



June Council Meeting Minutes

Date: July 20, 2016

Attendees:

Morgan Cosentino - *Representative from MCCA*
Mike Crespan, M.P.H., R.S. - *Director of Health Department, Town of New Milford*
Sgt. James Dzamko - *New Milford Police Department*
Rev. Jack Gilpin - *Reverend, St. John's Episcopal Church*
David Gronbach - *Mayor, ex-officio*
Kathy Hanley - *Housatonic Valley Coalition Against Substance Abuse Prevention Coordinator*
Erica Keane - *Early Childhood/Child Development/Health Teacher, New Milford High School; S.A.D.D. Advisor*
Mary Jane Lundgren, RN, MSW - *New Milford Town Council Member*
Gene Marino - *Board of Directors, New Milford Youth Agency; parent of a young person in recovery*
Lindsey Marr, *Doctorate in Nursing/Family Nurse Practitioner - Youth Advisor, New Milford Youth Agency*
Peg Molina, LCSW - *Director of Social Services, Town of New Milford*
Jason O'Connor - *Youth Advisor, New Milford Youth Agency; EMT New Milford Ambulance*
Beth Trott, MSW - *Director of Social Services & Municipal Agent to the Elderly, Town of Sherman*
Joan Wyner - *LCSW - Representative, New Milford Hospital*

Absent: Cornelia Edgeworth, Kathy Hanley, Scott Hoffman, Max Marino, Brendan Miller, Dana Pollack

Observers/Guests:

Allison Fulton - *Executive Director, HVCASA*
Melanie Kinman - *MCCA Specialist, Recovery Support Services for Individuals*

Increase Youth Participation in NMSAPC:

Discussion opened with brainstorming from council on how to increase youth involvement in the NMSAPC. Jason is coordinating with Stacey from YA on this effort. As the Student Leos advisor, he will reach out to kids in that program as well. Stacey will evaluate students from the YA's Student Advisory Board. Erica will reach out to her SADD student members. It was proposed that once we gather a group of prospective student participants and the school year is in swing, that we convene additional NMSAPC meetings with NMSAPC members after school hours so students could attend - perhaps on a quarterly basis. It was also suggested we could use these after-school meetings as a good opportunity to engage SROs in the council's activities as well - another recently-identified goal of ours. We decided to schedule the initial meeting sometime in mid to end of September & invite Officer Ron Young. Erica has offered her classroom at the HS for the meeting venue.

Jason also noted that he will be working with a group of young people to produce a PSA video on the theme of "You just blew 5K"; warning people of the financial costs associated with DUI offenses.

Discussions re establishing a Safe Haven model in New Milford:

The council continued open discussions regarding potential efforts to develop a "Gloucester-like" Safe Haven model in our town. Lindsey asked for a status report on current practices for interacting with people in crisis - What are we currently doing? Are we handing out the resource cards as we had intended (Jim agreed to look into this)? Morgan related that judges and state's attorneys currently refer cases to MCCA. Lindsey's goal is to de-emphasize arrests as a response to individuals' crises, and work closer toward a model that provides adequate recourses, referrals and guidance. Jim said that clearance to institute a model like this would require permission from the DA; several members expressed frustration at the roadblocks to moving this concept forward. The mayor offered to follow up with Chief of Police Boyne to discuss iterative steps to creating a "Safe Haven Lite" program; he will also research costs and the possibility of engaging neighboring towns to work together on the effort. We also discussed reaching out to the CARES group to partner with us on this effort. We discussed the idea of nurturing relationships with "angels" - voluntary support individuals who could

counsel/coach people in crisis, and the challenges this would create. Nonetheless we agreed to begin to create a list of potential individuals. We agreed that the hospital should be the first refuge in such a Safe Haven model. Joan offered to invite Ron Stephens, New Milford Hospital's head of nursing to our next meeting to further discuss.

Financial Update:

Discussions were held re identifying a new fiduciary for NMSAPC as well as a new treasurer. The Rotary Club, United Way were suggested, as was [Westcog](#). Lindsey reminded us that the fiduciary will need to take responsibility for grant application and maintenance, but Jim offered to take on this role (i.e. treasurer). The grant application for HVCASA needs to be completed by end of August, and Jim will be given access to previous grant applications for reference.

NOTE: *Since the time of the meeting, Lindsey & Jim reached out to Arlene Ajami from United Way, who has accepted our request to be NMSAPC fiduciary with no fees associated. Katy Francis will be our contact person there going forward regarding requests and receipt of funds. (GM)*

International Overdose Awareness Day Update:

Lindsey outlined plans already in place for this event, designed to coincide with [International Overdose Awareness Day](#).

- A Candlelight Vigil is planned for August 31st on the Town Green (permit is being sought).
- Foam cutouts of people will be made to graphically represent statistics of overdoses.
- Jason will use his resources with youth to organize some sort of volunteer effort.
- Gene will work on a marketing piece to be used for social media, email, PR. Gene & Lindsey will promote.
- Lindsey will contact CARES group to explore interest in partnering with us on this

Discussions re Medical Marijuana Dispensary:

The council held open discussions about this. We are not entirely in agreement re the risks vs. benefits of this establishment opening in our town. Erica, who recently attended a state-sponsored forum on the risks associated with greater access to Marijuana (both medical & recreational), feels it will potentially increase access and will desensitize people (especially youth) to the risks associated with abuse. Gene & others agreed with her. She cited several take-aways from the forum in opposition to the dispensary. The Mayor noted the dispensary has been approved by the Zoning Commission, and he feels it will be adequately & professionally staffed and secured with only appropriate people having access. He also cited the need to support local enterprises looking to establish in New Milford. He suggested we review the Commission's minutes when the approval was made. It was felt by most that it is important that some effort needs to be made to establish a dialogue with the proprietor(s) so we can introduce our council and inform them of our efforts and concerns re this. We agreed to learn the name of the proprietor (checking Zoning Commission minutes) and invite him/her to a NMSAPC meeting.

Who will follow up on this?!

Mary Jane advised that local doctors need to be educated regarding risks and the fact that this is opening in New Milford.

HVCASA Updates:

Lindsey, Kathy and the group discussed plans for the HVCASA Visioning Retreat; date to be finalized.

NOTE: *Since the time of the meeting, this event has taken place. There were a number of items - strengths, areas of opportunity, etc. regarding the council that were discussed & identified. A recap of the meeting and these items is being prepared and will be distributed to the group shortly. (GM)*

Miscellaneous:

- Village Fair Days plans and schedules are finalized.
- Narcan Training will be held Monday, August 15th at The Maxx from 6:00-7:00.
- Due to schedule/time conflicts, Rabbi Rosenberg will regrettably no longer be able to attend council meetings.

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

Our next NMSAPC meeting is scheduled for **Wednesday, August 10 at 11:30 a.m.**

Thank you.

E. Marino III

Respectfully submitted 8/4/16 by
Eugene Marino III
Secretary
New Milford Substance Abuse Prevention Council