



June Council Meeting Minutes

Date: June 22, 2016

Attendees:

Morgan Cosentino - *Representative from MCCA*
Mike Crespan, M.P.H., R.S. - *Director of Health Department, Town of New Milford*
David Gronbach - *Mayor, ex-officio*
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*
Brendan Miller - *Marketing Communications, High Watch Recovery Center*
Peg Molina, LCSW - *Director of Social Services, Town of New Milford*
Jason O'Connor - *Youth Advisor, New Milford Youth Agency; EMT New Milford Ambulance*
Dana Pollack - *MSW, LCSW, High Watch Recovery Center*
Joan Wyner - *LCSW - Representative, New Milford Hospital*

Absent: James Dzamko, Cornelia Edgeworth, Rev. Jack Gilpin, Kathy Hanley, Scott Hoffman, Max Marino, Rabbi Ari Rosenberg, Beth Trott

Observers/Guests:

Allison Fulton - *Executive Director, HVCASA*
Errin D'Amato - *Program Director, Recovery Support Services for Individuals, MCCA*
Melanie Kinman - *Specialist, Recovery Support Services for Individuals*

Opening group discussions:

Guests Errin and Melanie from MCCA briefed the council on a new program funded by a grant from Behavioral Health Associates: **Recovery Support Services for Individuals**. Errin is the Program Director, Melanie is a Specialist working 40 hrs/week split between Danbury and New Milford. The program is designed to provide support for individuals in crisis, with immediate attention at ER, etc. and short to medium term follow up. Not an MCCA-only effort, patients will receive individual attention/guidance from Melanie and ongoing support - from initial input evaluation to help finding a rehab facility, medical and social guidance, etc. This is perceived to be very close to the position the Council had been researching in terms of sourcing grant funding to establish. Mayor Gronbach offered the support of his office to promote the program (issue a PR, etc.). Mary Jane noted the importance of briefing/training the nursing staff about this program. Joan referred the group to New Milford Hospital's head of nursing, Ron Stephens to coordinate.

Update on The Community Forum:

Lindsey related the qualified success of last month's Community Forum. All were satisfied at what was offered, tho' low attendance was disappointing. Idea suggested by Joan that we amp up our pre-promotion next time. Peg also suggested that we should be prepared for an "Emergency" forum by having a plan in place to quickly execute another forum in case of a crisis (multiple ODs, for example). Erica and others feel a September/October timeframe, closer to school's start schedules, would result in higher attendance.

HVCASA Update:

The term of NMSAPC's grant from HVCASA has expired and we now need to work on our request for next year's grant. A list of line items is required, and Lindsey will provide the necessary effort for this. Requests were made of the Council by Lindsey to make their suggestions for programs, other expenses known to her so she can include. Erica suggested exploring the program that show's the loss of a young OD victim from the perspective of his family's pet dog. Allison offered to share other groups' reviews of this program.

Discussion moved to difficulties encountered with the Council's receipt/spending of HVCASA funds as it relates to the town's budgetary requirements and schedules. It was suggested that the Council research alternatives to the current status of the Youth Agency acting as the Council's fiduciary wrt the HVCASA grant. Erica mentioned that the Lions had offered to take this role in the past. Jason will be asked to follow up on this, as he is a member of the Leos.

NOTE: *Since the time of the meeting, we have reached out to Pat Hembrook to make this request, as Jason was unavailable. Pat serves on the YA board as well as the Lions board. (GM)*

Also discussed was the notion of the Council applying to become a NFP or 503(c) organization. This would enable the Council to directly accept grants, funds, donations (something we are currently unable to do) and eliminate the need for a fiduciary. The Mayor mentioned there are several "angels" in our community prepared to make donations if requested. All agreed this would be beneficial for the Council to pursue. The Mayor offered to check with the town's Finance Dept. re details on this.

On a related topic, Mayor Gronbach inquired about our source of funding and requested the Council to provide him with a proposed budget for next year to begin a dialog with him about receiving funding from the town (perhaps via Depts. of Health and or Social Services). We are encouraged to define our plans and goals and articulate them to the Mayor for consideration.

Also regarding HVCASA & NMSAPC, Allison has offered the opportunity for a **Visioning Retreat**, a valuable exercise for a SAC at our stage of development. This would be a 4-5 hour team-building session where goals, visions, roles are reviewed for the council and our strengths/weaknesses/efficiencies, etc. are identified.

Miscellaneous:

Lindsey proposed establishment of a **Safe Haven** program, based on models like the one in [Gloucester, MA](#). The Mayor said he has also been looking into this, hoping to reach out to appropriate organizations/groups to help establish (Faith Church, Village Crest, etc.). The Mayor & Mary Jane suggested reaching out to Police Chief Boyne to initiate a dialogue on the topic and a plan of action. Erica also suggested the Chief be invited to attend future NMSAPC meetings. Allison reported that Fairfield and Groton, CT both have initiated similar programs.

Lindsey would like to see the Council have greater participation/involvement with youth. She will follow up with SADD & the YA's Student Advisory Board to establish a path forward.

Lindsey also urged for greater involvement/participation of SROs in the Council's work. Noting the value of effort from the last attendance of SRO Vinny Parziale in February, the group suggested establishing a quarterly invitation to SROs held later in the afternoons so as not to interfere with their school schedules. Discussion required whether these would be set up as one of our regular monthly meetings (once every quarter), or if we would convene a separate quarterly session to keep SROs in the loop. TBD.

Lindsey expressed interest in knowing stats for OD reports that do not result in deaths. Currently only death-related OD stats are accessible. Mayor Gronbach suggested approaching WestCog re this info. Allison noted she is a member of a state sub-committee dealing with the prevention side that is looking to address this need.

Finally, Lindsey informed the group about International **Overdose Awareness Day**, occurring August 31. The Mayor suggested making use of the town Green, using black & white cardboard cutouts of figures to represent deaths/survivors of overdoses. Peg suggested we reach out to **CARES** to partner our efforts for this event. It was also suggested that we engage faith-based members of the Council to promote awareness and occurrence of events, and to generally engage all of our usual sources/resources. It was noted that the event coincides with the start date of school, so events would be better off if planned over a series of days, culminating in a prayer vigil/moment of silence event. Lindsey will be following up on these details.

Please contact me if I have omitted or misrepresented any details.
Our next NMSAPC meeting is scheduled for **Wednesday, July 20 at 11:30 a.m.**
Thank you.

E. Marino III

Respectfully submitted 7/13/16 by
Eugene Marino III
Secretary
New Milford Substance Abuse Prevention Council