

**Old Saybrook Youth & Family Services
Commission Meeting
Tuesday, January 5, 2021; 5:00 PM
Via Teleconference Due to COVID19/Corona Virus State of CT Public Health Emergency**

YFS Commission Meeting Playlist:

https://www.youtube.com/playlist?list=PLKX0JMf1KPp8lRBZS_ZdP8IwLPaujsfIH

“To collaboratively support and advocate for positive relationships in an inclusive community”

I. Roll Call	<p>Attendant Members: Mike Rafferty, Chair; Michael Spera, Chief of Police; Lisa Castro, Old Saybrook Middle School Counselor; David Plotkin, Community At-Large Member; Jeff Harder, Community At-Large Member, Jonathan Paradis, Old Saybrook Parks and Recreation, Mary Ann Iadarola, Public Health Nursing Board Representative</p> <p>Absent Members: N/A Student Representatives: Joe Bradley, Kyle Wisialowski Absent Student Representatives: Libby Stuart Attendant Staff: Heather McNeil, Executive Director Brittany Eckert, Program Coordinator Angela Gaidry, Commission Clerk</p>
II. Call to Order	<p>Meeting called to order at 5:00 PM by M. Rafferty Pledge of Allegiance</p>
III. Comments from the Public	<p>No comments. In Attendance: L. Mahal, Old Saybrook Resident</p>
IV. Approval of Minutes	<p>Motion made by M. Iadarola to approve the minutes of Tuesday, November 12, 2020 as presented. The motion was seconded by J. Paradis and approved.</p>
V. Chairman's Comments	<p>M. Rafferty commends H. McNeil & YFS Team for wonderful program offerings. Encourages commission members to review and participate when able. Wish everyone a happy and healthy 2021!</p>
VI. Director's Report for 1/05/2021	<p>Introduction H. McNeil - busy meeting, full agenda with budget discussion. Introduce Brittany Eckert, Old Saybrook Early Childhood Council Program Coordinator- partially funded by Middlesex United Way grant. MUW has reported less than \$100K donated during pandemic which in turn impacts allocations to youth service bureaus. However this year's expectations remain the same. MUW has been pleased with OSYFS.</p> <p>OSECC B. Eckert – OSECC meets once a month (1st Thurs of each month) comprised of several school reps, owners/directors of local childcare facilities, Acton Library children's director, J. Paradis of Parks & rec, parents, etc. Pre-natal to age 5 (or beyond as needed), parental resource, school readiness programs (Headstart, Birth to 3), help find or develop programming. Circle of Security – 7 wk. parenting workshop, behavior toolbox, etc. Recent workshops, Understanding Stress in Early Childhood, Bubbles to Bonding with Chelsea Graham (OSYFS clinician)- safe place to discuss issues around parenting. One Book, One Town- pick a book for community topic “kindness and equality”, OSECC Monthly Newsletter Social distanced egg hunt with activities for kids & parents. Scavenger Hunt around town. Fun watching adults & kids outside the building.</p>

Student Rep Check-In

M. Rafferty inquired with students on how things are going?

J. Bradley – things pretty good at OSHS. Various school clubs slowly trying to take place. Drama club trying to possibly find a musical. Winter sports postponed.

K. Wisialowski – in agreement “Joe got everything”

Holiday Giving 2020

Lot of help from OSPD- over 90 families served, 137 children overall. Right on target with LY.

Thank you to Andrea Gosselin, Heather Spera, Caitlyn Kelly, and Jen Damato for help with organizing. Very efficient.

Instead of 2 days at OS Fire Dept., this year due to COVID contactless drive-thru at police dept. and took only 2 hrs. 20 min.

Chief Spera –always happy to partner with YFS. Very efficient.

Will get together to begin discussions about next year.

Budget - *see below Budget Narrative

H. McNeil - all YSB under state legislative mandate to provide prevention education, positive youth development programming and community needs.

Review of Sept 2019- June 2020.

Chief Spera motion to approve FY22 budget as presented and seconded by J. Paradis. Vote approved unanimously.

Social Worker Program

Chief Spera- New police accountability law

Presented at Police Commission meeting - Social Worker Program with law enforcement agency (pilot program). Currently maintain an excellent existing partnership with YFS (many communities this does not exist). Referrals currently being made.

Partners with Connecticut Coalition Against Domestic Violence (CCADV)

Will need to obtain support from Board of Selectman to get endorsement for this initiative.

Comments from commission members:

M. Rafferty- important program initiative for our community in today’s world

J. Paradis- betterment for community. How received with BOS?

L. Castro- help with need of additional support year-round, confidentiality piece important.

D. Plotkin-great collaboration OSPD/YFS; what in addition would this person position/program provide or bring to the relationship? What would be different?

Clarification – a “specialist” focused on solely this role/responsibility.

Program details TBD i.e. budget, specifics of job description, hours, hiring details, etc. Will not be housed within police dept.

January CAFÉ Events

Upcoming C.A.F.E. programs **Tuesday 6:00-7:15PM:**

-Suicide Prevention & Awareness 1/12 facilitated by Director H. McNeil, LMFT & S. Steinmacher, LPC

-Become QPR Trained 1/21 presented by BH Cares Alliance for Prevention & Wellness

-The Role of Executive Functioning & Academic Success - Learning in a Virtual World 1/21/21 facilitated by Karyn Hester, Nationally Certified School Psychologist and LPCA

	Local Prevention Council (LPC) Funding and coalition building Next meeting Jan 14 @ 3:30PM – all welcome Diversity Training for Staff LGBTQ speaker Feb. 9, 2021 Additional Comments M. Iadarola – Nursing Board is available to help and support.
VII. Old Business	Nothing to report.
VIII. New Business	Action steps and advocacy or report on initiatives by Commission members. Next YFS Commission meeting February 2, 2021.
IX. Other Business	Nothing to report.
X. Adjournment	Motion made by M. Iadarola to adjourn the meeting at 6:05PM. The motion was approved.

Respectfully submitted,
Angela Gaidry, Recording Clerk

Youth & Family Services- Budget Narrative

General Description of Department: YFS operates under a legislative mandate to provide prevention education, positive youth development programming, and community mobilization. YFS oversees the Early Childhood Council as well as the Local Prevention Council. As a planning and coordinating agency, Youth and Family Services works closely with the schools, police, agencies and organizations to assess community needs, develop strategies and implement effective programs. Clinical services offered include individual, couple, family and group counseling and education as well as in-school services throughout the community. This year, YFS, along with other departments, faced many challenges due to the COVID-19 pandemic. We were able to provide training in telehealth to all mental health clinicians so that services would continue with very little disturbance. Although all of our client contact was taking place via computer screen or telephone, YFS staff was able to consistently provide services to community residents.

** (In light of the COVID pandemic, most post-March programming was virtual.)

Accomplishments

- Increased in- school presence through health curriculum enhancements, switched to virtual programming for end of school year.
- Actively work to remove barriers to mental health treatment. Provided clinical services (over 1,000 clinical sessions)
- Engaged HS students in ongoing positive youth development programming (Youth Action Council)
- E3, peer prevention HS group, was recognized for their prevention efforts and received a grant through America's Promise
- Development of virtual youth mentoring activity (Crafty Connections)
- Engaged middle school students in quality, supervised, after-school programs
- Facilitated high school transition program for 14th year
- Maintained elementary student/parent emotion regulation 'ZEN-time' group
- Year-round group for parents/caregivers of high-functioning Autism Spectrum Disordered individuals.
- Increased shoreline YSB program collaboration and sharing of resources
- Launch of C.A.F.E series (Community and Family Engagement), interactive psycho-education and resource oriented groups
- Launch of YouTube mindfulness resource for teachers and school staff 'FindCalmOS'
- Development of 'Above the Storm Clouds' newsletter to support community members during COVID-quarantine
- Engaged early childhood providers, parents and children in large 'One Book, One Town' literacy event
- Work as part of Emergency Mgt. Team to identify and respond to need within the community during times of crisis (COVID, Storm shelter)

Major Objectives 2021-2022

- Increase multicultural competency
- Enhance clinical training for clients who identify as non-binary/LGBTQ
- Continue to improve access to treatment/identify barriers to services
- Continue to collaborate with OSPS to identify need for services
- Maintain training focus on quality telehealth practices
- Increase trainings in trauma-informed and evidence-based care
- Enhance life skills program for all school-aged youth and parents
- Maintain and enhance involvement in statewide prevention programs with OS Youth Action Council and E3
- Progress staff towards credentialing as Prevention Specialists
- Enhance informational and resource base for community members
- Enhance Early Childhood parent education resources
- Maintain and enhance collaborative community relationships
- Coordinate student (SEARCH) survey of 7-12th grade