

North Reading Youth Services Committee Meeting

Date/Time: Monday, April 27, 2020 - 6pm

Location: Zoom – Teleconference

Committee Members Present		Committee Members Absent	Guests/Visitors Present
Peter Majane, Chair	Amy DiChiara	Patty Harrington	Jennifer Ford, Y.S. Director
Danielle Masterson, Vice-Chair	Deborah Mahoney	Samantha Miller	
Karen Buscemi, Secretary	Jason Slattery	Christy Damphousse	
Frank Ferraro	Leslie Shultz		

Chair Peter Majane called the meeting to order at 6:04pm.

1. **Review of Previous Minutes:** January 27, 2020 minutes were reviewed and accepted unanimously.
2. **Financial Report:** YS Director Jennifer Ford stated there were no changes to the finances and outlined there would be future purchases to exhaust the FY2020 budget before end of fiscal year.
3. **Social Services Report:** YS Director Jennifer Ford outlined there were a lot of mental health and self-care conversations. Parents had concerns about increased screen time due to remote learning from the stay-at-home guidelines and the possible major long-term side effects of increased usage of electronics. Jen had several conversations pertaining to the importance of youth staying connected with peers and limiting their access could be alienating.
4. **Participation Report:**
 - a. YS Director Jennifer Ford reported virtual programming brought in 3 new faces. All programming has been virtual since April. Mentoring, 5th Grade Girl's Group, Middle School Youth Group and EarlyAct Club are still going strong and there has been positive feedback from parents regarding it. Jen added an open 8 AM check-in for elementary and middle school youth, and a 9 AM check-in for high school students. The check-ins were designed to allow youth to "check-in" with Jen for anything.
 - b. The YS and SSAT (Social Services Action Team) Intergenerational Event was a success with 50+ people in attendance. The acappella group "NOTEorious" performed and there were many interactive activities for youth and seniors to participate in together. There was positive feedback from both the youth and seniors.
 - c. The MIAA Leadership Conference which YS Director Jennifer Ford accompanied two NR high school students lead to one of them forming a local group called "Freeform" which focuses on providing fun activities for youth that choose not to use. The group's first event was attended by 6 youth and spent time playing gym games at NRHS during February break.
5. **Old Business:**
 - a. *Budget Meeting:* YS Director Jennifer Ford outlined her budget meeting with Town Administrator Mike Gilleberto and Finance Director/Town Accountant Liz Rourke went well in January. On March 9th, 2020, the YS presented at the Budget Hearing and received very positive feedback specifically pertaining to the request of a part-time assistant for Youth Services. The presentation included the presentation of 2019 suicide and mass school shootings statistics, highlighting the importance of offering programming that creates a sense of belonging for all. However, in light of the coronavirus pandemic, all departments have been informed that additional staff requests cannot be considered at this time and they are hopeful that there will not be budget cuts.
 - b. *Reality Fair:* No new discussions about the Reality Fair have occurred but Jen will propose two potential scenarios for next year, #1 - two separate dates, one in the fall for seniors and another in March for juniors or #2 - to include both classes in the same day, enabling the junior this year the opportunity to have the experience. This conversation will not take place until next fall.

6. New Business:

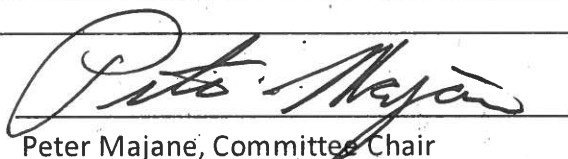
- a. YS Director Jennifer Ford supported with *Meals on Wheels* deliveries and has been working with NORCAM to communicate with the community. She also attends weekly COVID-19 emergency response meetings with the BOH, Fire Dept., Police Dept., Town Administrator, DPW, and Supt. Daly to continue brainstorming how to best support the community as well as provide updates to each other regarding those efforts. Jen is also working closely with The Emergency Management Team to develop emergency services for the future.
- b. Jen mentioned efforts by Al Pereira of Advanced Photo in North Reading to honor all high school seniors with individual printed banners which will hang all around the high school fencing.
- c. Youth Action Team meetings are still ongoing. The chats have been regarding mental health, coping methods and objectives to continue supporting the community at large.
- d. To help the community cope with the coronavirus pandemic, Jen challenged the community on Facebook to post positive moments during the COVID-19 pandemic and Jen herself posted some of her candid moments and expressed the comfort she found in it.
- e. Jen stated that Town Administrator Mike Gilleberto asked her on March 16th, 2020, to oversee the North Reading Human Services departments and she has been doing so since.
- f. Jen serves as the Town liaison to the volunteer organization, *In This Together (ITT) 01864* was formed and comprises of over 100 volunteers and offers services for seniors for grocery shopping, picking up prescriptions (non-narcotic), and Phone Pals. It was outlined how smoothly the services have been running and that YS encourages the Town to oversee the effort after the pandemic.
- g. Jen also discussed another program she oversees, *Project 500*, which focuses on North Reading residents, age 70 and over, living alone. 17 volunteers were given an assignment of 26 residents each to call and were provided a script to loosely follow when making the calls. The original list consisted of 523 names yet due to various circumstances, 423 residents were called at least once, several were called multiple times. The feedback was outstanding and many residents expressed deep appreciation for the group's efforts and stated it made them feel safe knowing that people cared and they were not alone.
- h. It was discussed that the YS Budget Infographic be shared on social media. Jen does not feel that it's information that youth or parents would really be interested in.
- i. It was suggested the NRYSC continue meeting on Zoom until the end of the COVID-19 pandemic.

Next meeting: Mon. May 18, 2020 - 6 p.m. Location: TBD

Meeting adjourned at 6:50p.m.

Documents/Handouts	
Committee Meeting Agenda	Committee Minutes from January Meeting
Financial Report	Social Services/Participation Report
2019 Annual Report	2020 Budget Infographic
FY2021 Budget	FY2021 Budget Narrative
Human Services Update	April YS Activity Calendar
May YS Activity Calendar	

June 15, 2020
Minutes Approved on Date


Peter Majane, Committee Chair