



**Minutes of the Bernards Township
Municipal Alliance/ Youth Services Commission
September 5, 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. Anderson Lee – Student Representative
6. Ed Rubino - Citizen Representative
7. Philip Jasina – Bernards Township Police/Chairperson
8. Colin Lochner – Substance Abuse Representative/ Vice Chairperson
9. Rabbi Robert Green – Clergy Representative
10. Csilla Csipak – Board of Education
11. Jennifer Asay – Township Committee
12. MJ Postal – Senior Citizen Representative
13. Tracy Baldassare – Bernards Township Police
14. Abigail Phillips – Health Department Representative

Other Attendees:

1. Susan Visser – Community in Crisis
2. Monica Sprague – Youth Services Commission
3. Christian Mulry
4. Winter Karl Gruswitz
5. Josh B

Members Not Attending:

1. Sanjiv Raghupathy – Student Representative
2. Michele Robertson – Citizen Representative
3. Kaitlin Cartoccio – Health Department Representative/Grant Coordinator
4. Lucy Forgione - Board of Health
5. Ebeny Torres – Somerset County Alliance Coordinator

Call to Order

Phil Jasina called the meeting to order at 6:00pm. 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 – June 6, 2023 - APPROVED

Motion (1) Phil Jasina

Motion (2) Colin Lochner

Staff Comment

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

Reports

Somerset County Alliance Coordinator (Ebeny Torres) – E. Torres not present. No report.

Youth Services Commission (Monica Sprague)

1. Sent an email to all Municipal Alliance members resources and events. Please email with any questions.
2. Thank you for submitting grant application for 2023 – 2024 year. Will know by first week in October if funding will be received.
3. New training coordinator starting in October.

Community Programs Coordinator (Abby Phillips)

- Took camp attendees to LMTI camp this year and developed action plan with students. Will focus on dangers of vaping. REACH students shared that they enjoyed all the presenters at LMTI. They also shared that vaping is normalized at school by students who vape, and it gives impression that it is ok to do. They would like to focus this year on more awareness around the dangers of vaping.
- Suicide Prevention booth on 9/15 at Ridge at lunchtime, and REACH students will have an opportunity to sign up to volunteer at the booth.

Agenda Items

1. Naloxone Training and Awareness

- a. Community in Crisis handed out about 15 cans of Narcan at National Night
- b. As there is increase in availability of Narcan, there is concern about awareness on how to use and what to expect if someone uses to help another. CIC offers free online training about every 5 weeks. If you attend, you will also receive a free kit. You can also pick up free kit from CIC and receive an overview.
- c. There are pharmacies in community that participate in Narcan program where individuals can get a free kit.

2. Youth Services Program Updates

- a. REACH (Ridge Education Action & Community Health)
 - i. Suicide Prevention Booth 9/15 at Ridge during lunch
 - ii. 9/12 – REACH “starter” meeting



- iii. REACH Booth at Ridge Back to School Night
- iv. REACH students would like to do more with WAMS students around mental health as well as with parents.
- b. Viking Yoga – no update on Viking Yoga or GEM (Girls Empowering Mindfulness)
- c. COPE (Creating Opportunities for Positive Emotions) – Will find out in October if grant is received to continue program.

PUBLIC COMMENT

- No comment

LOCAL EVENTS / MUNICIPAL ALLIANCE MEMBER COMMENT

- LEAD (Law Enforcement Against Drugs) “Too Good for Drugs Program” (drug education & prevention) that was at WAMS will be moving into elementary school.
- SLEO’s are present in schools. Brief clarification on position.
- Community in Crisis will be opening building behind current space. Friday night fun nights will be starting for middle and high school students as an alternative to parties. Will also have 4 week Adventures in Mindfulness starting October 9 for high schoolers and a social emotional learning workshop for middle schoolers week of October 9. If REACH students would like to partner with CIC to run a program in the new space, please reach out to Susan Visser or CIC.
- Next meeting is October 3, 2023. Kaitlin Cartoccio will be back in November.

ADJOURNMENT

This meeting was adjourned at 7:03p.m.

Motion (1) Lily Wong
(2) Phil Jasina

Respectfully submitted,
Catherine Santaiti, *Secretary*