River Forest Mental Health Committee

Minutes April 4th, 2023 at 6:30pm - In Person Meeting at the River Forest Community Center

Present: Phillip Buta, Helene Connolly , Elizabeth Davies, Elizabeth Dunne, Melinda Peterson, Jonathan Howard, MD, Kathryn Schmahl, Jessica Starck, MD

Absent: Jean Meister, Kristin Sneeringer,

Staff: Sarah Schwarting, LCSW, Mental Health Administrator

1. Melinda called the meeting to order at 6:33pm and conducted roll.
2. Public Comments, Kelly O’Connor, Positive Youth Development
   * Kelly is the Prevention Services Manager at the Oak Park and River Forest Townships, as well as on the coalition of Positive Youth Development (PYD)
   * PYD utilizes data from the Illinois Youth Survey (IYS), a survey of community youth regarding drug and alcohol use, health and family life, conducted in the middle schools and highs schools every two years.

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* + The 2020 survey had a lower response rate than in the past, but appears to show a reduction in substance use and underage drinking
  + Factors include a permissive attitude in the community as well as ease of procurement
  + Marijuana use among youth is typically around 15%, the number has started to rise
  + RFT has been a partner throughout PYD’s history
  + D90, D97, OP and RF law enforcement are engaged
  + Prevention and education are the ultimate goals, with partnership with the CDC
  + April is alcohol awareness month
  + Kelly shared the details of Parent University and prescription takeback day
  + Narcan use education is top-of-mind

1. Melinda moved to approve the minutes from March 7th, 2023, Jonathan seconded and the motion was carried.
2. Township Report from Carla Sloan, read by Helene:
   * Helene shared the Township report and thanked the committee members for the work done to review the grant applications, as well as perform and report on site visits.
   * Planning continues for the upcoming Parent University on April 19 at OPRF HS.  There is large number of RSVPs and registration is still open.  About half are from high school parents; half are from middle school parents. Much planning has gone into outreach and spreading the word. Resource tables will be part of the evening. All were invited to attend.
   * It's a busy time for the Township, with fiscal year-end, the Annual Meeting, approval of FY2024 programs, and creation of the FY2024 budget.
   * Work continues on the Township’s new website.  Final input is currently being provided. The new website will be simple, clean and easy to update. It will go live as soon as possible.
   * Work has begun on the updated mental health resource guide, which will be mailed to all RF residences.  A designer has been selected.  Sarah has been working on updating the content.
   * The Township Clerk, Vanessa Druckman, has resigned her position. The Township is currently interviewing for the Clerk position, which is a salaried, 5-hour per week position. The ideal candidate will be administratively strong, pay attention to details, be deadline conscious, and be super organized.
   * A state law was passed requiring all taxing bodies, except municipalities and counties, to study their efficiency.  A committee must be formed and meet by mid-June to do this; the committee will consist of the Board of Trustees and two residents.  Melinda and Kathryn volunteered to participate.
3. Mental Health Administrator Report – Sarah Schwarting:
   * Quarter four data is being gathered and processed. The end-of-year report is being written.
   * About 70 people are signed up for Parent University. The River Forest Township is partnering and sharing a table with Oak Park Township and Positive Youth development at the event.
   * The Hub will be going through the ‘sunset’ process.
   * The safe2helpil.com resource was shared with the Oak Park Community Mental Health board. The OP CMHB and Sarah have reviewed the CRSS curriculum.
   * Sarah attended a Dominican University alumni event and welcomed new president Glena Temple to the community.
   * The LOSS support group is meeting at the RFCC every third Monday of the month.
   * Thrive is starting a grief group. Sarah will share the flyer with the committee.
   * Positive Youth Development is going to have after-school programming and summer programming this year.
   * Sarah shared literature on Parent University created by Matt Baron.
4. Addiction Recovery Team ­– Melinda Peterson:
   * Melinda shared reminders about several upcoming community events including prescription takeback day, Rise Run, presence at the RF Memorial Day parade, the Good Life run
5. Other Updates from MHC Members: None
6. Old Business:
   * Committee discussed each agency’s grant request and made recommendations on funding
   * Elizabeth Davies asked about the different funding models used for grants and how to unify funding requests
   * Committee members raised the question about Village funding to the same mental health agencies funded by the Township and expressed interest in future collaboration and information sharing
7. New Business:
   * Kathryn made request of the committee to add funding for agencies that support LGBTQIA+ residents in the upcoming budget cycle.
8. The next meeting will be Tuesday, May 2nd at 6:30pm at the River Forest Community Center.
9. Melinda motioned to adjourn and Helene seconded. The meeting was adjourned at 7:44pm.