

## North Reading Youth Services Committee Meeting

**Date/Time:** Monday, February 27, 2023 / 6:00 pm

**Location:** Town Hall

Committee Members Present	Committee Members Absent	Guests/Visitors Present
Peter Majane, Chair		Lil Hartman, Director of Public Services
Jason Slattery, Vice-Chair		Christina Gandolfo, Director of NRYS
Beatriz Vautin, Secretary		Nicholas Mirocca
Frank Ferraro		Alexis Arsenis, potential new member
Jodi Sponzo		
Amy DiChiara		

- 1) **Call to Order.** Chair Peter Majane called the meeting to order at 6:00 p.m.
- 2) **Review of Minutes.** January 30, 2023 minutes were reviewed and accepted.
- 3) **Guest Speaker.** Det. Lucci has been the School Resource Officer (SRO) for 6 years now and has been the longest running one; usually the position changed every year or so. The students seem to respond and like seeing him in uniform around the schools, some towns have comfort dogs the SRO uses but North Reading doesn't. Amy and Det. Lucci went to England in May 2019 sponsored by the Rotary Club in Wakefield; there they went to Kent for 2 weeks to learn how the British police operate, for instance the British officers don't carry guns. Mental health and community resources with locations for youth to go to is a key aspect for the British. He went on a call to a local park where someone was sitting on a bench with an exacto knife and the two British officers sat down and started talking to the person while one took the knife away, which would never happen in the US. Frank mentioned that during the Teen mental health and substance use form on Feb 7 Youth Services was not included on the slides as a resource for parents and teens to reach out to.

Bullying and cyberbullying is a big issue for youth these days. A typical scenario is something being said in a group chat about someone and it being shown to someone else or the person being spoken about, and it being elevated to the point of Det. Lucci being involved and talking to the parents and students. A lot of time spent on bullying, sexting, and free pornography that is available. Det. Lucci is starting to see cases starting as young as 4<sup>th</sup> grade. There will be a session on social media at the Parent University on March 25, presented by Det. Lucci.

Top issues affecting North Reading Youth currently: internet/ social media; vaping; underage drinking (police not usually called to these incidents but get told stories by parents after the fact about parties, etc.) a lot of it is passed down attitudes from parents – kids watching parents drinking with their friends and think it's what they are supposed to do. A question was asked about whether there was still an issue with drugs among the youth; not largest thing on radar but are instances of youth trading prescription medications with each other, pressed fentanyl is big issue on the east coast in general and even things like marijuana are being laced with fentanyl. They haven't done a locker drug sniffing search in awhile (possibly 8 years); dogs aren't trained on sniffing marijuana anymore since it's legal for those over 21 and decriminalized for those over 18. Police blogs in the newspaper aren't allowed to contain medical information so you will never see any overdoses included in it. Covid killed the medflight car crash reenactment scenarios that used to be done before prom every year; Det. Lucci will look into whether this can start to be brought back again.

- a) FY24 budget request. Budget request that was submitted to Town administrator was handed out during the meeting. On March 13 or 27 the YSC budget will be presented to the Select Board and Finance Committees.
- b) Teen Mental Health and Substance Abuse Forum. Frank raised the issue that at the February 7 Mental Health and Substance Abuse forum sponsored by the Community Impact Team and Youth Services was left off of the slides about resources presented for parents and youth. He is hoping something can be done to update the slides and ensure that this doesn't happen again. How can we claim that we have close relationships with schools and CIT if things like this happen and we aren't included. Frank would like an answer as to how and why this could happen? He didn't want to bring it up in the meeting that day so that there wasn't a negative spin at the meeting for the meeting attendees.

## 5) New Business.

- a) CORI form. Maybe annually at least occasionally CORI forms are recommended for Board members especially those that might volunteer and work with you. Everyone needs a CORI specific to the Youth Services Committee regardless of any other CORI's they have on record. Members were encouraged to complete the forms at tonight's meeting.
- b) Youth Services Annual Report. A draft of the report due March 20<sup>th</sup> will be sent to the committee to review. We can't discuss things over email as a committee or it will be in violation of open meeting laws. Frank and Peter agreed to be on a sub-committee to discuss this and work on it with Lillian and Christina. Last years report is available and it was suggested Lillian could start there.
- c) Article for the Transcript. Who is able to write an article to the Transcript about the Youth Services Committee? The article should talk about the history of the committee and what we have accomplished recently. Beatriz will take the lead on this and create a google document for everyone to give input on the article. Beatriz asked if there was a charter or mission statement for the Youth Services Committee to include; it was suggested to look at the Youth Services website and last years annual report for content.
- d) Consideration of Alexis Aresnis as new YSC member. Alexis grew up in North Reading and was a part of Youth Services when it first started under Jenny O'Leary. She has two children under the age of 2, and is opening a new business opening in NR, called Bloom. She is interested in starting to get involved in the town and thought this would be a good fit given her past background and recommendations from people she knows in town. The committee voted to accept Alexis as a new YSC member. Peter will move her application forward.

6) **Time for questions, clarification, and brainstorming.** The meeting was running late so we did not cover this topic.

7) **Set date for next meeting.** Chair Majane adjourned the meeting.

**Next meeting:** March 27, 2023

**Meeting adjourned at 7:05 p.m.**

Documents/Handouts

January 2023 Minutes

Youth Services FY2024 proposed budget  
Update from Public Services Director

March 27, 2023

