



AMPLIFY

Avon YSAB/ LPC / COC Meeting

January 28, 2021 6:30PM

GoTo meeting – Avon Youth Services

Meeting Minutes

In Attendance:

Suzi Alexe, Youth Service Coordinator

Susan Mitchell – U.S. Horse Welfare & Rescue, Inc.

Christine Pescatore, Administrative Analyst, Social Services

Liam Alexe, Avon High School Student

Auradhya Kumar, Avon High School Student

Ryan Steremberg, Avon High School Student

Mary Grace Bruder, Avon High School Student

Officer John O'Neill, Avon Police Department, School Resource Officer

Marisa Hicking, Teen Librarian, Avon Free Public Library

Heather Toyen, Avon High School Counselor

Taylor Armstrong, College Student

Maria Mazzicato, Community Member

Kathy Randall – Parent/Community Member

Lori Stanczyc – Parent/Community Member

Makena Logan – Avon High School Student

Meeting called to order at 6:35pm

I. Welcome and Introductions, Communication from the audience (limited to five minutes)

- Welcome to Makena Logan thank you for joining us.
- Welcome to Special Guest, Susan Mitchell from US Horse Welfare & Rescue, Inc. who will be discussing her programs and opportunities for partnership

II. Susan Mitchell, US Horse Welfare & Rescue Inc.

- Susan started following issues with horses in 2013. She got involved in helping horses in 2016 by slowly rescuing horses from slaughter. Currently most of the horses she has are owner surrenders.
- She rescues horses that need help, not just horses that she feels would be good for therapy. Some of the horses do get adopted out.
- Became a 5013c in 2016, funding is largely by private donations and small grants. There are programs are offered and the cost range by program type.
- Some financial assistance is available for those who need it, she doesn't say no to people who need the programs, may ask for assistance from Youth Service Bureaus, Rotary Club, etc.
- 100% volunteer run with exception of program facilitators who are paid.
- Programs are for all ages, and have specific curriculum. Such as: Stories with Stormy for preschoolers – reading with Stormy the mini horse; reading with horses – children reading to rescue horses and there is a 12 wk. program beginning of March – 2 hour sessions, entitled Horsepower 1: Empowering Teens.
- When it came to volunteers some found it to be more work than expected and stop coming or need constant supervision, so they developed the Teens to the rescue program 12-17 age group. Also have mentor program for those with special needs who want to volunteer.
- For more information on programs please go to Susan's website, ushorsewelfare.org
- Heather Toyen has been giving Susan's info to members of the Leo Club at the high school, for volunteer opportunities as well as program participation.
- Susan encourages us to have an YSAB meeting on the lawn at the rescue to get a feel of the place when the weather warms up.
- Susan would also like to work with Marisa on the reading program

III. Updates on Current Programs

- **Intergenerational Valentine Program (PGS/RBS)** - Students making Valentines for local seniors. 850 Valentines have been requested by local Nursing homes. Marisa and Kathy Randall can also take some to distribute.
- **Library TAB members Valentines for seniors** - The TAB members have made Valentines that will be distributed by the Avon Senior Center. We will work on a plan to possibly have PGS, RBS, TAB and any other students who want to participate to make cards for seniors this spring.
- **Input from Student Leaders regarding topics that concern Youth** - Ryan loved the idea that the high school students could be included in card making for the seniors. He discussed hybrid/ remote, he stated that the senior class of the high school has a higher percent of remote students. Heather Toyen stated in the high school 50% of the students are full remote, which leaves 25% of the students going to classes on Monday and Tuesday and the other 25% going to classes on Thursday and Friday (Wednesday is a full remote day for all students). They have approved a few requests for some students to go full time to school. A survey was recently sent out asking parents if they would send their child to school if they went 5 days full in school or would they opt for full remote. Depending on the outcome of the survey, there may be a changes coming, but they cannot have 100% of the students full in school at this time.
- **Recruit Youth for the Board and Community Projects** – Thank you to the youth that have joined the board, please feel free to invite your friends to join as well. Suzi asked for ideas for more projects, feel free to email her with ideas.
- **Anti-Vaping Campaign Discussion** - Suzi is going to touch base with Mr. Renkawitz at the high school
- **Youth Conference** – Combined effort of Avon Youth Services, Rocky Hill Youth Services, Farmington Youth Services, and Southington Youth Services. This year's event will be held virtually on March 25th at 3:00pm, for information please email Suzi at salexe@avonct.gov.
- **Planning Spring Programs** – The rescue currently has teen volunteers and is always looking for more. May partner in the future for program(s).

IV. Avon Police Department Update and JRB (SRO – O'Neill)

- There have been no new referrals to JRB
- There has been one request for assistance with truancy at TBS.
- New Community Relations Officer is Officer Jason Reardon
- Partners in Prevention/Truancy/School Refusal Behaviors – there have been no behavioral issues in the schools, kids have been following the Covid-19 protocols with masks and shields.

V. Community of Concern/ Local Prevention Council - Updates

- **Angst Presentation/Program.** May have to be done virtually perhaps partnering with the Library, need to check on how much longer we can wait to use the program.
- **TBS Program partnering with PTO on Mental Health Spring 2021**
- **Free Four Part Webinar Series with Dr. Alicia Farrell** - How to Raise a Well-Adjusted, Confident, Self-Reliant and Civil Adult in a Crazy Mixed-Up World. Being held virtually on Feb 3, 10, 17 and 24th. More information and link to register available on the Town of Avon, Youth Services page.

VI. Adjournment

Next meeting: March 2021. Date TBD