

North Reading Youth Services Committee Meeting

Date/Time: Monday, December 18, 2023 / 6:00 pm

Location: North Reading Town Hall

Committee Members Present	Committee Members Absent	Guests/Visitors Present
Peter Majane, Chair	Beatriz Vautin, Secretary	Dr. Patrick Daly
Jason Slattery, Vice-Chair	Amy Salomon	
Frank Ferraro	Alexis Arsenis	
Amy DiChiara		
Jodi Sponzo		
Seani Thomas		

- 1. Call to Order.** Chair Peter Majane called the meeting to order at 6:00p.m.
- 2. Review of Minutes.** November 27, 2023 minutes were reviewed and accepted. Jodi motioned and Frank seconded the motion. Jason did the minutes.
- 3. New Business. Guest Speaker: Dr. Patrick Daly, Ed.D.** Superintendent North Reading Public Schools

Dr. Daly expressed he was excited to have a new Youth Services Director and fresh programming. Dr. Daly believes Youth Services is the perfect complement for support and connection to the other offerings and athletics available in town. Finding support youth need without the stigma of an official seeking mental health support for the school office or councilors on the school campus. Not discounting the excellent work that the mental health support team is provide, but an ideal supplement for that connection that is critical for overall wellbeing.

Dr. Daly showcased some updates to the Bridge Program. Programs were added and expanded post-COVID. COVID was a catalyst for social and emotional anxiety. There was also a deficit of human connection by the shelter in place restrictions during the pandemic. The Bridge Program are aimed to facilitate this adjustment as we get back to “normal”. Universal Screenings were a great tool for being proactive rather than reactive.

Dr. Daly shared the role of Ms. Lindsay Gervino the School Department Adjustment Counselor. Focused on youth experiencing a behavioral health crisis. Services include: crisis assessment; development of a risk management / safety plan and referrals for additional support if/when needed.

One important area was strengthening the connection among groups in town that share a common thread (Youth Services, Community Impact Team, Substance Use Coalition), as well as collaboration or consolidation of many peer and mentoring groups with the purpose of benchmarking best practices. Student’s grades were the final topic of conversation. Dr. Daly said coming out of COVID there were gaps in reading and writing, but consistent with the State’s metrics. Standardized assessment data illustrated no signs that the students are falling behind. Coming back to the traditional classroom setting was a source of anxiety for many students. Dr. Daly praised his team for transparency, identifying opportunity areas and quickly connecting resources to close the gaps.

4. Director Youth Services Report

Eleanor Richard: Youth Services Director, gave an update on current programming and how they have been well attended. Optimistic and thriving for improved attendance moving forward.

Review of upcoming meeting schedule and discuss possible guest speakers

Jen Ford to be invited to the February 2024 meeting to give us an update on the CIT activities.

Someone from the Guidance Department, possibly for the March meeting.

Principals for all of the elementary schools, possibly for the April meeting.

5. Old Business. There was no old business to discuss.

6. Miscellaneous Business. Lillian Hartman: Director of Public Services, updated the Youth Services Committee when fiscal year was closing.

A motion was requested to postpone the required December nomination and electing of the 2024 Chair and Vice-Chair until the January 22, 2024 meeting to give an opportunity for members to vote that were unable to attend the December 18, 2023 due to the rain storm that affected attendance. The motion was approved.

A Youth Services Committee (YSC) member, Frank Ferraro had expressed dissatisfaction regarding a conversation with Select Board member with respect to YSC member re-appointments. This matter is set to be discussed during the Select Board meeting on January 8, 2024.

7. Set date for next meeting. The next meeting is scheduled for February 26 at Town Hall.

Chair Majane adjourned the meeting.

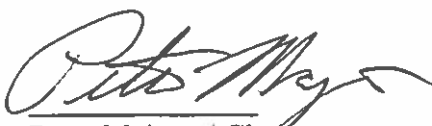
Next meeting: January 22, 2024

Meeting adjourned at 7:00 p.m.

Documents and Handouts	
November 27, 2023 minutes	
YSC Update from Youth Services Director November 2023	

January 22, 2024

Date Minutes Approved


Peter Majane / Chair

YSC Update from Youth Services Director 1/22/2024

Department Operations

The Youth Services, representatives from Parks and Rec, the Senior Center Director, and the Public Services Director meet in early January to discuss space needs and space-sharing opinions within a future Intergenerational Center.

Youth Services attended a Life Long Learning Group meeting with other town departments on January 3. As part of the conversation with this group, programming, educational opportunities, skills-building, and social connections for the 18-26 “young adult” group were discussed. The degree to which this type of “young adult” programming falls under the Youth Services purview is unclear.

Youth Services additionally attended a Dementia Friends training to learn how a Dementia Friendly group could be formed by youth in North Reading and to Eleanor became a certified Dementia Friends Trainer.

Youth Services submitted the department’s FY2025 budget request. This request includes increasing funds for supplies by \$1,600, increasing funds for professional development by \$1,000, and a request for funding a part-time assistant director to support department operations and run youth and family programming.

Programming & Events

Youth Services continues to offer recurring monthly programs and pop-up programs. Since the last Youth Services Committee Meeting on December 18th, youth services has offered 12 programs and events. As the table below shows, youth attendance continues to be a challenge.

Date	Program	Youth Attendance	Novel Youth Attendance
12/19	MS Homework Help	4	0
12/21	Intergenerational Trivia	0	0
1/2	MS Homework Help	0	0
1/2	LGBTQIA+ Meet-Up	0	0
1/3	Home School Meet-Up	0	0
1/5	String Theory: Learn to Sew/Knit	0	0
1/9	MS Homework Help	2	0
1/10	Tabling at Middle School Lunch	N/A	N/A
1/10	School Avoidance/Refusal Zoom Meet-Up	0	0
1/11	Multicultural/BIPOC Teen Meet-Up	0	0

1/16	MS Homework Help	Canceled	Canceled
1/18	Disabled/Neurodivergent Meet-Up		
1/19	Teen Board Game Club		

Since October, Youth Services programs have had 85 youth attend, and without counting the redundancy of youth attending more than one session, we have had 33 unduplicated youth attend. The Youth Services department has offered a total of 61 hours of programming, of which 24 hours have had no youth in attendance. This equates to 40% of programming hours being unattended by youth.

Our upcoming programs for February can be found on the calendar at the end of this report.

Visibility and Partnership

Youth Services continues working with the Community Impact Team to create 12 family and parenting workshops spread throughout January to May in a series called Noodles and Noggins. The first six workshops are open for registration on the CIT website.

Eleanor tabled during both middle school lunches on January 10th. She talked with 56 middle schoolers about Youth Services programs (41 of which represented youth who had not previously attended YS events or programs) and handed out 48 “menus” of 2024 YS programming offerings. This also served as an opportunity for youth services to connect with teachers and administrators at the middle and high schools.

Eleanor attended the December meeting of the Middle School council. During this meeting a plan was created to have middle schoolers who fast during the month of Ramadan share the non-food-space that Youth Services will be running in the MS/HS media center during their lunch blocks.

Eleanor has also been working with the library to cross-promote programming, as almost all of it is offered in their space, and they do not have a teen librarian.

Upcoming YSC meeting invitations include:

- **Coalition for Substance Use Prevention (and Recovery)** – Jan. 22 - 10am (Hybrid)
- **Mental Wellness Action Team** - Jan. 25th - 10am (Virtual)
- **Middle School Council** - Jan 29th - 3:15pm (MS Principal’s Conference Room)
- **School Committee Meeting** - Jan. 30th - 6:45pm (MS/HS)
- **K-12 Action Team** – Feb. 7 at 6pm (DLL)

Serving Youth Together

The Recreation Department currently has registration for their winter programs on their website. Their winter offerings include basketball, karate, dancing, tumbleweeds, twinkle tots, wiggles and giggles, basketball skills clinics, inclYOUision sports, and Robothink.

The library continues to hold Teen Advisory Board (TAB) meetings and offers D&D, Retro Video Game Club. The library also now has half-day Teen crafting events, such as felting and canvas painting.

CIT has the following youth-orientated workshops scheduled. Register online!

Program	Date	Time	Location
Youth Cognitive Development	1/24/24	7p	NRPD
Strength Bombardment	1/30/24	6:30pm	Flint Memorial Library
Ages, Stages, and Realistic Expectations	2/7/24	6:30pm	Flint Memorial Library
Setting Social Media and Digital Boundaries (with child)	2/8/24	5p and 7p	NRPD
Practicing Refusal Skills (with child)	2/8/24	6p and 8p	NRPD
Community Naloxone Training	2/12/24	6:30p	NRPD
Family Conflict Management	2/13/24	6:30p	Flint Memorial Library
Asset Building for Non-Parents: Be A Trusted Adult	2/27/24	6:30p	Flint Memorial Library
Mental Health First Aid For Adults Working with Youth (2-day certification)	3/13 & 3/20/24	5p-9:30p	NRPD

FEBRUARY

NORTH READING YOUNG ADULT PROGRAMS

SUN	MON	TUE	WED	THU	FRI	SAT
				1 Teen String Theory (Learn to Sew/Kint) 3:30-5 @ Flint Memorial Library Study Room	3	
4	5 5th Grade Girls 3:30-5 @ Flint Memorial Library	6 MS Homework Help 3-5 @ Flint Memorial Library Study Room ----- LGBTQA+ Teen Meet Up 6:30-7:30 @ Flint Memorial Library Study	7 Home School Meet-Up 1-2 @ Flint Memorial Library ----- Ages & Stages Workshop 6:30 @ Flint Memorial Library	8 Multicultural Teens Meet Up 3:30-4:30 @ Flint Memorial Library	9	10
11	12 5th Grade Girls 3:30-5 @ Flint Memorial Library	13 MS Homework Help 3-5 @ Flint Memorial Library Study Room	14 Intergenerational Valentines Dance Party 2:00-4:00 @ Senior Center	15 Disabled & Neurodivergent Teens Meet Up 3:30-4:30 @ Flint Memorial Library	16 Teen Board Game Club 3:30-5 @ Flint Memorial Library	17
18	19 PRESIDENT'S DAY	20 Teen Makers Lunch 12- 1:30 @ Flint Memorial Library	21	22 Teen Makers Lunch 12- 1:30 @ Flint Memorial Library	23	24
25	26 5th Grade Girls 3:30-5 @ Flint Memorial Library ----- Dress & Decomp 6-7 @ Flint Memorial Library Teen Space	27 MS Homework Help 3-5 @ Flint Memorial Library Study Room	28 Wednesday Tween & Teen Crafters 3:30-5 @ Flint Memorial Library Study Room	29 Teen Podcasting 3:30-4:30 @ Flint Memorial Library Study Room		