



**Minutes of the Bernards Township  
Municipal Alliance/ Youth Services Commission  
October 3, 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. MJ Postal – Senior Citizen Representative
10. Abigail Phillips – Health Department Representative
11. Lucy Forgione - Board of Health

**Other Attendees:**

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

**Members Not Attending:**

1. Csilla Csipak – Board of Education
2. Jennifer Asay – Township Committee
3. Sanjiv Raghupathy – Student Representative
4. Michele Robertson – Citizen Representative
5. Kaitlin Cartoccio – Health Department Representative/Grant Coordinator
6. Ebony Torres – Somerset County Alliance Coordinator
7. Rabbi Robert Green – Clergy Representative
8. Tracy Baldassare – Bernards Township Police

**Call to Order**

Phil Jasina 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 – September 5, 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 (Ebony Torres)** – E. Torres not present. Phil Jasina read provided report from E. Torres:

1. Site visit for 2023 will happen when Kaitlin Cartoccio returns.
2. Wed., Oct. 8 is Somerset County Alliance quarterly networking meeting. Email with information sent out to the MA members.
3. While emails from Ebony Torres get forwarded to the MA members, Ebony has been working with Somerset County IT dept. to put together a calendar of events on county website where county and municipal event information can be posted in one place.
4. Finalizing year end
5. Thank you to Riya and Lucy for their work.
6. DEDR plans are still being finalized

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

1. Somerset County resource event with a family focus is on Friday at the Somerset County Votech in Bridgewater. General county and youth services resources will be available.
2. Launched “Community Connections” workshops. *Strategies for Effective Bystander Intervention* is Oct. 27<sup>th</sup> at 10am-12pm; participants must register. Information emailed to MA members.
3. Proposal review for competitive grant applications Update: Received Bernards Township application and it was recommended to approve. We will know by the end of October if county commissioners approve.
4. Trying to limit email updates to weekly.
5. Appreciate Bernards Township keeping youth services a priority. Need to ensure that any programs sponsored by Youth Services Commission is clearly distinguished as such and not just Municipal Alliance Sponsored on website, social media, and flyers. Lucy Forgione assured that we will do best our best do so. Phil Jasina requested that any discrepancies be brought to his attention for correction.

#### **Community Programs Coordinator (Abby Phillips)**

1. Municipal Alliance will have a booth at the Ridge football game this Friday, Oct. 6. Will hand out It's t-shirts and Municipal Alliance information. Please let Abby know if you are able to volunteer at the event.
2. Suicide prevention table last month went very well. Traffic was great and students seem to like the give aways (fidgets, etc.)



3. 2<sup>nd</sup> Back to School Night this week. REACH students will have a table to share information with parents.

-

### **Agenda Items**

#### **1. Naloxone Training and Awareness**

- a. Community in Crisis will have a Narcan training November 7. 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.
- b. If you choose to carry Narcan, make sure that if administered you also call 911 and stay with effected person. Being trained is important to understand how a person may behave and respond to Narcan.
- c. There are pharmacies in community that participate in Narcan program where individuals can get a free kit no questions asked. State will also be providing for free and they are soon to be available at local stores on the shelf. Again training is so important!

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

- a. REACH (Ridge Education Action & Community Health) – REACH students were at the Mayor’s fall fest this past weekend. They will also be volunteering at an information table at the 2<sup>nd</sup> Back to School Night at Ridge this week and at the Ridge football game on Friday night to provide information to parents and students.
- b. Viking Yoga – no update on Viking Yoga or GEM (Girls Empowering Mindfulness)
- c. COPE (Creating Opportunities for Positive Emotions) – still awaiting grant approval

### **PUBLIC COMMENT**

- No members of the public present. No comment.

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

- Lily Wong: Suggest having a Municipal Alliance table at the Mayor’s Fall Festival in the future.
- Phil Jasina: DEA Take Back Day is 10/28. Table outside police department and access to secure drop box in police station.
- Lucy Forgione: Thank you to Abby Phillips for stepping in for Kaitlin, as well as Riya Patel for taking care of all the fiscal reporting for Municipal Alliance.
- Colin Lochner: October is Substance Abuse Prevention month – Good toolkit at: [Prevention Month | SAMHSA](#). Recommended MA review resources there to include with MA materials at events.
- Susan Visser: Harm Reduction Conference on 10/10 at RVCC sponsored by CIC. MA members invited to attend. Phil Jasina forwarded flyer via email.
- Congratulations to Anderson Lee for achieving Eagle Scout this Monday!
- Lily Wong: QPR Training by Empower Somerset is very effective. Will get word out regarding additional upcoming training sessions via social media
- No meeting on November 7, 2023 due to Election Day. Lucy Forgione, Phil Jasina, or Kaitlin Cartoccio will email members the information about next meeting date.

**ADJOURNMENT**

This meeting was adjourned at 6:41 p.m.

Motion (1) Phil Jasina

(2) Lily Wong

Respectfully submitted,  
Catherine Santaiti, *Secretary*