

HUMAN SERVICES COMMISSION MEETING MINUTES

TUESDAY, March 8, 2016

Attendance:

Commissioners: Laura Fishman, Robert Galan, Ed Horne, and Dick Sallick

Staff: Barbara Butler and Susan Pfister

Guest: Paris Looney, Director Emergency Shelter Services, Bacharach Community

Minutes:

The minutes of the February 9, 2016 meeting were approved.

Guest:

Paris described the Gillespie Center Shelter which provides beds and services for 15 men and 4 women with stays ranging up to six months as well as two houses in town serving families. She leads a team which develops an integrated plan addressing family, schooling and housing needs with the goal of finding permanent placement. She also described 2-1-1 a Fairfield County coordinated access network. This number is answered 24/7 to immediately evaluate the need and either provide help in meeting that, i.e. diversion, or schedule a coordinated entry appointment. Their goal is to end chronic homelessness (of more than one year in duration) in the area in 2016.

New Business:

- Community Mental Health Preparedness
- Joanne Harpel, an expert on suicide bereavement and post intervention will address Staples Faculty and then parents on this sensitive subject.
- Grim Reaper Day which was briefly discussed will highlight the dangers of drugs and alcohol especially as related to driving.
- Fresh Check Day, another Wellness Fair, and TAG Kids To Go and Mental Health First Aid training will emphasize positive aspects of mental health.
- Senior Tax Relief program changes were outlined and reviewed.

Old Business:

CSA Enhancement Planning Committee: The final report has been completed and will be presented to the First Selectman. It is scheduled for the Board of Selectmen on March 17 which can recommend initiation of RFP.

Department Report:

- Energy Assistance/Warmup: 200 families served, funds not exhausted.
- Student Outreach Counselor position will be filled by Ed Milton who has had a similar role in New Canaan High School. He is a former Westport resident and knew Chris Lemone well.
- FY 2016-17 Budget Process is on target.

Respectfully submitted,
Dick Sallick