

North Reading Youth Services Committee Meeting

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

Location: Zoom – Teleconference

Committee Members Present		Committee Members Absent	Guests/Visitors Present
Peter Majane, Chair	Patty Harrington		Jennifer Ford, Y.S. Director
Danielle Masterson, Vice-Chair	Leslie Shultz	Samantha Miller	Patrick Daly, Superintendent N. R. Public Schools
Karen Buscemi, Secretary	Jason Slattery	Amy DiChiara	Dave Doucette
Frank Ferraro	Deborah Mahoney	Christy Dampousse	

Chair Peter Majane called the meeting to order at 6:03pm.

1. Guest: Dr. Patrick Daly, Superintendent of North Reading Public Schools – Dr. Daly updated the committee on the current fall re-opening plan for North Reading schools.

- a. Dr. Daly outlined that the situation was still fluid and could change at any moment
- b. DESE approved for the school year to be reduced by 10 days, still fulfilling the required amount of instructional days outlined by the state and enabling the teachers the additional time to train for the return of students.
- c. Still looking to finalize a plan that keeps all safe – students/faculty/transportation
- d. There has been increased advocating for online learning.
- e. It was outlined that a hybrid plan allows for parental flexibility, though an AM/PM switch would not work.
- f. Looking at a 5-day on, 5-day off plan.
- g. Science has indicated that quarantine is more of a 10-day process rather than a 14-day process.
- h. Looking for a plan that can be switched easily from hybrid to all online.
- i. There will most likely be some sort of COVID-19 assessment prior to school entry.
- j. Hybrid plan needs to be consistent so teachers with children in different districts can still work and have support.
- k. All students and teachers will need to have necessary devices for online learning.
- l. There will be grades and increased responsibility this time around – there was mixed reviews regarding the online learning process which started in April 2020.
- m. Special needs students will have to be all in-person as online learning does not work for this group.
- n. There will be no activities/classes that require any sort of heavy breathing, so they are discussing options for gym and chorus.
- o. Digital learning collaboration was well-received by teachers and it was outlined that digital learning should become part of the curriculum.
- p. Plan is to maximize in-person learning for 1st quarter should there be a surge in COVID-19 cases later in year – it was outlined that kids with anxiety really thrived online where others really would have done better with in-person classes.
- q. There was positive feedback regarding the 2020 in-person graduation – some of the new protocols may be adopted permanently.
- r. The YS Committee offered their services and assistance to Dr. Daly should he need it.

2. Review of Previous Minutes: June 15, 2020 minutes were reviewed and accepted.

3. Financial Report: YS Director Jennifer Ford stated there were no changes to the finances and nothing was spent.

4. Social Services Report:

- a. YS Director Jennifer Ford announced that the volunteer group In This Together (ITT) 01864 has officially transitioned to the town. Jen will support Elder Services with overseeing the requests at this time due to the pandemic directly impacting their population yet the plan is that all of the Human Service departments will utilize it in the future.
- b. Jen mentioned the Community Mask Distribution event scheduled for August, 22, 2020.
- c. The social justice group, originally organized by Rich Wallner, met once and is hopeful a committee will be formed as there is a need for education regarding systemic racism throughout North Reading.
- d. North Reading Youth for Anti-racism (NRY4A) group marched peacefully in support of Black Lives Matter, from Ipswich River Park to the Town Common, but was met with some animosity from adults passing by. HS youth would love to start a group within the school and Dr. Daly appeared open to the suggestion. It was stressed that Youth Services is always open for support. Jen found the march to be very empowering for all age groups yet disheartening at the same time that adults would direct such hateful behavior toward a youth driven event.
- e. It was outlined that in addition to the coronavirus pandemic, families are still dealing with the regular, everyday stresses, so it's really just compounding all issues.

5. Participation Report:

- a. YS Director Jennifer Ford outlined summer participation has been really low.
- b. July had modified outdoor games with proper social distancing – Disc Golf: all kids had their own frisbee to play with, etc.
- c. Other programs included: Lunch Bunch, a book chat, Flashlight Tag, self-care series and Youth Action Team meetings.
- d. Only had 1 participant sign up for the "Lunch Bunch" program and when that participant learned they would be the only one, they chose not to participate, hoping that others will register for the upcoming ones.
- e. Overall feeling was that in-person programming is still questionable from a medical standpoint but quite necessary from a mental health. Jen planned all programming within proper guidelines.

6. **Old Business:** There was no old business to discuss.

7. New Business:

- a. YS Director Jennifer Ford acknowledged that there is still denial by residents regarding racism existing in North Reading and that the Town has not yet taken a stand regarding those issues or the role that we play in systemic racism.

Next meeting: Mon. Aug. 24, 2020 - 6 p.m.

Location: TBD

Meeting adjourned at 7:05 p.m.

Documents/Handouts	
Committee Meeting Agenda	Committee Minutes from June Meeting

August 24, 2020
Minutes Approved on Date

Pete Majane
Peter Majane, Committee Chair