

Westport Youth Commission
Regular Meeting Minutes
February 16, 2023
MINUTES

Introductions for new members

What's Up

- Squash team had last practice and going to nationals next week
- Break next week
- TEAM Westport essay contest deadline Feb 28
- Boy basketball is 12-5

Jet makes a motion to approve the minutes, Jared seconds

Youth Services Report

- Annual budget presented to the Board of Finance (very supportive)
 - Question about the impact of cannabis legalization and Kevin explained that many communities are looking at the issue and trying to stay ahead of the curve with programs and resources.
 - Bills coming up at state legislature to hopefully close loopholes. State attorney general announced crackdown on Delta 8. Illegal in CT, but still sold in gas stations and stops.
- Alcohol awareness month in April
 - We'll have a Students Against Destructive Decisions (SADD), starting meetings at Toquet for middle schoolers, LiveGirl Confidence club also coming back to Toquet
- New student support specialist, Ally Kernan. The position is contracted through youth services department with Liberation Programs. Position was left open in August, now filled
- Toquet Hall
 - Live music has come back
 - Beginning of March bringing game night
 - Will host live SHS radio show
 - Murder mystery coming back in MArch

Peer Education and Awareness

- iMentor
 - Dr. Babich reviewed and liked the new format/flow
 - Presentation to Coleytown Middle School Feb 28

- Corn a cop, looking for dates, best date may be the weekend after AP tests to avoid sports conflicts, finals, and school events. Corn-a-cop will be helping train future executives
- Bacharach award nominations due April 15. Anyone can nominate. Recognition at the award ceremony. There is no limit to the amount of people can give the award to
- Let people know about the commission who may be interested
 - Also adults
 - People can be on commission without being voting members

Town Improvements

- Skatepark
 - Meeting with Parks and Rec to discuss more improvements for skatepark
 - Plan to set up meeting with Mike West from Parks and Rec
 - \$10,000 budgeted for temporary fix (maintenance)
 - Could raise more money for a more permanent solution. Need to bring the park up to speed
 - Ideal construction material would be concrete
 - Skatepark was a project of the commission when it was first built
- Student Discounts
 - Shout out to Jake for reaching out and wanting to revive it
 - 2 meetings scheduled next week with President of Westport Chamber of Commerce and President of Westport Downtown Association
 - Has born and died twice
 - Merchant involvement won't be a barrier, the barrier is the handoff between youth commission groups
 - Two options: can bootstrap it and get it all done, or we can make cards and sell them, the companies will manage the merchant relationships. Second way would be more expensive
 - It's not uncommon for chamber of commerce to have a discount program, could we embed it with them
 - Valerie said the program died because downtown got more corporate and students didn't want to shop at places like Pottery Barn. And we need to consider cost barrier
 - Targeting smaller businesses
 - If we went business to business, it would become all-hands-on-deck
 - Students are also given student IDs every picture day
 - There were issues with consistency in marketing, businesses closed, and there weren't students on the commission taking on the role

- Cooper has idea to send out poll about what places people go to after school, know which merchants to double down on
- Hardest thing is management of the program, need constant management

New Business

- Police chief is planning to schedule free concert for Westport students at Levitt Pavilion in late May, last meeting we were making preliminary list of artists.
 - Karena was making a list, can let us know
 - Could we combine it with day of corn-a-cop, and have it corn-a-cop then concert
 - Deadline to get list is likely sooner rather than later. March 3rd is deadline
- Working with center in Bridgeport
 - They've had some difficulties that have pushed back talks about coordinating a program with WYC students helping run program
- PTA has been working with an AP at Staples to advocate for use by teen boards, we may be able to claim a Youth Commission board
 - Annam would like to design the board, she is a talented designer

Jared makes a motion to adjourn, Cooper seconds. The Ays have it