



**Minutes of the Bernards Township  
Municipal Alliance/ Youth Services Commission  
June 6, 2023**

**Mayoral-Appointed Members Attending:**

1. Ellen Houlihan – Civic Group Representative
2. Catherine Santaiti – PTO Representative
3. Rebecca Tritt – SAC Representative
4. Lily Wong – Citizen Representative
5. Kaitlin Cartoccio – Health Department Representative/Grant Coordinator
6. Anderson Lee – Student Representative
7. Ed Rubino - Citizen Representative
8. Philip Jasina – Bernards Township Police/Chairperson
9. Lucy Forgione - Board of Health
10. Colin Lochner – Substance Abuse Representative/ Vice Chairperson
11. Rabbi Robert Green – Clergy Representative
12. Csilla Csipak – Board of Education
13. Jennifer Asay – Township Committee

**Other Attendees:**

1. Susan Visser – Community in Crisis
2. Monica Sprague – Youth Services Commission

**Members Not Attending:**

1. Sanjiv Raghupathy – Student Representative
2. Michele Robertson – Citizen Representative
3. MJ Postal – Senior Citizen Representative
4. Tracy Baldassare – Bernards Township Police

**Call to Order**

Colin Lochner called the meeting to order at 6:03pm. All attendees stood for the Pledge of Allegiance.

**Mission Statement**

The Mission Statement was read by Philip Jasina. 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.



## **MINUTE APPROVAL – May 2, 2023 - APPROVED**

Motion (1) Phil Jasina

Motion (2) Ed Rubino

### **Staff Comment**

Welcome to the meeting and thank you to all in attendance.

Welcome Jen Asay, township committee member, to the Municipal Alliance.

Well done, Kaitlin, on a successful Twilight Challenge.

### **Reports**

**Somerset County Alliance Coordinator (Ebeny Torres)** – E. Torres not present. Kaitlin Cartoccio provided the following update:

1. RFA report and DMAS Funding submitted for July 2023 – June 2024. We will find out our funding in the fall.
2. Ebeny will attend in September.

### **Youth Services Commission (*Monica Sprague*)**

1. Jump Start Networking event was a success. The culinary students did a beautiful job catering. In the future, we would like to have a couple of Bernards Township Municipal Alliance members attend this event.
2. Budget will be tentatively finalized on June 26, 2023. Funding amount for competitive grant will be decided after this date. Kailin is invited to submit request for funding with proposed programs.
3. Submitting grants for REACH, Viking Yoga, and Cope.

### **Community Programs Coordinator (*Kaitlin Cartoccio*)**

- Applying again for REACH, Viking Yoga, and COPE. If we get another year of COPE, that would be great to continue elementary program and extend to middle school. We created a comfort corner in the middle school library in the past, and it would be great to update and extend.
- Sharing out results of the PRIDE Survey to the Board of Education. Community in Crisis created a summary of most significant data collected. If they would like for us to present at a board of education meeting, we can. Alternatively, we can post and send out this information.
- Thank you to Amy at Community in Crisis for analyzing data and synthesizing information in a summary for BOE and public.
- Thank you, Rebecca Tritt, for inviting us participate in the Mental Health Week at Ridge. It was the most successful year for REACH. REACH students helped inform what give aways should be. Included resources and suicide hotline cards

### **Agenda Items**

#### **1. Twilight Challenge 2023– *Debrief***

- a. 256 participants (217 5K participants, 10 health walkers, and 29 lollipop loop participants); 184 runners who finished race.
- b. \$239 additional donations and over \$4K in race fees



- c. The two runners who came through first did not follow the course after being advised by race marshal. Tiffany reviewed the runner's GPS maps to confirm, and both were disqualified as they did not follow the official race course. Both were understanding.
- d. May use a different Race Timer next time as 2 runners had issues with chips, issue with starting line and finish line placement, timer couldn't print results, and had problem with results of race winners in multiple categories.
- e. Taylor recommended cutting pre-registration in 3 parts to help with efficiency.
- f. J. Asay – confirmed that the course is the RIDGE cross country course. Recommended reaching out to Ridge runners and their parents to advise best places for race marshals on the course.
- g. Band was fabulous and professional. Mama Stew plays more upbeat music. Will decide on band closer to next year.
- h. Shout out to Jeff Lee for the race photography! 1600 pics including drone shots of volunteers, pics of families and friends at registration, and race start and finish shots. Phil volunteered to upload photos.
- i. Regarding Health Walk – this year we had power walkers. Next year we need someone to walk behind all the walkers to make sure no one gets left behind or lost.
- j. Ordered 210 t-shirts this year. There are some left overs from runners that didn't show.
- k. Big thank yous to Ridge Bagel, Starbucks Riverwalk, Basking Ridge EMS (Steve Hornblow), Basking Ridge Police Department, Wegman Bridgewater, and Shoprite Bernardsville. Catherine to send thank you notes.
- l. Excellent to have Rich (Park Grounds Crew) and Taylor (runner and event manager who worked with Kaitlin).

## **2. Youth Services Program Updates**

- a. *REACH (Ridge Education Action & Community Health)*
  - i. 5 seniors are graduating
  - ii. Last meeting of the year was last Friday – Picnic
  - iii. 15 students attending LMTI this summer including 5 incoming freshmen and 3 return campers.
- b. Viking Yoga – no update. GEM (Girls Empowering Mindfulness) might replace Viking Yoga. Similar to Girls on the Run.
- c. COPE (Creating Opportunities for Positive Emotions) – This year we repurchased stock to resupply classroom kits and provide more curriculum resources for guidance counselors. We will see if program continues to be funded.

## **PUBLIC COMMENT**

- No members of public present.

## **LOCAL EVENTS / MUNICIPAL ALLIANCE MEMBER COMMENT**

- Jen Asay – Introduced herself and background as pharmacist and work with substance abuse education.
- Next meeting is Sept 5, 2023. Kaitlin will be back in November.



**ADJOURNMENT**

This meeting was adjourned at 7:16p.m.

Motion (1) Kaitlin Cartoccio

(2) Phil Jasina

Respectfully submitted,

Catherine Santaiti, *Secretary*