

**Minutes of the Bernards Township Municipal Alliance/Youth Services  
Commission  
March 6, 2018**

**Mayoral-Appointed Members Attending**

John Malay, Chair, Township Committee Representative  
Kaitlin Cartoccio, Vice-Chair, Health Department Representative  
Linda Wooldridge, BOE Representative  
Johnny Graves, Clergy Representative  
MJ Postal, Senior Citizen Representative  
Amy Button, William Annin Middle School SAC, School Representative  
Sherri Harris, Citizen Representative  
Tracy Baldassare, Bernards Township Police Department  
Joan Harris, Citizen Representative  
Isabel DiPalo, Student Representative  
Swapna Uradi, PTO Representative  
Cathy Phillips, Substance Abuse Representative

**Other Attendees**

Lucy Forgione, Health Department  
KateLynn Patronick, Youth Services Commission  
Jason Quinn, RAAD  
Robyn Ulmer, United Way of Northern New Jersey  
Cindy Fleischer, parent

**Members Not Attending**

Zoe Pettit, Citizen Representative  
Katy Soulas, Civic Group Representative  
Alexandra Timoney, Student Representative

**Call to Order**

John Malay called the meeting to order at 6:04 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.

## **Minute Approval**

Joan Harris made a motion to approve the minutes from February 6, 2018. Tracy Baldassare seconded. The minutes were approved.

## **Reports**

**Somerset County Alliance Coordinator** – 3<sup>rd</sup> quarter reports are due on April 10. The 4<sup>th</sup> quarter networking meeting is scheduled for April 16.

**Youth Services Commission** – KateLynn Patronick reported that the Commission on Child Abuse and Missing Children is holding its annual spring forum on April 18 from 8:30 am to 12:30 pm. John Kriger will give a presentation on “The Dynamics of Addiction, Domestic Violence and Child Abuse.” RSVP to KateLynn Patronick.

**Community Programs Coordinator** – Kaitlin Cartoccio handed in the 2<sup>nd</sup> quarter report to the Youth Services Commission. Kaitlin Cartoccio and Amy Button met to discuss the Youth Services Commission competitive grant. They propose to start a “mini-RAAD” club at William Annin using REBEL (an anti-tobacco program for NJ teens) as a basis. The program would be revamped to cover vaping and e-cigarettes. This proposal has been submitted for approval.

## **Agenda Items**

**School Culture and Climate Initiative Presentation** – *Robyn Ulmer, United Way of Northern New Jersey*

The School Culture and Climate Initiative, a partnership of United Way Youth Empowerment Alliance and the College of Saint Elizabeth Center for Human and Social Development, provides resources for schools to improve their culture and climate in a systemic, intentional, and sustainable way. The group is currently working with Mount Prospect Elementary School, who have been wonderful partners and have made great strides in improving morale among staff and students. The Initiative is a 3-year process.

Learn more about the School Culture and Climate Initiative here:

[http://unitedwaynnj.org/ourwork/ed\\_youthempower\\_schoolcultureclimate.php](http://unitedwaynnj.org/ourwork/ed_youthempower_schoolcultureclimate.php)

At Mt. Prospect, the SEL team has been working to improve lunch and recess to make it more enjoyable and less stressful. They have a “Buddy Bench” on the playground where students can sit if they do not have anyone to play with. The SEL student team monitors the bench. Mt. Prospect also has assemblies, Spirit Days, and service projects.

Ms. Ulmer also shared some data about the benefits of integrating Social Emotional Learning (SEL) into everything a school does, including curriculum. Negative behaviors are reduced and academics improve. Students learn responsible decision-making, self-awareness, and self-management of feelings. Learn more

about Social Emotional Learning at [www.casel.org](http://www.casel.org). CASEL, the Collaborative for Academic, Social and Emotional Learning, is a great resource for data, research, and tangible ideas for working SEL into everyday activities.

Some Municipal Alliance Members expressed an interest in having similar work done in the middle and/or high school. Ms. Ulmer said that she would be happy to discuss this. United Way also offers Professional Development Workshops. See: [http://unitedwaynnj.org/ourwork/ed\\_youthempower\\_profdevelopment.php](http://unitedwaynnj.org/ourwork/ed_youthempower_profdevelopment.php)

Any Municipal Alliance members who would like to learn more can reach Ms. Ulmer at [Robyn.Ulmer@UnitedWayNNJ.org](mailto:Robyn.Ulmer@UnitedWayNNJ.org) or 973-993-1160 x142.

### **Grant Coordinator Update**

*Vaping Presentation for Ridge faculty* – Kaitlin Cartoccio reported that this is now scheduled for April due to bad weather in February and March. Kaitlin also created a vaping brochure for parents.

*Student Stressor Survey* – This survey, which was last done in 2012, will be done on Chromebooks in late May for students in grades 6, 8, 10 and 12. Dr. Harlow will tabulate the data.

*Bernards Township Stigma Free Community Resolution* – the Municipal Alliance approved this resolution to designate Bernards Township as a Stigma Free community with regard to mental health. This resolution will now be presented to the Township Committee.

### *Upcoming Events*

- Youth Mental Health First Aid training – scheduled for March 17 & March 24
- Mental Health Resource Fair – March 22 at Bernards Township Library
- Teen Talk – will be presented by RAAD students on April 11, 2018 at 7 pm in the Ridge cafeteria. The format will be an informal discussion for parents on academic stress, vaping, anxiety and depression, social media and underage drinking.

### **Local Events**

safeTalk – Sunday, April 22, 2018, 10 am – 1pm at the Basking Ridge Fire Company. This is a training program on suicide prevention.

### **Municipal Alliance Member Comment**

John Malay talked about BRASS (Bernards Residents Advocating School Safety). This is a newly organized parent group focusing on school security and student wellness and mental health.

**Adjournment**

Isabel DiPalo made a motion to adjourn. MJ Postal seconded. The meeting was adjourned at 7:24 pm.

Respectfully submitted,

Linda Wooldridge