

**Minutes of the Bernards Township Municipal Alliance/Youth Services
Commission
October 3, 2017**

Mayoral-Appointed Members Attending

John Malay, Chair, Township Committee Representative
Kaitlin Cartoccio, Vice-Chair, Health Department Representative
Linda Wooldridge, BOE Representative
Cathy Phillips, Substance Abuse Representative
Johnny Graves, Clergy Representative
Tracy Baldassare, Bernards Township Police Department
Joan Harris, Citizen Representative
Hersh Gupta, Student Representative

Other Attendees

KateLynn Patronick, Youth Services Commission
Amy Button, William Annin Student Assistance Counselor
Megan McDermott, High Focus Centers
Joseph Doherty, RAAD

Members Not Attending

Zoe Pettit, Citizen Representative
MJ Postal, Senior Citizen Representative
Isabel DiPalo, Student Representative
Swapna Kumari, PTO Representative

Call to Order

John Malay called the meeting to order at 6:01 pm. All attendees stood for the Pledge of Allegiance.

Mission Statement

Welcome and reading of the Mission Statement by John Malay. The mission of the Bernards Township Municipal Alliance Against Substance Abuse is to provide consultation, programs, training, and resources to members of the Bernards Township community with the goal of preventing and reducing the use of alcohol, tobacco and other drugs.

Public Comment

None.

Staff Comment

Kaitlin Cartoccio announced that the November meeting is Monday, November 13. The agenda includes a presentation on the Stigma Free Initiative.

Minute Approval

Tracy Baldassare made a motion to approve the minutes from September 5, 2017. Joan Harris seconded. The minutes were approved.

Reports

Somerset County Alliance Coordinator – Kaitlin Cartoccio reported on upcoming dates and deadlines. LMTI presented at the September 18th MAC Networking meeting. The first quarter report for 2017-18 is due on October 10. On October 25th, the Safe Communities Coalition fall conference will take place at RVCC. The next MAC Networking meeting is on November 1. There will be an information session on two evidence-based programs: Footprints for Life and We're Not Buying It 2.0.

Youth Services Commission – KateLynn Patronick reported that Bernards Township will receive a \$5,000 grant for 2017-18. Upcoming workshops are: October 14-15 -- Somerset County Weekend Journey through the Past. October 16 – Domestic Violence. October 24th – Strengthening Bonds (teen dating violence). KateLynn also distributed Adolescent Information data for 2015-16 for Somerset County and for Bernards Township.

Agenda Items

Presentation: *Megan McDermott, High Focus Centers*

High Focus Centers provides outpatient substance abuse and psychiatric services for adults and adolescents. For adolescents, High Focus offers a Psychiatric program, a Co-Occurring program (mental health and substance abuse) and a Substance Abuse program. The adolescent Substance Abuse program has been completely revamped over the last 5 years and has three levels:

1. P.E.A.K – for occasional users. Includes education and parent education.
2. R.I.S.E – for adolescents who have started using more regularly. Meets after school 2 days per week.
3. P.A.T.H. – for adolescents who have become addicted. Meets after school 3-4 days per week.

Ms. McDermott said that High Focus is seeing a decrease in adolescents with substance abuse only and an increase in co-occurring mental health and substance abuse issues. Trends include youth age 10 and up using alcohol, marijuana and pain medication, with a definite increase in younger children using pain medication. Tracy Baldassare noted that she is seeing more LSD use among adolescents because it is not considered to be addictive.

RAAD

The students are working on the program for William Annin Empowerment Day for 8th graders. Two RAAD students spoke at the Board of Education meeting on September 25th.

Suicide Prevention Week at Ridge – 9/12 – 9/15

This event was very successful. The Ridge Wellness Club participated as well as the following organizations: Zufall Health Center, the National Alliance for Mental Illness, and the American Foundation for Suicide Prevention.

Upcoming Events

There are many events in October:

- October 10 – Knock Out Opioids at Bernards High
- October 11 – Teen Volunteer Fair
- October 13 – Municipal Alliance Football Game at Ridge
- October 16 – Empowering Your Teen through Love and Logic
- October 25 – Proactive Parenting
- October 28 – National Take Back Day

In addition, Mental Health First Aid training is being offered on November 1.

Statement of Intent 2018 – Kaitlin Cartoccio will send email to Municipal Alliance members; please respond.

Bernards Township Stigma Free Initiative

Joan Harris is working on this. A presentation to the Municipal Alliance is scheduled for the November 13th meeting.

Ridge High School Booth – A booth on “The Great American VapeOut” is scheduled for November 15.

Adjournment

Hersh Gupta made a motion to adjourn. Cathy Phillips seconded. The meeting was adjourned at 7:15 pm.

Respectfully submitted,

Linda Wooldridge