

## North Reading Youth Services Committee Meeting

**Date/Time:** Monday, September 28, 2020 - 6pm

**Location:** Zoom – Teleconference

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

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

- 1. Review of Previous Minutes:** August 24, 2020 minutes were reviewed and accepted.
- 2. Financial Report:** YS Director Jennifer Ford stated there were no changes to the finances.

**3. Social Services Report:**

- YS Director Jennifer Ford discussed how there continues to be a lot of work being done behind-the-scenes, including her work with the Human Services departments. She mentioned a homeless young mom to North Reading was in need of help for her 16-month-old. She has been couch surfing with her baby and is currently living in the basement of some church friends here in NR. Jen reached out to Mary Prenney (Elder Services), Amy Luckiewicz (DFC Grant) and Laura Miranda (NR clinician) to seek gift certificates to local merchants, specifically Stop & Shop and Walmart. Mary was able to donate both a Stop & Shop and Walmart gift cards. Jen noted that despite not asking a lot of questions (respecting her privacy and dignity), she felt the woman was genuine and didn't suspect it being a scam. Jen outlined the need for a better vetting process in the future.

**4. Participation Report:**

- YS Director Jennifer Ford outlined participation has continued to be low but noted the Youth Action Team sponsored a community wide clean-up event that went well. Y.A.T. falls under the coalition and is comprised of 5 high school students. Jen stated that the program is very youth driven and reports the kids work well independently as well as collaboratively. Jen shared details of a riding bikes program which was created by a member but unfortunately had low participation. Another member created an info-graphic for COVID awareness, another created the clean-up event and one of the quieter members offered to write an email draft to HS administration regarding the HS Club virtual presentation that YAT is proposing.
- Jen outlined she does not schedule programming for September as back-to-school time is chaotic for most kids and families but October programming is up on the website. She noted she will host all activities outside until the weather fails to cooperate.
- Jen discussed her disappointment at not currently being able to occupy the High School due to COVID-19 protocols, nor does she have a public space where kids could have access to her if needed. She noted it's hard to make initial contact with kids virtually.
- Jen made the decision to divide Youth Services programming into Cohorts, like the schools. She felt it made sense to maximize participation. She works with the school Cohort schedule in order to coordinate and maximize potential participation.

**5. Old Business:**

- YS Director Jennifer Ford was featured in a recent article in the Transcript and the committee congratulated her once again for her work with North Reading's youth.
- It was asked whether Jen was still assisting with town duties in other departments and Jen outlined that Town Administrator Mike Gilleberto continues to use her as a resource outside of Youth Services and she works with the Council on Aging to create joint

programming. She also outlined that she works with a lot of other departments in hopes of bringing them all together to work jointly on all projects.

#### 6. New Business:

- a. Vice-Chair Danielle Masterson suggested the library and Youth Services join forces to bring the community a virtual Halloween Costume Contest.
- b. Jen discussed how she's working on a Pen Pal Initiative for the youth and elderly. She had thought about doing something like this for a while, then received a call from a youth looking to obtain community service hours for her black belt who suggested it and now the two are working together to finalize a plan.
- c. Plans are being made for a virtual Reality Fair. The collaboration is coming along well and some of the virtual components of the Fair may become a permanent part in the future.
- d. Vice-Chair Danielle Masterson outlined how she was invited to join a group that was discussing the idea of a book club which would focus on anti-racism. It is not a town sponsored group. Danielle stated that Jen's name had come up during her initial conversations as a potential Youth Services program. Jen felt that attending any meeting under the Youth Services Department might be perceived as a conflict of interest so she made it clear she was attending any group meetings as a North Reading resident.
- e. A North Reading high school group, North Reading Youth for Anti-racism, reached out to Jen for support should the high school reject their intent to meet as a campus club.

**Next meeting:** Mon. Sept. 28, 2020 - 6 p.m.      **Location:** TBD      **Meeting adjourned at** 6:45 p.m.

Documents/Handouts	
Committee Meeting Agenda	Committee Minutes from August Meeting
October YS Programming Schedule /Calendar	

October 26, 2020

Minutes Approved on Date

  
Peter Majane, Committee Chair