



HEALTH AND HUMAN SERVICES DEPARTMENT

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City of Newton
Youth Commission Advisory Board
Meeting Minutes
Wednesday, February 14 @ 6:30pm
Newton Free Library

Attendance:

Jenna Bancroft, Meri Haas, Sarah Mead, Bill Mitchell, Ana Ciric, Sherry Zhang, Rhiannon Esposito, Grace Cai, Chloe Lee, Kenneth Tsay, Amanda Feiner, Nick Makura, Simba Makura, Eitan Leshem, Christian Chau, Dhruv Lal, Andrey Sarkanich, Pete Olhava, Andrew Feinberg, Armine Freeman, Priscilla Situ, Hana Futai, Spencer Solcoff, Ava Qiu, Georgia Finkelstein, Cindy Qiao, Sarina Chand, Zach Gusenoff, Matthew Wrigley

1. Meeting called to order at 6:35pm.

- a. Discussed the new seating arrangement and meeting set-up.

2. Welcome Activity

- a. Meeting started with a couple of ice breakers with the hope to make a comfortable environment and start to learn all member's names.
- b. Discussed that we will continue to do ice breakers at the beginning of every meeting.

3. General Commission Business

- a. Read the Youth Commission description and goals found on [the City's website](#):
 - i. The Newton Youth Commission is a volunteer body of Youth and Adults appointed by the Mayor to work on issues related to youth in the Newton community. We meet monthly - our work is determined by current events and community needs. The commission is comprised of nine students and an advisory board of both students and adults.

The Newton Youth Commission's goal is to implement programs and policies to meet the opportunities, challenges and issues of Newton youth. In addition, the purpose of this Commission is to:

- encourage youth to take leadership roles in the community;
- facilitate opportunities for and access to resources on local, state, and federal levels;
- coordinate programs and activities carried on by both public and private agencies;
- create and implement policies for the prevention of youth problems in a cooperative and professional effort;
- create a sense of permanency of action and continuity of purpose for all youth activities.

4. Presentation from Newton's Probation Court Officers

- a. Presentation was given by Bill Mitchell and Officer Sarah Mead
- b. Mr. Mitchell defined what probation is and talked about his work and the moral challenges associated.

- c. Discussed the differences between district court and superior court.
- d. Officer Mead talked about the recovery court, the resources available to parolees and what she does as part of the system.
- e. Officers mentioned the impact of substance use and mental health on the individuals they serve. Made a point to speak to the dangers of fentanyl and carfentanyl.
- f. Youth Commission Advisory Board members were then given the opportunity to ask questions.

5. Subcommittee Updates

- a. Each subcommittee presented their update and then Youth Commission Advisory Board members offered quick feedback to each group.
- b. Mental Health Subcommittee
 - i. Planning workshops for sophomores and juniors during finals week focusing on stress reduction.
 - ii. Planning to reach out to guest speakers, specifically teachers.
 - iii. Hoping to invite therapy dogs to attend.
- c. Communications Subcommittee
 - i. Have been having trouble finding a meeting time.
 - ii. Discussed merging with the Community Engagement Subcommittee as a lot of their work overlaps.
- d. Community Engagement Subcommittee
 - i. Discussed the work going on in their group, specifically a commission newsletter and other ways to engage with the youth community.
 - ii. Wanted to ensure that the voices of Advisory Board members were heard and that all subcommittees were represented.
- e. Bike Safety Subcommittee
 - i. Planning a “Bike Day” event at a location with a track or other appropriate place.
 - ii. Hoping to have safety equipment donation and donations of bike gear.
 - iii. They’ve reached out to organizations like the Newton Police Department and Green Newton to collaborate and share information about bike safety.
- f. Climate and Sustainability Subcommittee
 - i. Hoping to make long-lasting changes.
 - ii. Planning to host a “Climate Garden” event, focused on the importance and impact of having a garden.
 - iii. Would like to teach/reach out to preschoolers in Newton about Newton’s biodiversity.
 - iv. Creating a climate calendar, website, and challenges. Completion of challenges would enter you to possibly win a gift card to the Newton small business, Fulfilled Goods.

6. Closing

- a. Meeting attendees were asked to answer a feedback survey related to the meeting.

Next Youth Commission Advisory Board Meeting is scheduled for Wednesday, March 13 at 6:30pm at the Newton Free Library.