

North Reading Youth Services Committee Meeting

Date/Time: Monday, September 27, 2021 / 6:00 pm **Location:** Zoom -Teleconference

Committee Members Present		Committee Members Absent	Guests/Visitors Present
Peter Majane, Chair	Jason Slattery	Christy Damphousse	Jennifer Ford, YS Director
Deborah Mahoney, Secretary	Patty Harrington		
Leslie Schultz	Amy DiChiara		
Frank Ferraro	Yan Huang		
Jodi Sponzo			

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

1. Review of July Minutes: July 26, 2021 minutes were reviewed and accepted.

2. Financial Report: No change in finances. Pre-pandemic YS Director Jen Ford received a grant and the money is still there to use.

3. Participation Report: Summer participation was super low. August picked up slightly. Project Peace was held and four youth attended regularly and were appreciative of the opportunity to discuss mental health. They were confident that they knew of others who would benefit and be receptive if this group continued in the fall. FREEFORM is a group geared toward MS and HS for youth who make the deliberate decision not to use substances. Over the summer the same group of youth attended and the group had some great discussions about hurdles they are currently facing. The last event of the summer was flashlight tag at IRP which was fun. Again, summer numbers were low but the events were meaningful and mighty! Over the pandemic three youth met regularly for the Youth Action Team (YAT) and they decided to recruit new members. There are now nine members total so they are off to a good start this school year. Going into the fall YS Director Jen Ford hopes to offer MS youth group, YAT, FREEFORM, mentoring, 5th grade girls, Project Peace, Early Act and YASA. There will be a HS intern for each group. YS Director Jen Ford will not advertise groups until she has a definite answer as to if she can access the schools and hold groups there.

4. Social Services Report: YS Director Jen Ford continues to have numerous conversations about mental health with community members. We are going into a tough time of year regardless but this year people are deflated that we are going into a second winter of COVID. Take time to pay attention to those around you during this time. YS Director Jen Ford also had a lot of conversations with youth and families about sexuality and/or gender identity. She had a discussion with a parent whose child is struggling with a diagnosed phobia. YS Director Jen Ford has been in touch with a lot of youth about community service opportunities which are limited because of the pandemic but she tries to be creative and find opportunities. Committee member Frank Ferraro spoke and appreciated YS Director Jen Ford for her work during this pandemic since her resources are so limited. Youth Services has reached 2,690 people on Facebook. YS Director Jen Ford asked us to remember our teachers and health care workers.

5. Old Business: DFC/CDC's virtual site visit for the Coalition happened. They were really impressed with our Coalition and our partnerships and said we should be used as an example for other communities. Through Coalition funding the gazebo in the center of town is lit up in purple to honor recovery month. North Reading was inducted as an age friendly community by AARP. Last year a survey was sent to those 55+ to gather information and the group is now in the process of scheduling a presentation to discuss the results hopefully in October. A question was raised regarding the high

property tax which is a reason many older citizens move from North Reading and there is a rebate program for senior citizens through the assessor's office.

6. New Business: YS Director Jen Ford spoke with the Fire Chief to offer CPR, AED and First Aid to town sports referees and umpires. Training was not able to happen for soccer season but will hopefully happen for basketball season. Last year thousands of people were involved in self-care week and it will be offered again this year in November. Guiding Good Choices is being offered again. There was a brief discussion on how to get word of this program out to the community. Chair Peter Majane spoke regarding the vacancy of the Vice Chair position and if we should fill it now or wait until January. There was discussion and it was decided that Jason Slattery will fill the Vice Chair position for the remainder of the year. Dr. Daly will be our guest speaker at the October meeting. If someone is not getting town alerts you can sign up on the website or you could send your email to member Amy DiChara and she will add you.

Next meeting: October 25, 2021 **Meeting adjourned at 6:57 p.m.**

Documents/Handouts	
July 2021 Minutes	

October 25, 2021
Minutes Approved on Date


Peter Majane, Committee Chair