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Stratford Youth and Family Advisory Board (YAFAB)
Room 110-Birdseye Municipal Complex
Minutes-November 17, 2014

In attendance: Jocelyn Ault, Shelly Bheer, Andrea Boissevain, Darrin Bosco, Chris Brown, Nina Chanana, Dorren Chiccarello, Brianni Davillier, Paul DosSantos, Lucretia Duwel, Winnie Etienne, Collette Fearon, Anna Gasinski, Patty Hines, Raquel Juarez, Denise Keegan, Sean Kennedy, Roula Kouvatas, Audrey Law, Denique Weidema-Lewis, Kevin Morse, Dudley Orr, Kristi Peña, Lou Perno, Alicia Rog, Jodi Palmieri Schumann, Ty Sims, Shannon Tripodi, Tammy Trojanowski, Kate Venison

Absent: Amanda Cotela, Kristen Doerr, Madelyn Dragone, Angelo Giannitelli, Paige Hoydick, Olivia Mastroluca, Suds Range, Ed Rawls, Mary Tiernan, Mark Wright

Call to Order
Winnie Etienne called the meeting to order at 7:04 p.m. Board members and guests introduced themselves.

Approval of September 15, 2014 Meeting Minutes
Paul DosSantos made a motion to approve the September 15, 2014 meeting minutes. Dudley Orr seconded the motion. It passed unanimously.

Approval of By-Laws Proposed Revision
The proposed revision presented at the September 15, 2014 meeting states: The Board will generally meet monthly according to a predetermined schedule. Dudley Orr made a motion to approve the By-Laws proposed revision. Lou Perno seconded the motion. It passed unanimously.

The Results Are In . . . 2014 RYASAP’s Search Institute Student Survey
Denique Weidema-Lewis, RYASAP Director of Prevention, presented the 2014 Stratford results from the Search Institute Student Survey. The full report will be available after December 10, 2014.

Partnerships For Success Committee Report
The PFS Committee is planning for the second Freshman Forum on April 1, 2015. Currently, committee members are attending forums in the surrounding towns to gather ideas and possible speakers for Stratford’s forum. The PFS Committee is continuing the “Talk Early, Talk Often” campaign by giving away hand warmers and seat cushions at the Annual Thanksgiving Bunnell vs. Stratford High Football Game.

Youth Committee Report
Roula Kouvatas reported that the 2014-2015 MONEY grant applications are now available on the Town of Stratford Community Services webpage under the announcements and Stratford
Youth and Family Advisory Board tabs. Applications are due December 15, 2014. The Youth Committee participated in Question. Persuade. Refer (QPR) Suicide Prevention Training at their November 10, 2014 meeting. The Youth Committee will be leaders in an effective social media strategy that will deliver messages about the dangers and consequences of prescription drug misuse and abuse, grant funded by the American Medical Association Foundation’s Healthy Living Grant. In addition, the Youth Committee will assist the PFS Committee distribute hand warmers and seat cushions at the Annual Thanksgiving Bunnell vs. Stratford High Football Game, and will be distributing hand warmers at the Annual Holiday Tree Lighting at Town Hall on December 2, 2014.

The Color of Justice
“The Color of Justice” community forum took place on October 21, 2014 at St. Joseph’s of Stratford. Youth and Family Advisory Board members attended the community conversation regarding disproportionate minority contact in Connecticut, focusing on Stratford. The evaluation report was distributed.

Drug Free Communities
The Town of Stratford Youth and Family Advisory Board will hold a “Drug Free Communities 101” seminar on January 12, 2015 from 4 to 8 p.m. All Coalition members and additional volunteers will discuss the Strategic Prevention Framework (SPF), environmental strategies, and the Action Plan for year 1.

A proposed ordinance to ban smoking on Stratford beaches, athletic fields, and parks and on the Short Beach golf course will get a public at the Town Council’s Ordinance Committee meeting at Town Hall. A hearing conducted by the Ordinance Committee is usually the last step before the full council votes to approve or reject an ordinance proposal. The Parks and Recreation Committee referred the following proposal to the council with a favorable recommendation on Aug. 27: “It shall be unlawful for any person [on any property owned or leased by the town of Stratford] to carry a lighted pipe, cigar, or cigarette; to use an electronic smoking device or other smoking device, containing tobacco or any other substance; or to light, smoke, activate, or in any way use a pipe, cigar, cigarette, or electronic smoking device or other smoking device containing tobacco or any other substance.” For more information, check the Town’s website.

Community Up-dates & Announcements
• Roula Kouvatas was recognized as a Bronze Level Honoree at Sterling House Community Center’s Presidential Volunteer Service Awards Ceremony.
• Bunnell High School was ranked number 290 in Newsweek’s “Top 500 U.S. High Schools for Beating the Odds”. Bunnell High School was ranked in the top 300 high schools in the nation for performing better than expected considering the level of poverty and performing better than expected in narrowing the achievement gap.
• Stratford Library will be at Stratford High School on November 18, 2014 and at Bunnell High School on November 25, 2014 in the Library and Cafeteria issuing new library cards to students. Stratford Library card holders are encouraged to check out Hoopla for free online movie and TV show renting from the Stratford Library.
• Stratford Public Schools, in cooperation with the Town of Stratford Community Services, was awarded the 21st Century Community Learning Center Grant, which will operate 21st Century Creative Learning After School Program CLASP at Wooster Middle School and FLASH at Flood Middle School. The after school programs are scheduled to begin in January 2015.
• South End Community Center (SECC) is hosting a Holiday Toy Drive for children participating in the ABCD Head Start/Early Head Start, K-6 After School and Summer Soiree. SECC is accepting toys and individuals to sponsor a child in the program. SECC is seeking food donations for Christmas food baskets, as well as gift cards.

• The SECC VITA (Volunteer Income Tax Assistance) Program begins in January 2015. The program operates Mondays 4 to 8 p.m. at Franklin and at the SECC Thursdays from 5 to 9 p.m. and Saturdays from 9 a.m. to 12 p.m. Volunteers for tax assistance need to be 18 years or older. Also, volunteer greeters will be needed.

• Town of Stratford Health Department flu clinic is open on Wednesdays from 1 to 4 p.m. at the Birdseye Municipal Complex.

• RYASAP and Southwest Regional Mental Health Board are hosting a “Meet Your Legislator” breakfast on Wednesday, December 3, 2014 from 8:30 to 10 a.m. at Norwalk City Hall, Community Room.

• R.E.A.C.H. Out Project is having an “Addiction/Recovery Parent’s/Loved Ones Education/Information Seminar” on Saturdays - November 15, 22, and 29, 2014 - from 11 a.m. to 2 p.m. at Wildermere Beach Congregational Church, 133 Broadway, Milford. The R.E.A.C.H. Out Project offers peer-mentor support for youth and family members struggling with behavioral, substance use and/or mental health disorders. For more information, you can contact Carol Cruz at 203-507-4223 or reachoutproject14@gmail.com.

Adjournment
The meeting adjourned at 8:58 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Anna Gasinski