

**Minutes of the Bernards Township Municipal Alliance/Youth Services
Commission
December 4, 2018**

Mayoral-Appointed Members Attending

John Malay, Chair, Township Committee Representative
Kaitlin Cartoccio, Vice-Chair, Health Department Representative
Linda Wooldridge, BOE Representative
MJ Postal, Senior Citizen Representative
Amy Stem, William Annin Middle School SAC, School Representative
Alexandra Timoney, Student Representative
Katy Soulas, Civic Group Representative
Laurie Albee, Citizen Representative
Joan Harris, Citizen Representative
Tracy Baldassare, Bernards Township Police Department
Zoe Pettit, Citizen Representative
Cathy Phillips, Substance Abuse Representative

Other Attendees

Lucy Forgione, Bernards Township Health Department
KateLynn Patronick, Youth Services Commission
Jamie Sutton, William Annin Middle School

Members Not Attending

Swapna Uradi, PTO Representative
Johnny Graves, Clergy Representative

Call to Order

John Malay called the meeting to order at 6:12 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.

Staff Comment

This is John Malay's final meeting. He said that the Municipal Alliance has a very challenging job, and it has been very rewarding to work with the group. Kaitlin Cartoccio thanked him for his many contributions. Joan Harris will be Chair starting in January 2019.

Minute Approval

MJ Postal made a motion to approve the minutes from October 2, 2018. Joan Harris seconded. Amy Stem made one correction, and the minutes were approved as amended.

Reports

Somerset County Alliance Coordinator – The request for application is due on December 20. Kaitlin Cartoccio said that it is ready to be submitted.

Youth Services Commission – KateLynn Patronick said that the first quarter report is due on January 2. She observed the RAAD group on Empowerment Day and will observe the Peer Educators next week. Ms. Patronick said that 2nd Floor is a youth helpline for mental health issues that is available 24 hours a day. Students can text or call from their Smartphone. She distributed some information cards.

Community Programs Coordinator

Kaitlin Cartoccio is working on the first quarter report for Youth Services. She is buying supplies (yoga mats, blankets, etc.) for the Breathe program, which starts in the spring,

Student Stressor Survey 2018

Kaitlin Cartoccio distributed the presentation on the Student Stressor Survey that was presented to the Board of Education on October 29. The survey was administered 2 months after Parkland, which could explain why fewer students indicated that they felt safe compared with previous surveys in 2005 and 2012. The results for use of e-cigarettes was low compared with the amount of vaping that is occurring at school (especially at Ridge).

Grant Coordinator Update

RAAD -- The RAAD group had a table at Ridge Back to School night. All parents who visited the table received a Municipal Alliance brochure and an informational brochure about vaping.

Empowerment Day at William Annin was on October 19. Kaitlin Cartoccio said that it was the best one yet. There were student workshops on addiction, natural highs and mindfulness. RAAD students participated in basketball, games and art during 6th period. Kevin Wanzer was the featured speaker.

RAAD students also volunteered at Pumpkins in the Park.

October 26 – Municipal Alliance football game

October 27 – Prescription drug drop off

November 14 – Great American “Vape-Out” at Ridge

The Municipal Alliance is working with Stephanie Smith, the Director of Counseling for the Bernards Township School District. Ms. Cartoccio, Mrs. Smith and 8 RAAD students met to discuss improving the environment at Ridge High School.

Peer Educators at William Annin – Amy Stem reported that the Kindness unit is almost complete. Students created a Tree of Kindness display with positive messages and are sending out email messages about kindness. The Drug and Alcohol unit will begin in January 2019.

Upcoming Events

- Interactive Vaping Workshop at Somerset Hills YMCA– December 5, 6:30 pm. Dr. Melissa Tasse, a neuropharmacologist, is the primary presenter. Tracy Baldassare and Kaitlin Cartoccio will be participating also.
- Youth Mental Health First Aid Training – December 13 and January 17. The December 13 training is full; many teachers signed up. The January 17 training still has some openings and is free for Municipal Alliance members.
- Angst Documentary Screening – January 24, 6:30 pm, Ridge PAC. This event is open to the public and is recommended for ages 10 and above. Michael Phelps is in the film, and he talks about his experience with anxiety. After the film is shown, Blueprint Mental Health will facilitate a Q&A.

RHS Booth

MJ Postal reported that the November 14 anti-vaping booth was very well received.

During Guidance Counselor Appreciation Week in February, the Municipal Alliance and the Counseling Department will collaborate to provide information about guidance counselors and Student Assistance Counselors at Ridge.

Fundraising/Twilight Challenge

The Twilight Challenge will be held on June 2, 2019.

Member Comment

Joan Harris reported that a Stigma Free concert will be held at Ross Farm in the spring.

Tracy Baldassare reported that there were 3 Narcan appointments in Bernards Township in November.

Next meeting: January 8, 2019

Adjournment

Linda Wooldridge made a motion to adjourn. Joan Harris seconded. The meeting was adjourned at 7:25 pm.

Respectfully submitted,
Linda Wooldridge