

**Old Saybrook Youth & Family Services  
Commission Meeting  
Tuesday, December 5, 2023; 5:00 PM**

**YFS Commission Meeting Playlist:**

<https://youtu.be/7xW03ViSq9Y>

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

<b>I. Roll Call</b>	<p><b>Attendant Members:</b> Mike Rafferty, Chair; Jonathan Paradis, Old Saybrook Parks and Recreation; David Plotkin, At-Large Member; Mary Ann Iadarola, Public Health Nursing Board Representative; Lisa Castro, Old Saybrook Middle School Counselor Jeff Harder, Community At-Large Member</p> <p><b>Absent Members Excused:</b> Michael Spera, Chief of Police</p> <p><b>Attendant Student Representative(s):</b> B. Cassella, W. Percival <b>Absent Student Representative(s):</b> Carli Castro</p> <p><b>Attendant Staff:</b> Heather McNeil, Executive Director Brittany Eckert, Prevention Program Coordinator</p>	
<b>II. Call to Order</b>	Meeting called to order at 5:00pm by M. Rafferty Pledge of Allegiance	
<b>III. Comments from the Public</b>	None	
<b>IV. Approval of Minutes</b>	<b>Motion</b> made by J. Harder to approve the minutes of Tuesday; September 12, 2023, as presented. The motion was seconded M. Iadarola and approved.	
<b>V. Chairman’s Comments</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Great programs, activities &amp; flyers being sent from YFS.</li> <li>Welcome new student representatives Brendan Cassella &amp; Wesley Percival</li> </ul>	
<b>VI. Director’s Report for 12/05/2023</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><b><u>H. McNeil – New Student Reps</u></b> -Welcome &amp; introductions of Brendan Cassella &amp; Wesley Percival (Both OSHS juniors) -Appreciate all feedback, suggestions and concerns.</li> <li><b><u>Social Services Overview-Susan Consoli</u></b> -Provide wide range of resources, services &amp; support throughout the community -Social Services Help Day (SSHD), food truck distribution, mobile food pantry, Husky Health, Tina Belmont (Town Nurse), outreach other community partners -Additional seasonal services Dental resources, job fair, budget counseling services, back-to-school bags, energy assistance, Thanksgiving, Holiday Giving and more.</li> <li><b><u>Retirement of Sal Bruzzese</u></b> -Retired after 45 years of service to the town. Was honored at the October CYSA Annual Conference, as well as a declaration from the Town of Old Saybrook.</li> </ul>	

- **Other**
  - Turkey Distribution at OSPD – over 300 turkeys giving out (Tues before Thanksgiving) and 110 cars (Wed)
  - Holiday Giving (Dec 19 distribution)
  - L. Castro: school staff interest in adopting a family. Several requests for that from community members as well.
  - H. McNeil: don't have the resources for that as we did in the past but may review for future.
  - Funding donations: \$3,800 from River Valley Community Foundation, Middlesex Community Foundation 16 Polar Express Tickets,
- **Fall Programming – community, school and after-school**
  - Outside of school: increased registrations & attendance in after school programming and trips. Parents have offered positive feedback related to trips/cost/locations, and child's experience.
  - Goodwin PTA mtg – to speak about counseling, with plans to attend OSMS and OSHS parent organizations after the holidays.
  - Caregivers Night Out – raised approx. \$350 for Youth Prevention Coalition; provide training opportunities and inter-agency connection (work with other students around the state).
  - HS drop-in: attendance varies, Wed group numbers (Justin's group) have increased.
  - YFS clinical staff provided support backstage and have been asked to be involved in the spring.
  - Interns positive engagement at OSMS, consistent referrals from the school.
  - Community programming: more of a challenge to get people out (many prefer hybrid or virtual option). Grandparents raising grandchildren group growing. WFSB interested in doing a story in Jan.
  - Several parent sessions planned in the 1st quarter related to youth MH (MHFA), QPR (suicide) and substance use prevention. Local communities of faith interested in presentations.
  - OSMS Screenagers Q&A: Date TBD and various other info. sessions incl. fentanyl info. session, possible NARCAN training, OSHS health class conversations around healthy relationships, critical decision-making (reducing risk) and other topics as requested.
- **Prevention Initiatives (Sticker Shock)**
  - Prevention initiatives: November – sticker shock with YPAC 100% participation from stores selling alcohol.
- **Starlight Festival (collaborative programming)**
  - Starlight Festival – YFS is on planning committee. Activities for families with kids, fundraiser for SSKP – raised \$1,500.
- **Administrative Core Functions of a YSB**
  - In the last legislative session, there was a lot of concern over a potential shift in the broad spectrum of programming many YSB's can offer to a more intensive JRB-restorative practices focus (less prevention for instance). It was vigorously argued against and CYSA put out -CYSA Advocacy Statement and Core Areas.

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b><u>Proposed meeting schedule for 2024</u></b>            -Jan, Mar, May, June, Sept, Oct, Nov            -Budget: request made to utilize WPCA van (2017) and retire YFS larger van (due to recent and potential ongoing maintenance costs)</li> </ul>	
<b>VII. Old Business</b>	Nothing to report.	
<b>VIII. New Business</b>	Nothing to report.	
<b>IX. Other Business</b>	Nothing to report.	
<b>X. Adjournment</b>	Motion to adjourn M. Iadarola, motion seconded by L. Castro Meeting adjourned at 5:52PM.	

Submitted by,  
Angela Gaidry, Recording Clerk