



Minutes of the Bernards Township Municipal Alliance /Youth Services Commission

April 5, 2022

Mayoral-Appointed Members Attending

1. Colin Lochner - Vice Chair, Substance Abuse Representative
2. MJ Postal - Senior Citizen Representative
3. Rebecca Tritt - Ridge High School SAC, School Representative
4. Ellen Houlihan - Civic Group Representative
5. Catherine Santaiti - PTO Representative
6. Rabbi Robert Green – Clergy Representative
7. Michele Roberts – Citizen Representative
8. Sanjiv Raghupathy - Student Representative
9. Madison Clowes – Student Representative
10. Kaitlin Cartoccio, MAC/Health Department Representative

Other Attendees

1. Stephanie Billitz - Somerset County Alliance Coordinator
2. Monica Sprague - Youth Services Commission

Members Not Attending

1. Janice Fields - Chair, Township Committee Representative
2. Tracy Baldassare – Bernards Township Police Department
3. Phil Jasina, Alternate - Bernards Township Police Department
4. Swapna Uradi - Citizen Representative
5. Karen Gray - BOE Representative
6. Xingyue Huang – Citizen Representative

Call to Order

Kaitlin Cartoccio called the meeting to order at 6:01 PM. All attendees stood for the Pledge of Allegiance.

Mission Statement

The Mission Statement was read by Kaitlin Cartoccio. 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.

Three goals of the Alliance: ESP!

1. To **educate** about the damaging effects of alcohol, tobacco and other drugs,
2. To **support** events & programs that provide healthy alternatives to substance abuse, and
3. To create community wide **presence** in the identification of problems and in designing effective measurable solutions.



Staff Comment

No comments

Minutes Approval

A motion was made to approve the minutes from March 8, 2022

Motion 1) Ellen Houlihan

2) Michele Robertson

All in favor, motion carried.

Reports

Somerset County Alliance Coordinator – (Stephanie Billitz)

- Submitting Alliance's grant to the state. Next Networking meeting is April 13th via Zoom and 2 presentations in May and June. Dates TBD.

Youth Services Commission –(Monica Sprague)

- Eager to see what Bernards applies for with the Competitive Grant funding.

Community Program Coordinator – (Kaitlin Cartoccio)

- No official report.

Agenda Items

1. DMHAS Youth Leadership Funding Opportunity – Stephanie Billitz, Somerset County

Additional funds will be available for Youth Leadership Funding. A little over \$29,000 for Somerset County to use over the next 3 years. Approx \$2900/ municipality. Must be used for programming around Youth Leadership. We will have just a couple of weeks to submit proposal for the extra funds to the township committee May 9 meeting. Any ideas are welcome.

- Mental Health First Aid Training
 - Adult Mental Health First Aid (participants are adults):
<https://www.mentalhealthfirstaid.org/population-focused-modules/youth/>
 - Teen Mental Health First Aid (participants are teens):
<https://www.mentalhealthfirstaid.org/population-focused-modules/teens/>
- Another option – the Community In Crisis presentation regarding Colorado Marijuana
- "I Care" identification bracelets for teachers, students, community members to wear and identify themselves as approachable.



- Not specific to DMAS money, but to put on MA radar – addressing the middle school years – navigating online media, filtering information, making good choices.

2. Youth Services Program Updates

a. Competitive Grant Application – COPE (Creating Opportunities for Positive Emotions)

Kaitlin connected with Molly Mooney (Cedar Hill school counselor) and would like to continue mindfulness toolkits for each class (fidgets, emotion cards, etc). Wrote a grant to create COPE - a kit for every K-5 elementary school classroom in Bernards Township. Motivated by the impact of COVID on elementary school. Connects kids with school counselor as needed as follow up. How to identify and manage emotions. Applied for all of the supplies to create kits, back up supply, and resources for school counselors. Submitted on April 1 and will hopefully get a response by next week.

b. REACH (Ridge Education Action & Community Health)

Last meeting was yesterday. Will resume in person meetings after spring break. Will attend all community events like Charter Day. Continuing online newsletter and social media accounts.

Six students applied to be on the Youth Council/ Scholarship to go to LMTI. Will have a few more apply

c. Grab and Go Teen Outreach

Next kit pick up April 13 and 14. Deciding between reusable bags for Earth Day or stress relief for college entrance exam time. Likely Earth Day reusable bags.

3. Twilight Challenge Update

- Wegmans will donate all of the bottled water, water and cups for water stations, and fruit for day.
- Still need sandwiches/ food for about 30 volunteers.
- Athletifreak (big sponsor) – Will work out items for awards, take charge of children's lollipop loop, and heading prerace warm up.
- Awards Update – may pair down and eliminate age group winners as it is a smaller race of about 100 runners. Looking at top 3 male and top 3 female winners, and top 3 overall winners.
- Need MA volunteers to put up posters in local businesses. Kaitlin will send out a sign up for different business centers, and volunteers from group can sign up and pick up materials from Health Center.



- Kaitlin will also email out signup genius for race day volunteers.

PUBLIC COMMENT

No members of the public present at this time.

LOCAL EVENTS / MUNICIPAL ALLIANCE MEMBER COMMENTS:

Discussion on returning to in person meetings in May. Most members favorable and can reach out to Kaitlin if they're uncomfortable. Zoom option may or may not be available.

ADJOURNMENT

The meeting adjourned at 7:30 pm

Motion (1) Kaitlin Cartoccio

(2) Mary Jane Postal

Respectfully Submitted,

Catherine Santaiti

Municipal Alliance Secretary