



September Council Meeting Minutes

Date: September 21, 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*
Cornelia Edgeworth - *New Milford School District Substance Abuse Counselor*
Rev. Jack Gilpin - *Reverend, St. John's Episcopal Church*
Kathy Hanley - *Housatonic Valley Coalition Against Substance Abuse Prevention Coordinator*
Emma Johnson - *Clinical Outreach Coordinator, Steps to Recovery*
Erica Keane - *Early Childhood/Child Development/Health Teacher, New Milford High School; S.A.D.D. Advisor*
Melanie Kinman - *MCCA Specialist, Recovery Support Services for Individuals*
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: Sgt. James Dzamko, David Gronbach, Scott Hoffman, Max Marino, Brendan Miller, Dana Pollack

Observers/Guests:

Ron Stephens, Nurse Manager of the Emergency Department and the Emergency Management Coordinator, New Milford Hospital; Chris Sconiers and another representative from [Teen Challenge](#)
Sarah from HVCASA

Discussions re establishing a Safe Haven model in New Milford:

We talked more about this issue and how we can keep the momentum going. Everyone understands this is a long-term effort - a marathon vs. a sprint. Details about "angels" (volunteers to assist people in distress), actual locations for a safe haven site (all felt a dedicated site as opposed to a shared site like Loves & Fishes, for example, would be needed), etc. were discussed. It was suggested that a paraphernalia drop box be set up in any future Safe Haven site, to reduce concerns about being prosecuted for possessing them. Ron suggested the idea of establishing a dedicated Safe Haven phone number that would ring to the PD, and then be directed to a network of volunteers who would be trained/able to respond. Many wondered about the logistics of having volunteers exposed to possible risk in many circumstances. Mike re-opened the idea of pursuing funding for a dedicated social worker to respond/assist people in distress. Melanie explained her role at MCCA in a similar capacity; she has not yet been called to assist at NM Hospital. Ron explained that most cases are sent to Danbury Hospital.

Teen Challenge

Chris Coniers and a colleague of his from Teen Challenge CT, located in New Haven, came to introduce their group to the council.

Teen Challenge is a faith-based interdiction, awareness/prevention/outreach organization. They were founded by Rev. Wilkerson, based upon biblical principals, morals. Their program is a 15-month residential recovery one that addresses "Life Control Issues". Payment is made on a sliding scale; pay what you can, with no one turned away. They operate 8 residential centers between NY & NJ.

They boast an 85% success rate of their program that emphasizes education (GED required to complete), job-training.

They offer a customized curriculum for religions other than their own.

Apparently, there is no clinical therapy provided. They offer "group studies" with an on-site chaplain (not "academically trained, but life experience") to address any "spiritual void".

They provide presentations to schools and other public forums. These can be age-appropriate tailored - even to elementary school-aged kids. They have a media presentation they can provide for this to share with administrators, etc. to seek approval.

They shared some upcoming dates where we could sit in to monitor presentations they are offering at nearby locations.

We asked for recommendations, and communicated a potential fall date to set something up to present this plan to school administrators.

Other:

Erica reported that 3 underage drinking parties occurred during homecoming week. These were posted on social media. Some resulted in hospital treatment by attendants. Melanie reported that DFC can be called in to investigate when there is social media evidence. This underscores the need to increase our efforts on this issue. We need to do more awareness campaigning. The idea of a newspaper article was suggested.

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

Our next NMSAPC meeting is scheduled for **Wednesday, October 19 at 11:30 a.m.**

Thank you.

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "E. Marino III". The signature is written in a cursive style with a prominent initial "E" and a stylized "III" at the end.

Respectfully submitted 10/28/16 by
Eugene Marino III
Secretary
New Milford Substance Abuse Prevention Council