



The Coalition for a Better Wallingford Meeting Minutes

Date: June 27th, 2024

Time: 6:30 PM

Location: 136 Center St. Wallingford, CT 06492

Meeting was called to order by: Dianne Mark, Executive Director

IN ATTENDANCE:

Dianne Mark	Rajan Doering	Nikki Trocchio*
Jillian Mark	Maria Harlow	Mandy Miranda
State Rep. Mary Mushinsky	Melanie Rossacci	Diane Tourangeau
Natalie Campagnuolo	Sharon Hanford*	Liz Davis
Jared Couto	Odali Rodriguez (Wallingford Health Department) *	
Cori Hass (Mayor Administrative Aid) *		

*attended via Zoom

BODY OF MEETING:

Coalition Programs and Events

Natalie Campagnuolo called the meeting to order, and all participants introduced themselves. Natalie discussed the progress of the Creative Art Program and introduced the Friday Night Teen Group, which runs from the end of school until 7:00 PM. The Elementary Art Group is struggling, and new ideas are being considered for that age group.

Natalie has been conducting mentoring sessions during lunch waves at the high school, informing youth about the Coalition and gathering input. She recommends that other Wallingford leaders attend lunch waves to increase youth interest. Natalie has also worked with the alternative high school program, focusing on students with behavioral concerns and social-emotional needs.

The Coalition offers prevention services, and youth are using these resources. Natalie will continue visiting Sheehan and Lyman Hall High Schools next year to involve students in jobs and extracurricular activities. Data is being tracked on paper with the schools, and there's a suggestion to share this information with the public. Dianne also sent data and information to the Town Council to make people aware of the Coalition's work in the community. An email was also sent to the Town Council offering to do a meet and greet and Narcan Training. Dianne and Natalie noted individual interest as people are contacting the Coalition.

Natalie and Dianne briefed everyone on the DEA Takeback, stating that it was heavily promoted through billboards, social media, and radio advertisements. Despite this, the turnout was lower



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than anticipated. At the event, participants were offered activated charcoal medication disintegration bags (DeTerra). The Coalition plans to collaborate with the police department to enhance promotion for future events. There is a takeback box available at the police department. It was suggested that the location should be closer to the road for future DEA Take Back events, as poor signage and difficulty finding the event may have contributed to the low turnout. Dianne intends to communicate with the police department about improving the event's location and visibility.

Natalie informs everyone that two Coalition youth members, Jared and Lina, received YSS awards and an autograph from President Joe Biden.

Dianne states that the Miles for Mental Health event was successful, with nearly double the number of participants compared to the previous year. Additionally, the Coalition has participated in various community events, including the Wallingford Restaurant Hop, Wallingford Pride Event, Health Department Fair, and Block Party. The Coalition also attended the Wallingford Wing Fest, where youth volunteers helped to set up the event. The Coalition continues to participate in Garden Market at Doolittle.

ARPA Funding

ARPA programs are ongoing, including Narcan training sessions and alcohol prevention classes. The Coalition seeks to increase participation in the Narcan training (community outreach, slide decks for local businesses, professionalism, etc.). The Coalition is also exploring ways to increase participation in parent education programs for substance abuse prevention. Lastly, the Coalition engages youth in substance abuse prevention and awareness through the Friday group. State Rep. Mary Mushinsky recommended training at PTAC or PTO meetings, stating that this will improve data for future grant applications and renewal.

Upcoming Events

Dianne briefs meeting participants on upcoming events, including the Cosmic Community Family Day, featuring prizes for children and adults, public fundraising, and various safety demonstrations. The Coalition is seeking volunteers for this event. Dianne and Natalie provide an overview of specific needs, including raffle prizes for each child, vendors to table the event, fundraising, volunteers, etc.

Round Table – Town Updates

Liz Davis reports that many merchants are experiencing slow business; Liz expresses interest in organizing a block party to get locals involved in shopping at local businesses. Liz recommends that during the block party, restaurants offer sidewalk dining as well.

Rajan Doering (Board of Education) states that the school year has ended, and the high school graduation took place. Additionally, there is an upcoming NFL Players Weekend (youth clinic



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with NFL players doing drills). This event is \$50 per child; there are opportunities to sponsor youth. This event is taking place at Hamden Hall for students between 8th and 12th grade.

State Rep. Mary Mushinsky reports on new regulations for THC-containing beverages (such as seltzers); these beverages can only be sold in a CT-licensed liquor store or dispensary. There are also low dose limits.

Melanie Rossacci reports significant budget cuts, including reductions in staffing and programs. The BOE needs more money to help students and their families, but the state is shorting the BOE money, which is detrimental. Wallingford BOE is not eligible for the HVAC program (grant funding) because Wallingford did not meet the cut.

Youth Social Services reports working with over 40 youth for the Summer Program. They have also attained a \$83,000 grant and are working with SCOW on educational training.

Odali Rodriguez reports that the Health Department is collaborating with SCOW to put together a QPR program for the youth and has also been attending Garden Market. Odali reports that CPR classes have been held every last Tuesday of the month since February; the plan is to begin CPR classes again with more organization. Odali inquired about the Coalition doing Narcan after CPR training.

Cori Hass reports that Twilight Tunes is starting next week on July 10th. Cori also reports that grants are also becoming available; specifically, there is approved funding from the government to cover some of the boilers at the schools.

Sharon Hanford states that the Alliance now has a full staff of prevention specialists and suicide prevention/awareness and that the Alliance would love to partner with and help the Coalition.

Dianne requests continued support, participation, and fundraising and encourages recruiting new members.

The meeting concluded with Dianne reminding Coalition members to be mindful of their social media posts, as they work with youth and should lead by example.

MEETING ADJOURNMENT:

Diane Tourangeau asked for adjournment at 7:44 P.M., Seconded by Mary Mushinsky.