

# BARNSTABLE YOUTH COMMISSION MINUTES

Thursday, January 9, 2014

Present: Elizabeth Ells, Colleen Morin, Nicole Neville, Sam Spillane, Miranda Belanger, Orlando Henry, Sally-Ann Imes, Patti Machado, Reid Hall, David Cameron, Paul McDonald, Craig Tamash, Jen Cullum, Scott Pye, Scott Thomas, Amy Gaser, and BHS students.

1. The meeting was called to order at 2:15 pm. Colleen Morin motioned to accept the minutes of the November 21st meeting, all in favor.

2. An open discussion took place on drug awareness:

Various issues were discussed:

- The general concern was that a lot of students at the high school either do drugs or drink alcohol, who are obviously under age. This is happening during school, after school, on social media. and at sporting events. Alcohol is the single biggest problem because it is readily available. It is done mainly outside of school at dances and sporting events, although there is also a lot of drinking at private residences where adults are purchasing alcohol.
- Alcohol/drug use is predominant especially at sports games (football and hockey). Even though backpacks are checked prior to entrance into games, kids are still drinking prior to games or leaving the game to drink or smoke and reentering after tickets are no longer being sold.
- The problem seems to be lessening with parents and adults attending games.
- Many students are concerned that student athletes who are found with marijuana or alcohol are not reprimanded and are still allowed to play sports.
- There are certain groups of students that go out to drink together after playing sports.
- The Athletic Department is governed by MIAA guidelines, but the only way this can be enforced is by a police report.
- There is also a lot of drinking/smoking in the bathrooms at school. "1600" restrooms in the high school are closed from time to time.
- If a student is caught drinking or doing drugs in school, that individual needs counseling and support. - It's not about suspending students, it's about getting them help.
- A new drug called splufers (similar to the effects of marijuana) was mentioned. It is an herbal drug that smells vaguely like cinnamon, is put in water bottles, does not show up on drug tests, and can be purchased at convenience stores.

What are some things currently being done to prevent these issues and what else can be done?

- There are support groups (Gosnold counselors) behind the scene.
- Drop boxes are in offices, but not a lot of students are aware of this.
- There is a need for mandatory drug prevention programs which need to begin in early grades.
- Health P.E. is not a requirement to graduate. Would it be a good idea for students to meet with the School Committee about health class being mandatory as part of graduation?
- Discussion took place about what everyone likes and dislikes about Challenge Day. Not all students participate in Challenge Day due to scheduling conflicts. Healthy hallways was also mentioned.
- The DARE program does not currently exist, but there is a student police academy.
- The Athletic Director would like to meet with Elizabeth and Colleen to discuss their ideas about what can be done at sports events. Possibly more signage and not allowing bottles into sports events, as well as more teacher and police presence at events.
- Educate students that Resource Officers are there to help with problems.
- Jen Cullum would like to help the BYC visit other schools on the Cape to see how they are dealing with this issue.
- Patti would like the BYC to set up a subcommittee of two people. They can make up a flyer to be distributed to students about everything they learned at this meeting. (Example: Hey did you know?....) Sam can put this on the web page or through Ch. 18. The flyer can be given to guidance counselors to distribute to students.

Some attendees would like to digest the information and possibly meet again to discuss. There will be a YES meeting at 4 pm on January 24<sup>th</sup> at the HYCC to get more students involved.

The students were applauded for reaching out and wanting to work with police and school administrators on this issue.

Everyone is willing to work together to help curtail this problem. It is a cooperative effort amongst students, police, and school.

Elizabeth thanked everyone for attending.

Colleen made a motion to adjourn, Sam seconded, all in favor. Meeting adjourned at 3:50 pm.

Respectfully submitted by Kim Slezak, Recreation Division.