District. She is 1 of 2 full time nurses-immunizations, lead clinics, educating regarding TB, refugees and immigrant work. She work with people in accessing health, community health organizers. May 10-Senior Day for Seniors at the Senior Center, wellness related, mental health included
- c. Police-Hall High presentations done for sophomores. Alcohol and DUI, also to 10th grade, distracted driving. Slight uptick in marijuana cases, High school getting kids to stay in class, had kids leaving campus to get food, beverages, etc. Marijuana offenses, JRB, depends on situation.
- d. WHPS Tor-Wheeler Clinic or the Bridge. Staff meets with parents, kid, clearly outlines process, options, meetings. Marijuana based 1st warning process at Hall. Carl identified great DMHAS training possibilities for schools. Discussion around training for substance use concerns, areas for education and training for staff, CADDC for internal expertise for school social workers. Identify which school staff could be trained. Fifteen percent of opioid settlement fund went to towns in Ct, the other 85% to DMHAS for grants and such. There is opportunity for grants, perhaps for training school staff for prevention in the entire system, Questions around the P.E. health curriculum and substance use. Contact Lisa Daley for this. Issues arose around DCF referral, poor communication, need for continued follow up.
- e. YSB(The Bridge)-There are more referrals than can be managed. Looking for staff. LGBT support group for parents of kids who have identified, There is a grant for additional mentoring support, and substance use support group. The skating event was great, a coalition of other groups, close to 300 people there. Lots of middle school kids there, highlighting their needs. Conversations at Bridge how to support addressing truancy.
- f. Prevention Partnership Coalition-Skating rink great partner to work with. Kids loved the skating and the socializing. Consider making it monthly. There were a lot of parents there too, great to do outreach with them, more opportunities to capitalize on this. State opioid mini grant should be available Look to do other training.

6. Public Comment-None

7. Adjournment-5:00

Next meeting Thursday, March 9, 2023

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