

AMHERST YOUTH BOARD

Meeting Minutes

November 10, 2021 via Zoom

1. Attendance/Introduction of Members and Guests

Mark Forden, Chairperson

Members Present: Dr. Susan McClary, Rose Mary Buscaglia, Dean Carroll, Ann Nichols, Ariella Yonaty, Dawn Cwierley, Jodi Benson, Krista Hanypsiak Krause, Daniella Alba, Siddarth Suresh

Liaison: Councilmember Jacqui Berger – excused

Excused: Angela Seo

Absent: Priya Chaudhuri, Nora Robshaw, Josh Daniels, Heather Toscano, Iris Izydorczak, Tricia Dunne

Staff Present: Mary-Diana Pouli, Kathy Mobarak-Miller

Guests: Amherst Youth Foundation Members: Gary Joseph, Susan Grelick, Richard and Diane Wojtowicz
Amherst Youth Consortium Member: Gia Panesar

2. Public Comment/Presentation

Gary Joseph, the Chairperson of the Amherst Youth Foundation shared the following.

- The sale of the Amherst Youth Foundation building to the Town of Amherst and COVID-19 resulted in a change of focus of the AYF.
- Middle School nights are popular and will resume when safe to do so.
- The Our Place program for persons ages 18-35, who have a developmental disability, had been successful and will come back.
- Some fundraising for the AYF has been done during COVID-19. Annual fundraisers have included a Basket Raffle, a Meat Raffle, a golf outing and a Gala. The Williamsville Rotary Club Car Show proceeds are donated to the AYF. On Saturday, November 13th the Shop for a Cause endeavor is happening. 15% of all sales will be donated to the AYF.
- The AYF Mission Statement and Goals will be reviewed on December 4th.
- The AYF is looking for ways to partner with the Youth Board in the future.

3. Approval of October 13, 2021 Meeting Minutes

MM/SC Danielle Alba/Rose Mary Buscaglia to approve the minutes of the October 13, 2021 meeting.

4. Committee Reports:

➤ Finance

Dean Carroll reported that the committee will meet virtually to review 2022 summer day camp fees on Wednesday, December 1st at 6:30 PM. All will be sent the link to attend.

➤ Amherst Youth Consortium

Gia Panesar reported on the Thursday, November 4th virtual Amherst Town Hall Meeting on Underage Drinking. The data that Erie County Health Commissioner Dr. Gale Burstein presented on adolescent brain development was interesting. Amherst Police Officer Andy Edwards, the school resource officer for Williamsville East HS, defined his role as being available to help students and staff. 55 high school youth and adults participated.

➤ Family Room

Mark reported that a new edition of the newsletter is available. Both Family Room sites are open. A Fun Day is scheduled for December 10th.

➤ Amherst Task Force for Healthy Community*Healthy Youth

Susan reported that the Town Hall Meeting on Underage Drinking was excellent. She enjoyed Kate Powell's presentation regarding ongoing conversations between parents and their children. A favorite part was when Kate presented questions, submitted in advance, to Officer Edwards.

- **Program Planning & Evaluation** No report

5. Liaison Reports

- **Amherst Town Board** - Councilmember Jacqui Berger Unable to attend.
- **Amherst Youth Foundation**
See Public Comment/Presentation

6. Chairperson's Report

- Members with terms ending in 2021 were asked to contact Mary-Diana if interested in a second term as an Amherst Youth Board member.
- Kathy Miller explained the 2021 Town of Amherst Warm Clothing Project for Children. Information on participation will be emailed to board members.

7. Executive Director's Report – Mary-Diana Pouli

- **Program Updates**
 - A Royal Park neighborhood meeting took place. The architect shared a 3D rendering of the proposed work. Many are interested in going forward. A few are opposed because of increased traffic in the neighborhood. An MOU with Daemen College is close to being signed. Daemen College secured \$2.3 million from NYS toward the project.
 - Preliminary drawings for the Dana Heights and Bedford Park Playgrounds have been created and will be shared at future meetings.
 - At the North Amherst Recreation Center, the new fields are being worked on every day. The Amherst Town Board approved field lighting.
 - The former Gun Club site on Maple Road will be the site for 4 new fields for girls' softball.
 - Our afterschool programs are going well. There is a current waiting list for January 2022. It has been difficult to find staff.
 - There was one COVID case in our outreach gym program.
 - Very proud that our afterschool programs held a "Socktober" community service project. 500 pairs of socks were collected and donated to the Child Advocacy Center.
 - The Sweet Home Central School District Board of Education, the Amherst IDA and the Amherst Town Board have all approved a funding agreement for the Northwest Amherst Community Center. A lease has not yet been signed.
 - Ann Nichols did a great job presenting at the virtual Amherst Town Hall Meeting on Underage Drinking.
 - Thanks to all AYB members who purchased a meal(s) at the Amherst Task Force's chicken barbecue dinner fundraiser on November 2nd at the Harlem Road Community Center.
 - The budget passed at the Monday, November 8th Amherst Town Board meeting. There will be some changes in the Amherst Youth & Recreation Department. More on this at a future meeting.
- **Financial Report**

The report was sent to members by e-mail. The Department will fall short on revenue for 2021 due to Covid restrictions but is in a much better place than 2020.

8. Old Business None

9. New Business None

10. Announcements

- A vaccination clinic will take place for children, ages 5-11 years old, on Saturday, November 13th at the Harlem Road Community Center. Contact the Erie County Health Department to make an appointment.
- Sweet Home CSD will be a site of a vaccination clinic for children on Saturday, November 20th.

11. Meeting ended

MM/SC /Rose Mary Buscaglia/Ariella Yonaty to adjourn the meeting.

Next meeting is Wednesday, December 8 at 7:00 PM via Zoom.

Minutes respectfully submitted by Kathy Mobarak-Miller.