

Franklin Lakes Municipal Alliance Meeting Wednesday, October 7, 2015

In Attendance:

Thomas Altonjy, Jaclyn Bajzath, Jennie Ballas, Frank Bivona, Barbara Capozzi, Wendy Coffey, Joseph Collins, Mary Beth Como, Claudia Dargento, Melissa Ferro, Det. Sgt. Jeff Jost, Rachel Lohman, Beverly MacKay, Becca Magnusen, Kate Menapace, Liz Morris, Chief Carmine Pezzuti, Angela Phillips, Det. Mark Piercy, Paulette Ramsey, Laurie Restieri, Janis Ing Strauss, Susan Walker, Henry Wasserstein, Monica Yazdi, Courtney Zizzo.

Meeting was called to order at 9:40 a.m. Henry Wasserstein welcomed everyone and asked attendees to introduce themselves.

FLOW Heroin Initiative – Mayor Frank Bivona

Mayor Bivona announced that Franklin Lakes is commencing an initiative to enhance resources and work with relevant parties to stem the rising tide of drug abuse in our communities. We will work with neighboring towns to develop plans and take actions, such as asking for more resources, funding and manpower. In addition, the action plan includes:

- The formation of a steering committee to measure our progress against tangible benchmarks
- The dedication of a pool of funds
- The hiring of an independent professional in the area of drug abuse to provide confidential advice to drug users and their families about treatment resources
- The establishment of a pre-announced enforcement program
- The establishment and promotion of a "drug amnesty" program
- Enhancement of public education
- Petitioning our legislative representatives to enact legislation requiring mandatory substance abuse counseling

Spending Summary – Liz Morris

The Franklin Lakes Municipal Alliance (FLMA) has approximately \$12,200 in its budget comprised of approximately \$9800 from GCADA and \$2400 in matching funds. The county has to be advised as to how the funds will be allocated. Liz encourages the FLMA members to seek the allocation of funds sooner rather than later.

Recent Events – Chief Carmine Pezzuti & Det. Sgt. Jeff Jost

Detective Sergeant Jost explained that the summer was quiet. For Operation Take-Back in April 2014 and Sept. 2014, 64 and 84 pounds of prescription drugs were collected respectively. Oakland has a 24/7 drug takeback facility, but such a facility does not presently exist in Franklin Lakes.

Detective Sgt. Jost noted that CVS had just announced that it was making Narcan available without prescription in New Jersey. Narcan, which can be administered as a nasal spray or by injection, is used to reverse overdoses from heroin and other opioids. Under New Jersey law, immunity is provided to people who administer overdose antidotes in life-threatening situations. The law also grants immunity from arrest and prosecution for drug possession to those who call 911 to report overdoses.

Oakland Municipal Alliance Chair Detective Mark Piercy stated that an individual arrested for a substance abuse crime explained that heroin users will take larger doses, knowing that the police will be on the way to administer Narcan. He stated that the Oakland Police Department had administered Narcan four times this year with 100 percent success.

Proposed Chris Herren Event – Henry Wasserstein

Janis and Henry attended Chris Herren presentations at Don Bosco and William Paterson. The audience at William Paterson was about 750 people, mostly students, all of whom appeared to be extremely engaged.

Melissa Ferro and Courtney Zizzo of Ramapo High School learned of Chris Herren from a student and arranged for a presentation by him at Ramapo four years ago. They are in the process of arranging for Chris to appear again in October 2016 during the Week of Respect. Three presentations are contemplated: separate presentations to students of Ramapo and IHHS (Ramapo in the afternoon of October 4, IHHS in the morning of October 5) and an evening presentation on October 4 to be held at IHHS for parents of students at both schools in the evening. The cost will be \$15,000 plus travel expenses. Henry stated that FAMS Principal Joseph Keiser has expressed interest in having parents of FAMS students attend the evening session.

IHHS student representative Monica Yazdi stated that she saw Chris Herren speak and that everyone was quite moved by his presentation.

Melissa and Courtney discussed The Project Purple Initiative. The concept was developed by Chris Herren as a way to stand up to substance abuse and to combat bullying. The Initiative teaches students that they do not need alcohol and drugs to deal with life's challenges and that they are good enough just the way they are. They suggested that the initiative could be pursued to keep his message alive through the entire school year.

Melissa and Courtney suggested watching the ESPN special entitled "Unguarded" which is an episode of its "30 for 30" series.

Angela Phillips spoke about how she feels the Municipal Alliance needs to change its name to something that explains its mission more clearly to the community. Henry stated that he agreed and that we were still looking for a catchy acronym that would describe what we do.

Town Fair – Janis Ing Strauss

The Town Fair wasn't as well attended as in previous years. Janis explained that the town was generous in not charging the FLMA for its booth. Patrons love the tote bags that the FLMA gives out and Janis feels it's a worthwhile event.

Stigma Free Zone – Henry Wasserstein

Because there is a relationship between mental illness and substance abuse, the FLMA has become involved with this initiative. There is a Mental Health training session from 9 a.m. – 5 p.m. on October 20th. Two instructors from the county are coming to train up to 24 participants. Henry stated that several FLMA members were attending.

Other Business & Announcements

- A Path to Addiction – Cornerstone Christian Church, Wyckoff, Oct. 19 at 7:00 p.m.
- Stigma Free Zone Mental Health First Aid Training, Oct. 20, 9 a.m. – 5 p.m., Ambulance Corps Building
- BCPC 2015 Prevention Conference, Oct. 23, 8:45 a.m. – 3:15 p.m., Sheraton Mahwah Crossroads; contact Chanel Dupree at (201) 740-7069 or cdupree@cafsnj.org to register
- Light the Night: Oct. 27, 6:30 p.m. at Bergen County Administration Building, Hackensack
- Beverly Mackay talked about a presentation at both high schools by the Ganley Foundation regarding suicide education and prevention. On Martin Luther King Day 2016, the Tyler Clementi Foundation will be presenting a program that seeks to end bullying in schools, work places and faith communities
- H.A.P.P.Y. Week presentation at FAMS, Oct. 29th
 - Focuses on celebrities that have passed away due to drug overdose
 - Interviews recovering addicts
 - Interviews a parent of a child who's died due to overdose
 - The creator of the program is 15 years old
 - She will be presenting during Red Ribbon Week at FAMS

Proposed future meeting dates:

Jan. 6, 2016

March 16, 2016

May 4, 2016

The meeting was adjourned at 11:07 a.m.