



Stafford Family Services

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Karla J. Gardner
TOWN CLERK

Judy K. Gardner, LMFT Executive Director

MINUTES – STAFFORD FAMILY SERVICES ADVISORY BOARD MEETING SEPTEMBER 1, 2022 – 5:00 P.M.

MEMBERS IN ATTENDANCE: Steven Moccio, Jen Ohlendorf, Officer Taylor, Brian Bradway, Ella Ohlendorf (student representative)

MEMBERS ABSENT: Andrew “Osmar” Starkey, Jennifer Halstrom, Rachel Ayn Konick, Judith Mordasky, Sal Titus (ex-officio)

STAFF: Judy Gardner, Brenda Henderson

- I. The meeting was called to order at 5:06.
- II. The Minutes of the June 2, 2022 meeting were reviewed and approved (Bradway motion, Moccio second).
- III. Ms. Henderson handed out the final financial report for the 2021-2022 program year. A total of 130 new cases were opened. SFS received \$178,224 in insurance payments and co-pays and an additional \$23,589 was unspent from Town funds. This means that a total of \$201,813 was returned to the Town’s General Fund. Ms. Gardner noted that this is an improvement from the prior year that was significantly impacted by COVID. This past year also was affected with both clients and staff absent at times due to the virus. It was noted that both grants from DMHAS and DCF were fully used to pay for contracted clinicians at the agency. Officer Taylor asked where most of the clients that attend therapy come from and Ms. Gardner responded that at least 90% are from Stafford. The report for the first two months of the 2022-23 program year was also distributed. There have been 26 new cases opened and Ms. Henderson noted that because we were down interns for the summer we had to refer out to other agencies multiple clients. This year we will have 5 interns and this should eliminate the need to refer clients and should increase program income. Ms. Gardner noted that there has been a significant increase in the number of people looking for couples therapy. She also reported that there is an increase of \$14,000 in funding from DCF this year and some of this money will be used to pay for a case manager to assist with youth involved with the regional Juvenile Review Board.
- IV. The First Selectman was not able to attend the meeting so there was no report.
- V. There were no critical incidents or client grievances to report.

- VI. Ms. Gardner distributed a draft of the Quality Assurance Plan for the 2022-23 program year, noting the change in the reducing substance use category in terms of language and measurements. Mr. Bradway suggested that we look into a program that used to operate from the prisons called Speak Out that partnered with MADD and sent young inmates who were serving time for charges related to accidents from using substances to talk to students. Officer Taylor reported that the department is looking to offer a program for single fathers as Officer Middleton has identified a larger number than expected through the schools. They would like to maybe use the Senior Center since it has a kitchen to teach healthy meal preparation and babysitting could be provided onsite to facilitate attendance.
- VII. Officer Taylor presented his report on overdoses and crimes since January, 2022. He noted the increase in marijuana use from a State report and concerns related to the recent legalization in Connecticut of marijuana and the possibility of a dispensary being opened in town or nearby. Mr. Bradway expressed concern regarding being able to track the use of edibles. There was one death last quarter from fentanyl and 3 total since January. Narcan has revived 5 individuals that had overdosed. Recent overdoses are related to heroin, heroin mixed with fentanyl and straight fentanyl. There has not been as much reported cocaine use in town. Ms. Henderson noted the need for updated Narcan and Officer Taylor stated that if there is a Narcan training and giveaway then the State will provide Narcan. Ella asked if there was Narcan in the schools and Mr. Moccio answered that there is at the middle and high schools. Officer Taylor noted a significant increase in domestic incidents in the past month and states that 80% of them have some alcohol involvement. There is no pattern of day or time of day. Stafford has a higher than most other towns in the areas of domestic incidents, disorderly conduct and emergency committed. There was a discussion about drug activity at the high school and vaping nicotine and marijuana continues to be the biggest concern. Ella noted that students appear to be using drugs to deal with family issues, including students being subjected to violence in their homes. There was discussion about parents denying that their children have a problem and parents not being as involved in a positive way in their children's development and trying to be their children's friend instead of parent. Mr. Moccio noted that the grade with the highest rate of truancy is kindergarten.
- VIII. The survey that Ella conducted in school was reviewed again. She suggested that if the high school wanted to pursue an afterschool tutoring program that advertising during announcements would be effective. Ms. Ohlendorf noted that there was an interest in adding volleyball as a team sport at the high school. Mr. Moccio noted that the high school no longer has block scheduling which Ella said was a good change and now the middle school schedule matches the one at the high school that eases transition.
- IX. The next meeting is scheduled for December 1, 2022.

There being no further business the meeting was adjourned at 6:02 p.m. (Moccio motion, Bradway second).

These Minutes Respectfully Submitted,


Judy Gardner