



February Council Meeting Minutes

Date: February 3, 2016

Attendees: Cornelia Edgeworth, Mayor David Gronbach, Kathy Hanley, Scott Hoffman, Stacey Kabasakalian, Erica Keane, Mary Jane Lundgren, Gene Marino, Lindsey Marr, Peg Molina, Jason O'Connor, Joan Wyner

Absent: Mike Crespan, James Dzamko, Kathy Hanley, Brendan Miller, Dana Pollack,

Observers/Guests: Max Marino, Patrolman Vinny Parziale

Opening group discussions:

Introductions/welcomes were made for Lindsey Marr, our new co-chair, who joined the New Milford Youth Agency today replacing Laura Cleary.

Erica & Gene/Structural Guidelines:

Proposed Structural Guidelines (attached here) were presented to the council for review. It was noted that with the growth of the council, and our intent to align with [HVCASA's](#) Strategic Framework Guidelines, basic guidelines need to be established to maximize our efficiency and ensure we are communicating positive, sanctioned messaging about our efforts. In the Proposed Structural Guidelines, general council membership was established, as well as processes for admitting new members, guest attendance at meetings, etc. A Leadership Committee was proposed to help facilitate the business of the council. The Leadership committee will consist of a Chairperson (Stacey/Lindsey), a Co-Chairperson (Erica), a treasurer (Jason) and a Secretary (Gene). Stacey will begin to transition her chair role to Lindsey as Lindsey assumes her tasks at the YA. Stacey will continue to represent the council at the HVCASA regional council meetings. Stacey will also continue to work with Jason on grant and funding efforts.

Members are requested to review the Proposed Structural Guidelines by next **Tuesday, February 9th, 2016**. If no additional suggestions, revisions or objections are received by then, they will be determined to be accepted and in place going forward.

A reading of the NMSAPC Mission as it appears on our [website](#) made it obvious that we need to review this in order to align with Strategic Framework Guidelines and to be more inclusive in our efforts with other forms of substance abuse besides heroin/opioids (marijuana, alcohol, etc.), and to promote healthy life-choices and community-spirited programs. We should be conscious of this in the council's efforts going forward. Gene will work with the Leadership Committee to draft a revision that the entire council can review.

Stacey/Budget Update

The council's budget is ~ \$7K; only a small portion has been expended to date - (\$200 to [Caron Treatment Centers](#) for their speaker, Cory Trevana on January 19th at the Basics of Addiction Forum, and ~ \$125 for printing expenses for our brochure and hand-out cards). Approximately \$3K is earmarked for the [I Am Dirt](#) presentation in April. Stacey/Jason will provide exact figures at our next meeting.

Erica asked Vinny about any current trends, issues etc. facing the NMPD re substance issues. Vinny provided his background, credentials and passion to be involved. He described his unique perspective as SRO at SMS, and reported on some of his frustrations & his observation of mostly marijuana use. Vinny reported the Police Chief would like to alternate the three district SROs to attend council meetings on a rotating basis.

Erica/Update on upcoming SADD programs:

The need for some form of "Post Dirt" auditorium lobby event/display following the **I Am Dirt** presentation was discussed. All feel this should be more inclusive of all the appropriate town agencies/resources. Peg and Joan offered to help coordinate with and reach out to potential agencies to participate. The NMSAPC would like to offer give-aways/raffles/ or something of the sort to promote attendance; Vinny offered to work his contacts with local vendors/merchants to solicit donations for these prizes. The council will plan to distribute our flyers, new Mission

statement and other collateral at a table. The Mayor suggested that [MCCA](#) be invited to participate, particularly in light of their recent [receipt of grants](#) funding new resource(s) in their New Milford facility. He encouraged strengthening our relationship w/ MCCA. Peg offered to contact MCCA to pursue this avenue. [Greenwoods Counseling Referrals](#) was also suggested as another resource at a "Post Dirt" auditorium lobby event. Lindsay will follow up on that.

"Open Mic Night" (March 3rd- NMHS café) to be organized and produced by SADD student members.

Discussion occurred re details/next steps for the **Family Scavenger Hunt**. This is scheduled for May 15th 2-4pm on the Town Green. Help is needed to develop the questions/clues for the hunt, plan the event and solicit donations for prizes. Lindsey agreed to help on this effort, and Vinny again offered his help to solicit donations. Lindsey will

Other Business/Various Members:

Because of an opportunity that arose in school scheduling, Erica is setting up a plan for Brendan to speak at the HS on March 2nd. She has connected Brendan and Assistant Principal Scorlick, who are working to facilitate this. Meanwhile, Scott has gotten Brendan and Dr. Tomasello together, and Brendan has been approved to speak to Scott's class (date TBD). It was also suggested that Cornelia could be invited to speak, and that she also be included in Scott's curriculum going forward.

Vinny questioned why there is no representation at NMSAPC from the **Board of Education**. He underscored the disconnect on what he observes in his role and getting messages directed and communicated. Discussion turned to the issue of a parental waiver being required in order for students to meet with the school district's Substance Abuse Counselor, Cornelia. Mayor Gronbach again offered his assistance to engage the BoE. He suggested that we invite Josh Smith, Interim Superintendent of Schools, to our next meeting and to include a copy of our most recent minutes for Josh to become familiar with our efforts, and to explain the impediment a waiver requirement creates for students seeking Cornelia's service. Mayor Gronbach also offered to call Josh. Cornelia will follow up on this and invite Josh and another BoE member as well.

Stacey reported on her visit to the **Wellness Committee's** meeting. It was suggested that Cornelia and Lindsey follow up to connect with and join this group going forward. Stacey also met with staff at **Candlewood Pediatrics**, and was surprised to learn that none there are aware of what resources are available for substance abuse prevention/recovery or how to refer patients/families to Cornelia. Stacey asked Lindsey to follow up on this and to contact all local pediatricians to distribute fliers, info, etc.

Discussion occurred re ongoing efforts to include a faith-based member in the NMSAPC. The Mayor suggested a direct email to the list of local candidates for this role. Peg has a list for this and will forward to Stacey for action.

Discussion occurred about the disconnect at ER and emergency situations in general re distributing support/resources and compassionate support. Joan will bring the brochures to the hospital and give some background; she and Mary Jane will help spread the word about their availability. Jason will continue to promote distribution of the "C.A.R.E.S Resource" cards and follow up on their use by first responders.

Jason cited a recent event where he assisted as an EMT and he sensed a negative attitude toward the victim and family. Jason asked how we can encourage care professionals to overcome a tendency to judge people who are in traumatic crisis situations involving substance abuse. Vinny concurred on this observation/concern. Jason proposed setting up a talk/session to be offered to EMTs, PD, ER and medical staff to underscore the message of compassion/sensitivity in dealings with this group. Ron Stephens (NM Hospital head RN) was suggested as a good resource to assist in bringing this about. A group including Joan, Lindsey, Mary Jane and Max was suggested to take this project on

More discussion on placing a **Social Worker** resource in New Milford hospital who would provide care/compassion/counseling, resources to families in crises. Gene reported that Allison from HVCASA forwarded info on Charlotte Hungerford Hospital's success with this which includes a reference to a resource at the state Department of Mental Health and Addiction Services who helped facilitate the funding. NMSAPC has struggled to determine how/who should pursue this... what agency? what tactic? The Mayor expressed frustration that we have not been able to move more quickly on this and offered to back the effort. Gene will send available info to the Mayor for follow up.

Joan reported a technical glitch encountered at the hospital trying to include YouTube **PSA videos made by the YA** in the hospital's Powerpoint ER displays. Stacey/Jason offered the help of YA video resource in overcoming this tech hurdle.

Joan also reported that Dr. D'Andrea has completed his first monthly **column for the Spectrum!** She will forward a cc to Stacey to distribute to the council. Ideas are requested from council members on topics for future articles to keep Dr. D'Andrea's pipeline full. Please forward these to Gene or Lindsey so we can maintain a list. A suggestion was made for the next topic to be Cornelia's new position in the school district and to promote the resources she provides. Joan & Cornelia to follow up with this idea.

Stacey also reported that she was contacted by a [C.A.R.E.S.](#) representative with a similar idea to write articles. Stacey explained we are already working this, and they agreed that a separate article promoting the work of NMSAPC and the affiliated support of C.A.R.E.S. at the family support meetings might be a good idea. Gene offered to carry this effort forward with C.A.R.E.S.

The ongoing lack of awareness of the arrival of Cornelia to the school district as a Substance Abuse Counselor was discussed. All agree that we and the school need to do more on communicating the availability of this tremendous resource. It was suggested that contact info for Cornelia be added to both the next version of the NMSAPC Resources flier and the "C.A.R.E.S Resource" card. Gene will follow up on this prior to next printing. It was also noted that there is a need for a **referral process** to direct students/others in need of Cornelia's services. There is currently not a formal process in place. A meeting at the school is to occur on Feb 4th to address this. Erica also offered to promote Cornelia's role and availability on FB.

Please contact me if I have omitted or misrepresented any details. Thank you.

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "E. Marino III". The signature is written in a cursive style with a horizontal line at the end.

Submitted 2/4/16 by
Eugene Marino III
Secretary
New Milford Substance Abuse Prevention Council