

# North Reading Youth Services Committee Meeting

**Date/Time:** Monday, May 30, 2023 / 6:00 pm

**Location:** Flint Memorial Library

| Committee Members Present  | Committee Members Absent | Guests/Visitors Present                                       |
|----------------------------|--------------------------|---|
| Peter Majane, Chair        |                          | Lillian Hartman, Director of Public Services, part of meeting |
| Jason Slattery, Vice-Chair |                          | Christine Gandolfo, public resident                           |
| Beatriz Vautin, Secretary  |                          |   |
| Frank Ferraro              |                          |   |
| Jodi Sponzo                |                          |   |
| Amy DiChiara               |                          |   |
| Alexis Arsenis             |                          |   |

**1. Call to Order.** Chair Peter Majane called the meeting to order at 6:00 p.m.

**2. Review of Minutes.** May 15, 2023 minutes were reviewed and accepted.

**3. Old Business.**

a. None.

**4. New Business.**

- a. History of YSC: YSC was formed after a meeting the police department held in 2003 regarding youth issues in town. A group of concerned citizens raised \$100,000 to fund a Youth Services Director position and start a Youth Services Department. Frank came on board in 2004 after the initial group got things going. There have been 5 YS Directors since then. First director, left to take a job in Newton for more money and to be a bigger department than 1 person. The lack of help and barrier of being a one-person department has been an ongoing issue over the years. The second director epitomized what Frank believes we need in a director today; she was a social worker who had kids always calling her for help and she would help direct them to the resources she was aware of that they needed. Under the third director the program shifted from a high school to middle school program primarily. Fourth director had to work very hard during COVID to keep programs going for youth. The salary level played a part in that director leaving. The fifth and last director was only in the position for a few months. Key aspects from past directors which would be ideal to have include: Social worker background who has access to resources, a way of getting in touch with kids (working relationship with principals, police department), working with the Community Impact Team.
- b. Committee recommendations for job postings and program overlap: There is too much silo work among the various departments in the town trying to provide services. Youth mental health has been and is still a key component of the reason for the existence of Youth Services. A question of whether Youth Services is redundant and needed in town was a topic of discussion during the meeting. Committee members felt that there was a need for the Department and Committee to continue and to provide services for youth in town with mental health being at the forefront. Several members felt the position does require a social worker but that no social worker would take the position for \$70,000 and as a department of one with no support to reduce burn out. If overlap between departments occurs, it would be to the benefit of youths.

b. Two people from various committees and departments including: elder services, library, YS, Parks and Recreation, council on aging, CIT, and Veterans committees should meet monthly as a collaborative social service committee. This committee would be to discuss ongoing projects and work from each committee and brought back to the individual respective committee.

c. Job description tasks: See the new job description for specific notes.

5. **Set date for next meeting.** June 26 is the next meeting and we will invite Amy Lukewicz to attend to talk about programming and opportunities for collaboration with CIT as well as an update on the mentoring program she has been running in the absence of a Youth Services Director.

Chair Majane adjourned the meeting.

**Next meeting:** June 26, 2023

**Meeting adjourned at 7:30 p.m.**

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**Documents/Handouts**

May 15, 2023 Minutes

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June 26, 2023

Minutes Approved on Date

  
Peter Majane, Chair