

# Holliston Youth and Family Services Advisory Council

Minutes of Meeting held on June 12, 2023 (Hybrid format)

Present: Matt Putvinski (chair), Kate Cunningham, John Drohan, Peggy Payne, Dee Phair, Alison Quinan, Kirsten Rancourt, Jackie Winer, Zoe Moreau, Allegra, Cat Correia

Absent: Kristen Haddad, James Ryan

## Opening Remarks:

Matt read the opening statement and rollcall attendance was called. Kate made a motion to open the meeting which was seconded by Peggy. Having a motion and a second, Council members unanimously agreed to open this meeting at 6:32pm.

Peggy made a motion to accept the May 2023 meeting minutes which was seconded by John. The minutes were unanimously accepted.

## Director's Report:

1. May was Mental Health Awareness Month. The HYFS interns led a social media campaign throughout the month. HYFS staff visited Placentino Elementary school where they handed out coloring and activity pages and focused on empowering statements like: "I am brave", "I am kind", "I am strong". HYFS staff also engaged with the community by attending other town-wide events such as Touch a Truck; Town Meeting – where HDAAC received recognition for the DFC grant; and Art Saves Lives at HHS - where they handed out resources and swag. HYFS intern Katie has been supporting a drop-in art program at HHS with Mr. Lack and Jackie commented that participating in and engaging with the art community at school and feeling a connection to the art program can be a protective factor.
2. In May they welcomed the new DFC Coalition Coordinator, Zoe Moreau. Jackie and Zoe participated in a Diverse Holliston Meeting-In-a-Box and along with Allegra attended the flag raising at Town Hall (recorded on HCAT for viewing).
3. Kevin, the MSW intern attended the iDecide training and will help facilitate those groups when Kirsten is out on maternity leave.
4. "Ask the TA" segment on mental health is now available on HCAT. They partnered with the schools and police department to talk about initiatives and how the departments collaborate.

5. June is getting busy as the schools wind down – students will need support over the summer and HYFS will continue to provide services throughout the summer.
6. Interns Olivia and Katie ended their placement with HYFS and Jackie thanks them for their service and the wonderful work they did with their clients.
7. Office space update: HYFS has run out of space and have come up with a creative solution. The Veterans Services Dept. will be moving over to the Parks & Recreation side of the building (there will be some building retrofit work done to make that space workable for them). This will allow HYFS to take back 5-6 offices which will allow for increased functionality and enhanced programming and will ensure a more conducive environment for clients and staff. The reconfiguration will also allow Zoe and HDAAC to be situated with HYFS.
8. Jackie introduced Zoe Moreau who is the new DFC Coalition Coordinator for HDAAC. Zoe lives in Rhode Island and is commuting to Holliston. Zoe attended Roger Williams University and is currently attending CAADCA week (National Coalition Academy) training in Cambridge. Zoe has participated in several community events and committee meetings over the last three weeks. Zoe will also be attending mid-years for CAADCA in Texas later in the year. Zoe will be introduced at the Selectboard meeting on June 26<sup>th</sup> and then will be introduced to the Board of Health.
9. HYFS put on a Prom and Graduation campaign called “Talk, They Hear You”. The communication sub-committee created a brochure for the high school which aims to educate parents on social hosting laws and their responsibilities if they are housing youth during these events and celebrations. Jackie is not aware of any incidents stemming from this year’s Prom and Graduation.
10. Strategic Planning – Jackie is holding internal meetings about how to get organized and regarding delivery of services. Jackie asks the Board to review the Mission Statement and give feedback on it. They are creating an overall direction and vision for the department, defining roles and responsibilities, building out events and initiatives for during the year.
11. Jackie is also reviewing the calendar for survey administration to be sure that they capture stakeholder and current client input. The community seems to want to participate in the surveys. They put out a survey with their interns and the BC School of Social Work to evaluate some of the programs and to see how much people know about HYFS. They had about 500 survey recipients and one takeaway was that the respondents were grateful to participate in the survey and they were appreciative of being asked for their input.

Kate asked if the Board would be able to see the BC Survey results.

12. Kevin, intern from Boston University has started but has classes on Mondays and cannot attend Monday night meetings.

13. Jackie will be participating in a strategic planning session with Berry-Dunn on June 13<sup>th</sup> and encourages folks to participate if they haven't already by sharing feedback on the strategic plan for the Town.
14. The last day of school in Holliston will be on June 21<sup>st</sup> and Jackie wishes all school partners a safe and enjoyable summer break.

### Other Business:

1. Community Action Fund (CAF) Update (John)
  - a. The Spring Downtown Holliston Marketplace & CAF Youth Art Auction Fundraiser event was a success. CAF raised about \$1000. Allegra attended to represent HYFS. They had great participation from the CAF youth. There were some ideas for improvements for next year including coordinating with the HHS Art Department in terms of timing of their events.
  - b. There are plans for a possible BBQ event in July.
  - c. Several students are graduating but at least 15 new students will be joining for the next school year.
  - d. Two emergency assistance grants were approved by the Board in May.
  - e. John is still looking to raise awareness of CAF. He discussed "Holliston Together" with HCAT regarding spotlighting town agencies and local non-profit organizations. John asked if HYFS could possibly make short videos to put on TikTok, Facebook, (like the old "Schoolhouse Rock" shorts) etc. to highlight the services provided. Jackie and Zoe are considering "culture chats" to highlight different cultures / communities in town to foster inclusion and inform the town about the communities within the community. Discussion followed about potential sponsorship under Holliston Hub / HCAT.
2. Envisioning Future Holliston (EFH) Update (Dee)
  - a. The Committee is wrapping up its work – community forums, etc. The data collection deadline was today, June 12, 2023.
  - b. The EFH Committee will be meeting with consultants, Berry-Dunn, on Wednesday, June 14<sup>th</sup> at 10am – public is invited.
  - c. Jackie will meet with Berry-Dunn on Thursday, June 15, 2023.
3. Student Report (Cat)
  - a. Finals are Friday, 6/16 and Tuesday, 6/20 then the last day of school is June 21<sup>st</sup>.
  - b. A new principal has been hired for Holliston High School. David List comes to HHS from Medway HS where he was an assistant principal.
  - c. Tensions are high regarding the teachers' union and the recent no-confidence vote related to the Superintendent. There are concerns about teacher resignations.

### Closing Remarks:

Alison reported that she became aware of the “Securely” computer software program which is employed by the schools to surveille school-issued Chromebooks to flag concerning search terms which may relate to self-harm, mental health, or violence. She asked if HYFS is one of the mental health agencies to which families are referred if their student is identified as being at risk.

Matt Putvinski and Kate Cunningham will continue as Chair and Vice Chair for the following year. Cat Correia will also continue as student representative for the next school year.

Alison made a motion to adjourn the meeting which was seconded by Kate and the meeting was adjourned at 7:22pm.

### Next Meeting:

The next meeting of the Youth and Family Advisory Council will be held on September 11, 2023 at 7pm remotely by Zoom.

Respectfully Submitted By: Alison Quinan