

North Reading Youth Services Committee Meeting

Date/Time: Monday, January 28, 2019 6:00pm

Location: North Reading Town Hall, Rm. 10

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

Chairman Peter Majane called the meeting to order at 6:02pm.

1. **Review of Previous Minutes:** December 17, 2018 minutes were reviewed and accepted unanimously.
2. **Financial Report:** Y.S. Director Jennifer Ford outlined grant opportunities are still on the to-do list. Her focus has been on the winter planning of activities. Finances have still been pretty stagnant. It was stated that the NRYSSA money is still in a gift account. Only a smidge was used last summer to cover costs and is still considered an "emergency fund". Danielle Masterson said she could assist with the grant search and application.
3. **Social Services Report:** Jennifer Ford outlined she has had some great contact with parents and kids especially pertaining to the Dungeons & Dragons club. There are 10 kids, 7 of which are new faces to Youth Services. They meet for 4 hours on Tuesdays. Currently there are 9 boys and 1 girl. Jen noted that the girl in the program quickly opened up to her about her past and self-harm. Jen stated she was thrilled providing a less traditional avenue that this girl felt comfortable enough to open up. It was noted that Dungeons & Dragons needs more Dungeon Masters available to open the group up further and Jen has reminded the kids to be on the lookout for more DM's. It was outlined that the D&D club has invited a group of kids with unique common interests to come together and has helped build comradery. Jen had an extensive conversation with the mother of a child who was severely bullied in their prior community. The mother is considering the Mentoring program and EarlyAct club for her daughter.
4. **Participation Report:** Jennifer Ford outlined the winter programming has brought in 24 new faces to the department. She also discussed her idea to form a 5th Grade Girls Group to help instill good values. She feels 5th grade is a monumental year, with young females dealing with difficult subjects such as bullying, hormones, and body changes while still being receptive to adult intervention and guidance. She also outlined how a boy's club of this type would be equally as beneficial, but she felt boys might be more receptive to a male facilitator. A flyer went out to the elementary schools and so far, 4 girls have signed up. Jen outlined the work she did creating the flyer and how she made sure it was all-inclusive. The act of bullying was discussed and how this group formation was intended to empower girls with a voice to stand up to bullying and to help kids not feel so isolated due to bullying. Jen stated she is working with Kim Smith-Brown from North Reading Public School's Digital Learning Department to create a vocational series which would offer discussion and resources to those not planning to pursue higher education which would introduce students to options other than traditional college choices. Inviting speakers as well as interviewing advice and resume writing were all discussed as potential workshops. Marci Bailey approached Jen to discuss the potential formation of a knitting club and offered her knitting expertise. Jen outlined how the knitted objects could be donated to those in need and the therapeutic properties of knitting, how it gives a sense of purpose and the power to give back. Jen also indicated that she may reach out to senior citizens to help bridge the gap between generations. Jen stated how the Elementary Early Act Club is scheduled to visit Peabody Court at the end of February.
5. **Old Business:** The Reality Fair was confirmed for March 21, 2019. Jen reiterated her need for volunteers and noted it's truly a rewarding experience for both attendees and presenters.
6. **New Business:** It was suggested that all meeting dates stay firm as decided upon at the beginning of the year because we are an open meeting committee and changes can affect people beyond just the committee. It was also suggested that all committee members make a stronger effort to attend the monthly meetings. Peter Majane reminded everyone to keep their eyes and ears open for future guest speakers. It was suggested all town Principals return for updates and Detective Paul Lucci (school resource officer) be invited to speak. It was asked whether the North Reading Anonymous Text Line was in operation and it was determined that it was. Another concern for the future of the North Reading Youth Services Committee was the expiration dates of several members. A lot of members have the same expiration year for their term. It was suggested the committee stagger the terms, such as having some members renew annually while others renew bi-annually. The committee will reach out to Barbara Stats for options.

Documents/Handouts	
Committee Meeting Agenda	Committee Minutes from December Meeting
Financial Report	Social Services/Participation Report

February 25, 2019
Minutes Approved on Date

Peter Majane
Peter Majane, Committee Chair