

Weston Commission for Children and Youth Minutes from the March 21, 2016 Meeting

In attendance: Lynn Phillips, Allison Lisbon, Cathy Minter, Nicole Wilhelm, Matthew Filip, Michelle Albright, Charlene Monn, Eliza Kleban

Meeting called to order at 5:47 pm by Michelle Albright.

Approval of Minutes

- Minutes from the January meeting could not be approved because we lacked a quorum.

Discussion about coordinated programming with Weston Library

- Pamela Wilonski, the children's librarian from Weston Library, was introduced to Commission members and provided an overview of the many programs she is running for children and families including toddler playgroups, preschool reading and crafts, and high school reading club/teen book discussion. Pamela is also planning additional programs however some of these will be launched in fall 2016 following the library renovation. Although attendance varies, these programs have been well received and typically have less than 10 children.
- Commission members discussed the many ways to partner with Pamela/Weston Library given the range of programs she is already offering. WYS will include a link to the library website on our website and help promote these programs via our database and communication efforts with students and families.
- Commission members also discussed how to engage tweens and teens and activities/initiatives that may be most appealing to this age group.

Program Updates

- Winter WOW programs are coming to an end in the next two weeks. Spring program registration is already open (with a number of new programs offered at both HES and WIS) and many programs are already full; the spring session is scheduled to begin April 18th (the Monday after spring break).
- A Mini-Camp is scheduled for April 26th - a professional development day for teachers. This will be held at the senior center and will include three programs for students in grades K – 5 including fabric, food, and fun; super hero Legos; and recycling art.
- Registration for our summer camps has also begun; in addition to the WYS summer programs, the WPS are offering some technology camps, theater & music camps, and a reading camp.
- March's Tackling the Tough Stuff theme is Standards & Stereotypes. Michelle presented to the HES/WIS PTOs on March 16th and about 25 parents were in attendance. On March 30th we are presenting two workshops in collaboration with Wilton Youth Services and Silver Hill Hospital - these will be repeated in the morning and evening (once in Wilton and once in Weston). Aaron Krasner and Tracey Masella from Silver Hill Hospital will be speaking about depression and anxiety in youth.
- Michelle spoke about her experience speaking to all the senior health classes at the high school, and how she aims to continue to partner with the health teachers to address students' social and emotional needs.
- Michelle shared information about her involvement on the West Cog drug task force, as well as discussions with the president of ADAP, the executive Director of Positive Directions, the social worker for the middle and high school, and Board of Selectman about drug/substance use and abuse in our community. Michelle will continue to coordinate with these individuals and groups to identify what educational/prevention efforts are already ongoing in our community and where there are gaps we might want to address a/o areas to inform and reinforce this with families.
- Michelle shared her thoughts about the Frank Bruni event in Ridgefield and plans to hold several workshops for parents of high school students regarding the college application and transition process. We will continue to coordinate with high school staff to ensure that our programming complements what they are already doing. Commission members also discussed how to help educate students and families that high school is not just a path to college but an experience in itself.

OUR NEXT MEETING WILL BE HELD MONDAY APRIL 18TH AT 5:45 PM IN THE COMMISSION ROOM AT TOWN HALL.

Meeting adjourned at 6:42 pm.

Respectfully submitted, Michelle Albright