

Fairfield Cares Community Coalition
November 20, 2013 Meeting Minutes

Attendees: Wendy Bentivegna, Cristin McCarthy Vahey, Dorothy Timmermann, Ginna Paules, Alida Ward, Marty Hauhuth, Lauren Lanham, Pam Paulmann, Janice Kessler, Leonora Campbell, Michelle Walker, Catherine Giff, Beth Kelly, Bob Esposito, Lori Mediate, Nina Chanana, Tom Mrozek, Phil Dwyer, Denique Lewis, Nancy Billington, Caryn Campbell

Opened: The meeting was opened at 9:35 am by co-chair Cristin McCarthy Vahey; attendees introduced themselves

Minutes: By consent the October meeting minutes were approved.

Subcommittee Reports:

Publicity/Communication Michelle gave a report on the publicity. The Beanery will open November 14. Michelle posed the question do we want a logo? Yes – to create a brand, tell our story, we will need to create a logo and Facebook page. Need to establish a larger group to work with subcommittee. Issues were raised about the drug Molly. Press release to let parents know about it?

Research/Resources subcommittee Nina Chanana reported the committee was working on a one page 12 question supplement for the youth survey. They are targeting end of January beginning of February. Supplement will be given with RYASAP youth survey (160 questions). The last time the RYASAP survey was done was in 2011. The survey will run for six weeks. Supplement is 12 questions. The supplement deals with questions around mental-health, prescription drug abuse, and social media.

Nina also mentioned a coalition survey to be done in January to see how coalition members feel about our group and how we are doing.

Substance Abuse subcommittee Wendy reported for the committee goals that are realistic for this year including

-Panel presentation to address marijuana & prescription drug use. Possibly similar to one done by the Danbury coalition called Pot or Not.

- Social norms, we have created awareness of our posters but not sure our message is getting out there. Since new data is being collected on youth we will hold off on more youth social norm campaigning for now. Subcommittee will continue to do prom postcards.

-Proposed drug panel discussion should create awareness around Rx drop box located at Fairfield Police Department. The drop boxes have been placed around the state but the public relations part has not yet been launched. Work with Officer Jimmy Perez. Marketing materials discussed, perhaps stickers on newspapers?

-Freshman forum (Lauren Lanham) Parents and children attended at Ludlow high school last Thursday. Approximately 300 people showed up. Capt. Zabin discussed social host laws, two recovering addicts talked about their experience. Surgeon spoke on the teenage brain. Esposito and the headmaster also spoke. One comment that was made by concerned mother who thought too much information was shared. Bob Esposito stated that there was a lot of positive feedback. A reference was made to the proposed drug panel discussion to include the consequences of using marijuana.

Wellness Committee report given by Cristin McCarthy Vahey. The committee is focusing on stress and pressure issues, symptom prevention, and developing wellness tools. They discussed the importance of engaging with parents and looking at specific strategies to deal with stress. Perhaps using something like the power of parents like MADD, also their target audience is eighth-graders. They think maybe small-group coffees will help taking the message out to the community. Use Parent Connect Program as a tool and get more people to participate.

Marty mentioned that she works with a problem gambling resource counselor who can come speak, Bob; Problem gambling is often tied with other wellness issues.

LPC (local prevention Council) grant money allocation discussion led by Cristin.. (Refer to backside of agenda) Suicide prevention is not included as we have a separate mini grant for those purposes. Catherine gift mentioned that Ward is creating coordinating a speaker on stress and working on life after award program in February. Denique discussed e-cigarettes and the regulations around that as to the parameters of our grant funds.

Lt. Mrozak spoke about tobacco compliance and that it would cost more money than is allocated. Fairfield has never done tobacco compliance checks it has always been done by the state in the past. More discussion ensued on how to spend and allocate our funds. Cristin proposed a way to distribute the funds. Wendy mentioned that we need money to pay for the prescription drug panel event as well as for the prom postcards. Question was raised do we discuss the allocation today or another day?

The discussion ensued and Nina mentioned that it would be important to have money in the budget for publicity. Denique mentioned that these LPC funds are fluid and that we can make changes to the budget over the course of the year.

Dorothy discussed the Parent Connect Program and her current and past budget uses- last year's budget was used for supplies and staff. She has some supplies and will not need that much this year.. Dorothy talked about the parent connect program and the brownbag discussions on specific topics. Last year much of the focus was around trauma as it was post Sandy Hook. The format is a parent to parent support group, one night a month on a parenting topic with a counselor to facilitate discussion and meet people where they're at. Publicity was an issue and we need to focus more on getting the word out there about this program. Dorothy will send a blurb to everyone in the coalition. Pam suggested we connect the parent connect program with RX panel and perhaps have a representative from Fairfield counseling center on the panel.

Cristin proposed the budget as:

\$1500 to both high schools (\$750 each)

\$1000 to tobacco (as mandated by the grant)

\$1500 to the parent connect program

\$500 to prom postcards

\$500 to Publicity -of that 500 for general Fairfield cares coalition publicity and 250 to the parent connect program

\$675 to the RX panel

This budget was unanimously approved.

Suicide prevention efforts were then discussed. Wednesday, December 18 connect training will take place at Warde high school from 8 to 12:30 PM -30 participants have been invited to participate. These participants are from our high schools, middle schools, Fairfield counseling center, social services, police department, library, as well as Cristin and Wendy. Suicide Connect training focuses on a macro level and community response. Discussion ensued about QPR training versus connect training and the differences. We have five QPR trainers in the region. QPR is a two-hour training and we would like to take this out into the community for everyone.

Finally we had a school climate conversation where we decided to postpone discussion to January. Caryn Campbell mentioned that at a recent meeting new District level school climate plans and policies were presented. Next time we will be able to hear more about these new plans.

Cristin asked for any **updates and announcements**.

There will be no Fairfield Cares meeting on December 18 because of the Connect training. Wellness and substance abuse committees can still meet then.

Bob Esposito offered to arrange a meeting between FC and the Ludlowe Business teacher/class to discuss development of an FC coalition logo.

Pam mentioned an event on December 6 with Nic Sheff an author, and Liz Jorgenson, a counselor. It is at the Dolan School of Business at Fairfield University from 7 to 9pm. All are invited but please RSVP as seating is limited.

Meeting adjourned at 11 am. Ginna Paules is responsible for January minutes and Phil Dwyer has signed up for February.

Happy Holidays to all-

Respectfully submitted
Pam Paulmann