

## **Weston Commission for Children and Youth Minutes from the March 2, 2015 Meeting**

In attendance: Lynn Phillips, Jeff Drobner, Dan Doak, Dru Walters, Ellen Weyrauch, Cathy Minter, Michelle Albright, Charlene Monn, Lindsey Kappel, Mackenzie Daffner

Meeting called to order at 5:40 pm by Michelle Albright.

### Approval of Minutes

- Minutes from both the October 20<sup>th</sup> and January 12<sup>th</sup> meetings were approved with no revisions.

### Membership

- We are continuing to recruit additional members, particularly parents of preschool and elementary aged children. Charlene suggested one Hurlbutt parent that Michelle will follow up with, and Michelle will also discuss the Commission at upcoming HES and WIS PTO meetings when she presents. In addition, Michelle will stop by several of Miss Joy's preschool story times to promote Youth Services and inquire about interest in serving on the commission.

### Program Updates

- Due to multiple school cancellations and/or early dismissals, end dates for the WOW! winter session vary by several weeks.
- Spring program catalogs are online and registration begins March 17<sup>th</sup> with programs beginning April 20<sup>th</sup>. We have several new programs at both HES (Cartooning, WOW singers, Jedi engineering with Legos, and Sense-sational science) and WIS (Sense-sational science, Game gala)
- Summer program catalogs are online and registration begins March 10<sup>th</sup>. We are offering a range of camps for students in grades 1 through 12 including theater, music, cooking, engineering, film and science (the music and theater camps are again being offered in collaboration with Weston Public Schools).
- WYS co-sponsored an open mic night with Teen Peaceworks and the Domestic Violence Task Force of Weston on February 13<sup>th</sup> for approximately 25 high school students.
- Michelle met with new board members from Weston Arts to discuss scholarship funds; WestonArts will provide \$4000 in funding for each school year and is working on creating a resource list of music/theater teachers that will offer lessons for reduced fees.
- February's Tackling the Tough Stuff theme was "Love Train-ing," workshops were held on February 5<sup>th</sup> (11 parents in attendance) and February 25<sup>th</sup> (with 18 parents in attendance). Feedback from workshops continues to be positive and we have started using online evaluations to assess parents' experiences.

### Planned Initiatives

- WYS is collaborating with ADAP to screen Haze, a documentary about alcohol abuse on college campuses, on Wednesday March 18<sup>th</sup> at the Weston Public Library. Following the screening there will be a moderated panel discussion with Michelle, a board member from ADAP, and several student members. WYS & ADAP are also co-sponsoring Matt Bellace, who will speak to all high school students on April 30<sup>th</sup> (as part of what used to be known as the "pre-prom" event).
- WYS is collaborating with the League of Women Voters and Friends of the Weston Library to screen Miss Representation, a film that highlights how women and girls are portrayed in the media and the impact on body image and identity development. There will be a panel discussion following the event moderated by Michelle.
- WYS is collaborating with Wilton Youth Council, Wilton Youth Services, and Silver Hill Hospital to host nationally renowned psychologist, author, and speaker, Dr. Robert Brooks on Monday April 27<sup>th</sup> to discuss how to help children and adolescents to deal effectively with stress and build resilience. Dr. Brooks will be giving the same presentation during the day in Weston and in the evening in Wilton to accommodate parents varying schedules; community members are invited to attend whichever presentation is more

convenient. For the 2015-2016 academic year we are collaboratively planning a series of presentations that will follow this format facilitated by local professionals. We are modeling this on the Coffee and Conversation series that the Darien Depot has been running.

- WYS is working with WHS (including administrators, students and staff) to plan a social event for the spring. The counties donation to WYS could cover part of the costs for such an event and we would need to approach the PTO for some additional funding. Commission members discussed ideas for events and considerations regarding alcohol policies.

### **Publicity**

- Members discussed how to enhance awareness of WYS offerings such as advertising in programs for school music and theater events. Members also discussed appointing one member to serve as a publicity chair and work with Michelle to distribute/post press releases and information about upcoming events.

### **Additional business**

- Members discussed programs for students transitioning into high school and then into college. Members shared ideas to provide incoming students with additional information and reassurance such as a “Everything you always wanted to know about HS but were afraid to ask” event that included current students. Members also discussed holding a college transition panel that included recent graduates who could discuss whether they felt adequately or ill prepared. Dan and Dru shared information about current programs to ease student and parent concerns about transitions and the schools are already providing a fair amount of support. Michelle will coordinate with guidance counselors to WMS and WHS to see if we can collaborate on additional programs (particularly for parents).

**Our next meeting will be held April 6<sup>th</sup> at 5:30 pm**

Meeting adjourned at 6:50 pm

Respectfully submitted, Michelle Albright