

# Holliston Youth and Family Services Advisory Council

Minutes of Meeting held on December 12, 2022 (Remote via Zoom)

Present: Matt Putvinski (chair), Kate Cunningham, Katie Little, Deola Phair, Alison Quinan, Kirsten Rancourt, Jackie Winer, Caitlyn Correia

Absent: John Drohan, Kristin Haddad, Peggy Payne

## Opening Remarks:

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

Kate made a motion to accept the November meeting minutes which was seconded by Dee. The minutes were unanimously accepted.

## Director's Report:

1. Jackie shared that November was another busy month and reported on some of what was accomplished by her and the staff in the past month. Activities included:
  - a. Orientation and training for Allegrity Deheny, which included attending SEPAC meeting.
  - b. Jackie participated in a Youth and Family Services meetup. She meets with other Metrowest Youth and Family Services Directors twice per month which is good for information sharing and collaboration.
  - c. She participated in field visits with the interns. They are wrapping up their semester and winding down with clients and will be on break until 2023.
  - d. Jackie participated in the DFC Year One New Funding training program, which focused on learning about the many systems involved in the grant, including financial, reporting, website for collaboration with other DFC Coordinators, etc. to make sure that they are all set up so that when the DFC Coordinator is hired they will be able to get the DFC up and running and not be held up.
  - e. Jackie has been in communication with various community partners (i.e., Diverse Holliston, the Safe and Supportive School Committee, PTO Mindshare and other PTO groups) including working on a program for sometime in the new year with Diverse Holliston.
  - f. They have posted the DFC Coordinator position and Jackie met with HR today.
2. HYFS together with the HDAAC youth coalition has created a website called "Hangout Holliston". This project grew from the need for Holliston's youth to be aware of community events in town. The goal is for the website to be live and updated in real time.

Currently the website shows events through February. The website will be maintained by student coalition members with adult help.

3. Jackie reported on the results of the recent satisfaction survey. The goal is for the survey to be sent out to clients on a quarterly basis. The last survey was sent in April/May 2022. The survey is sent to current/active clients and those who were clients within the last six months. This latest survey was sent to 33 clients with a yield of 19 responses. Responding to the survey is voluntary so response was low. Jackie says they are improving the process of delivering the survey with Allegra's help which will hopefully lead to increased participation. The survey is useful because the feedback is important and it lets them know that the people they work with are feeling supported.

The feedback that was received was 90-100% satisfactory but some feedback identified that communication and outreach could be improved and they have put in place measures to do so (i.e., weekly communications with parents, improving intake process, orienting families to the service delivery model, sending out program updates on groups and offerings via email). Allegra is helping with PR to inform the community that HYFS exists, for example, by placing handouts and a community resource guide at HPL, and creating stickers to put on other relevant brochures to increase awareness of HYFS.

4. They continue to see growth in their clinical programs. There has been an increase in referrals to the IDecide program (the drug and alcohol awareness groups). Kirsten just finished with the first round group has finished and a second round group has started. HHS Administration has responded positively to the program and wants to bring in the IDecide experts from the MGH team to do some training for HHS staff and nurses to recognize, identify, and respond to students who may struggling in class or might be under the influence in school.

Jackie has given feedback to HHS about what the school's process is in responding to students who might be under the influence in school and issuing chemical health violations. There recently has been mixed messaging on social media about how the school responds to this issue. HHS will be working on updating their handbook to reflect the new DESE rule regarding discipline and the recent amendment to the MGL 37H regarding how suspensions can be handed out to use more of a harm reduction approach which includes more restorative justice and requires documentation of alternative responses before suspending a student.

5. Jackie has been working to build out the Program Assistant / Service Navigator role and clarifying the process around service referrals. Jackie hopes that Allegra will be able to help manage referrals as they come in so that they can clarify the decision process about when to take on a client family vs referring them out or using their insurance. Allegra has been shadowing on CAF referrals and eventually will be working on the CAF requests. There have been a lot of needs this month. Allegra has been meeting with other funders (i.e., Pantry Shelf, Senior Center, Veterans groups, Federal/Local funds) to try to connect people with the best assistance.

6. Jackie reports that Care Solace, which replaced William James Interface Services, has been responsive and she gets reports which show how many times they connect with parents to work to find matches for providers. The service has been utilized most at the Middle and High Schools.
7. Clinical Report: This month HYFS has had one court diversion referral, three individual therapy referrals, five IDecide program completions, three new enrollments, two pending referrals for interns which will hold until the interns are back from break.
8. Regarding the Data Report and the Other Activities segment: This segment is not yet detailed because they are still trying to sort out the roles and responsibilities of the Program Assistant position. Jackie wants to get a baseline of what is included in the role and things are currently changing and shifting. Jackie's own chart leaves room for being available for things that come up (i.e., emergencies, school needs, clinical supervision). Matt suggested that the data doesn't need to be kept on a daily basis, but that monthly which would provide a bigger picture overview would be fine.
9. Jackie will be meeting with the Select Board and the Finance Committee in February. The Board will vote to approve the budget which Jackie will submit in February. She doesn't anticipate any major changes to her budget except for physical office space considerations now that she has more staff (Allegra and interns). Also, the department's consultant is going up in price in 2023.

### Other Business:

1. HDAAC Report (Jackie)
  - a. Jackie reported that 8 candidates have applied for the DFC Coordinator position. The Town's HR department will be following up on the submissions. The posting will stay up for a couple of more weeks. A hiring committee will be created with the Coalition for first and second round interviews.
  - b. There is a survey going around (one of the Coalition's benchmarks) for baseline information and have created a Communication Committee with Barbara Ryan overseeing the committee.
  - c. Karen Jewett has created a curriculum (another of the benchmarks) for refusal skills which includes programs like the IDecide program.
  - d. There is an intern position which will be filled by a student on the Coalition youth action team and will start up in the new semester in January.
  - e. They are currently list buildings and putting together communication campaigns while waiting for a Coordinator.
  - f. Jackie is in touch with the CDC grant manager and will relay information about the hiring process. There is a 12-month action plan, but some things are getting pushed off and she will ask the grant manager for input and support.

2. Community Action Fund (CAF) Update (Matt)
  - a. There is a new PSA on HCAT.
3. Envisioning Future Holliston (Matt)
  - a. Dee will be representing HYFS on the new Committee as an alternate. Jackie would like to know what the consultants may want from HYFS.
4. Student Report (Cat)
  - a. Students are excited for the winter/holiday break coming up.
  - b. Students are talking about the cameras which have been installed at HHS in the hallways near the bathrooms to monitor hate speech and vandalism (which had been found in the bathrooms).
  - c. Jackie addressed the current rumor/gossip on social media regarding the protocols for searching students at HHS. She spoke with folks at the school to get an explanation of what is going on. The current HHS Administration is using a different approach to try to attend to individual students rather than using a “guilt by association” approach.

#### Closing Remarks:

Kate reminded the Council about the annual evaluation process. Jackie has completed her self-evaluation and Kate will review it and then send it to the Council to review via email. The completed evaluation is due to the Town by January 6, 2023.

Dee made a motion to adjourn the meeting which was seconded by Kate and the meeting was adjourned at 8:06pm.

#### Next Meeting:

The next meeting of the Youth and Family Advisory Council will be held on January 9 , 2023 at 7pm.

Respectfully Submitted By: Alison Quinan