



HEALTH AND HUMAN SERVICES DEPARTMENT

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**City of Newton
Youth Commission
October 11, 2023 6:30pm
Newton Free Library**

Attendance:

Rhiannon Esposito, Spencer Solcoff, Zack Gusenoff, Andrew Feinberg, Armine Freeman, Grace Cai, Hana Futai, Julia Dun Rappaport, Kenneth Tsay, Matthew Wrigley, Nick Makura, Priscilla Situ, Ryn Leffler, Sarina Chand, Tenley Hanson, Phoebe Anthony, Georgia Finkelstein, Gassia Minassian, Chloe Lee, Vikram Scherfke, Aanika Mohta, Eitan Leshem, Chloe Lyons, Pete Olhava, Joshua Levitt-Horne, Joya Tendulkar, Ava Qui, Nina Smy, Simba Makura, Christian Chau, Amanda Feiner, Meghan Kennedy, Jenna Bancroft, Michelle Menken, Spencer Friedberg

Meeting called to order at 6:35pm.

View the Presentation Slides [HERE](#).

Youth Commission Updates/Reminders:

- Attendance Requirements
 - Commissioners 80% (no more than 2 absences)
 - Advisory Board 60% (no more than 4 absences)
- New Commissioners will be notified by Friday, Oct. 13th.

Guest Speakers:

- Paula Gannon, City of Newton Cultural Development
 - a. Attending members learned about Newton Cultural Development including initiatives and events that youth can participate in.
- Hattie Kerwin-Derrick, City of Newton Director of Community Engagement & Inclusion (information presented by Jenna Bancroft, City of Newton Social Services Division)
 - b. Attending members learned about several events through the Mayor's Office that need youth voice and participation.

2023-2024 Initiative Ideas:

- Climate Impact & Sustainability
 - Prioritize composting programs in schools & community
 - Host Earth Day Event
 - Create informational flyers, stickers, booklets for distribution
- Community Wellness & Events
 - Host Pride Events (prioritize accessibility and privacy)
 - Host Mental Health Events (open to community)
 - Offer Events & Workshops around DV, substance use, mental health and incorporate small group discussions

- Create a video that outlines information and resources for DV, substance use, mental health and advocate for it to be shown in school, through City site, etc.
- Create FREE support groups for youth
- Post-Secondary Support
 - Host College/Career Readiness Events (open to community)
 - Partner with City Departments to expand internship program
- Bike Safety & Lane Access
 - Host a community session to hear from residents
 - Advocate for lane access & more street lights
 - Advocate for bike-share program
 - Provide safety-equipment to residents
- Public Transportation for Youth
 - Advocate for NewMo to be more accessible to Newton Youth
- School Improvement & Relations
 - Advocate for more Mental Health support
 - Conduct student surveys for more youth voice
- Youth Commission Promotion & Communication
 - Increase Social Media Presence
 - Bring back posters to promote YC
 - Use Social Media to post in solidarity around current events

Speaker Series Proposal: (Jenna Bancroft) Provided brief overview of [Teen Health Comics](#), a comic series that provides story-based prevention tools to youth and youth-serving adults and caregivers to talk about teen dating violence, opioid abuse and overdose, and depression and suicide. More information will be shared at the next meeting for potential speaker series.

Persevere in Purple: (Phoebe Anthony) October is Domestic Violence Awareness Month. On October 27th, join The Purple Wing Project and students across Newton as we wear the color purple to bring awareness to domestic violence and resources for the community. The Purple Wing Project is a youth-led organization based in Massachusetts. Our mission is to advocate, raise funds, and spread awareness to bridge the intersection between domestic violence and gun safety. We took action in the wake of the Supreme Court case, *United States v. Rahimi*, a pending case that contends an individual's ability to possess firearms under the Second Amendment while subject to a domestic violence restraining order. We are currently in collaboration with many local and regional organizations including, but not limited to REACH Beyond Domestic Violence, The Second Step, RESPOND Inc., Moms and Students Demand Action, Love Life Now Foundation, The Massachusetts Coalition to Prevent Gun Violence. Please help us "purple out" Newton on October 27th!

Meeting closed at 8:00pm.

Next meeting: Wednesday, November 8, 6:30pm at Newton Free Library