

Needham Youth & Family Services

Notes from September 12, 2018 Board Meeting

Meeting Commenced at 5:30 pm, Highland Room, Needham Town Hall September 12.

Board in Attendance Julie Stevens, David Bookston, Kevin Keane, Susan Patkin, Annie Stein, and Shayan Raza

Staff in Attendance: New Director Ms. Sara Shine; The purpose of the meeting is to introduce Ms. Shine ahead of her official start date of September 24, 2018.

Guest: Timothy Muir McDonald, Director Health and Human Services

Motion to Approve June 13 Regular **Minutes** and July 17 Board meeting re: Hire of New Director by David, Seconded by Susan. **Unanimous approval of June 13 Minutes and July 17 Board meeting minutes.**

Mr. McDonald noted that the Youth Commission now Youth & Family Services traditionally confirms officers for the new year in June or September. Kevin Keane Motion moved to continue as vice chair made by Julie; Seconded by David. **Unanimous Approval of Kevin as Vice Chair for 2018-2019.**

Motion to approve Julie Stevens as chair made by Kevin, Seconded by Susan. **Unanimous Approval of Julie as Chair for 2018-2019.**

Mr. McDonald formally introduced the new Director of Youth and Family Services Ms. Sara Shine. Julie brought a cake and pieces were passed around as a formal welcome to Ms. Shine. Ms. Shine was asked to provide a brief overview of her career. Ms. Shine discussed her background including her most recent fourteen years at the Italian Home for Children in Boston. The Board noted they welcome Ms. Shine discussing any and all ideas with them as she begins her new position.

Mr. McDonald noted that during the first two months Ms. Shine will be assessing the community needs and getting to know many people in Town.

- Mr. McDonald also noted that Maria Papantoniou has left the Department and transferred to the Town Clerk's office; the administrative assistant position will need to be posted in October and filled after that date. There will be some change in the description as financial reporting moves to a centralized position within HHS and more program logistics and scheduling moves into the role.
- Caitlin White, the clinical intern will be staying on part-time; the goal remains to decrease the client wait list.

- Ben Aronson is staying on but his school commitments increase substantially for the next 2 years so he will be going from 17.5-19.5 hours in 2017-2018 to 10-12 hours during 2018-2019.
- Also noted that with the Health Department's move to the Rosemary Building Mr. McDonald controls a new conference room that might work well for youth parenting programs.

A general discussion ensued of Youth and Family Services needs/resources:

- Network with the schools and police department in order to understand the collaborations
- Revisit the parent lecture series organized by a previous director. Parents found OPR suicide prevention workshops, drug use and internet topics particularly useful.
- Clinical Services is only part of the mission. Nonclinical programs should be reviewed such as the job bank and babysitting training.
- Anticipate the need to say no; the staff is committed, competent but small and can only be spread in so many directions at one time.
- Guide the energy and enthusiasm of the high school students especially after the Florida school shootings last year and consider building new programs around that dynamism.

A second general discussion on the strengths of Youth and Family Services:

- Array and Diversity of the Programs—considering renaming/rebranding some of them so they are more intuitive—two examples VAN and VIP.
- Understanding of Different Type/Conditions of Families Served
- Understanding Staff Dedication (Ms. Shine noted this was one of the real strengths that attracted her to the position)
- Historic connections to schools especially through PTC Presidents
- Take advantage in new ways of Youth's ability to step up to new challenges such as beginning an anti-bullying program after an incident in the middle schools several years ago.
- Board mentioned that many members of the community do not realize the full range of programs and services on offer and getting the word out on both clinical and nonclinical programs is critical.
- Work on connections with the 5th-8th grade so that more young people and families are aware of the services prior to high school.
- Parenting assistance is a huge help in the community; this resource needs to be better advertised.

Student Board Members Annie and Shayan mentioned the following strengths:

Youth staff are regularly seen in the high school. It was especially appreciated in February 2018 in the aftermath of the death of two high school students in a car accident

Interfaith aspect—Winchester has a program in this area that would be welcomed in Needham.

Youth staff are regularly available to back up and assist the high school guidance staff. This is a great help to high school students.

A direct link to the students is appreciated; more high school students need to know the resource exists!

The 7th grade body image class was very good; but it was only one workshop; perhaps add some of these issues into a continuing program for high school students

Budget

The budget requests will be sent in early October. Expense lines need to be reviewed by the Board as licenses and trainings are now being covered and needs to be added in the new budget.

Ms. Shine will need assistance to make sure the requests line up with the needs of the Department for the next fiscal year.

Discussed High School Issues

**6:25 pm Motion to Adjourn made by David, Seconded by Susan.
Unanimous approval to adjourn.**

Notes by Faith Crisley, Recording Secretary