

YOUTH COMMISSION MINUTES**Thursday, May 19, 2022****Town Hall, Conference Room B**

1. Call Meeting to Order: Gili Schneider-Nachum made the motion, Seconded by Sherry Clark

2. Attendance:

Board Members: Sandy Scott, Sherry Clark, Gretchen Bean, Casey Rickli, Gily Schneider-Nachum, Joan Clementi

Staff Members: June David-Fors and Doreen Genna

Selectmen Liaison: Kristen Wixted

Visitors: Mitch Cohen, Rachel, Community Clinician

3. Date of Next Meeting: June 16, 2022

4. Review of Minutes: June is in process of finalizing a draft of the minutes for the Board Members to review.

5. Director's Report:

June discussed the 2021 MetroWest Adolescent Health Survey findings conducted by the MetroWest Health Foundation. The survey reported the major issue identified by the students is the increase in serious mental health issues. There is an increase in depressive symptoms and in students seriously considering suicide. There was a decline in reports of vaping, alcohol and marijuana. Sherry asked if the superintendent would be willing to release information from the survey. Sherry also raised concerns about a new TikTok Challenge trend that youth are participating in that could result in injuries and emotional distress.

June gave an update on the INTERFACE Referral Service that reports "a tsunami of need" for mental health services. This has impacted the time residents must wait for a counseling appointment from 14 days to 40 days. Given this, our staff is now assisting several families who cannot wait the 40 days due to the seriousness of their problems.

We are providing extensive assistance to residents facing homelessness. It is still difficult to place residents in housing due to the strict criteria and long waitlists.

June discussed "Be Well Northborough" a town initiative funded through ARPA Funds. A Kick-Off Event will be held on June 22, 2022 to introduce this initiative to residents. An example of a training program we will provide to staff and the public is Mental Health First Aid. Sherry suggested that child care be offered if there is a need.

6. Board Members:

Board Members are seeking clarification about the process to apply for ARPA (American Rescue Plan Act) Funds since the April 14, 2022 Public Forum was cancelled. Discussion ensued about the priorities for Family & Youth Services. Sandy and Joan discussed the history of need for a full-time counselor. Joan asked if this could be accomplished through ARPA Funds. Kristen Wixted and Mitch Cohen were very helpful in updating the Board on the process.

Board Members discussed a new plan to recruit high school student liaisons for the Fall of 2022.

7. Other Business: None

8. Adjourn: Gretchen Bean made a motion to adjourn, Seconded by Gily Schneider-Nachum