



**December Advisory Board Meeting**  
Monday, December 7, 2015 at the  
The Southington Community YMCA Administrative Building Meeting Room

**MINUTES**

**Advisory Board Attendance:** Beth Baker, Chris Bracken, Julia Brilla, Nancy Chiero, Heather Clinger, Jack Eisenmann, Mark Fazzolari, E. Richard Fortunato, Tom Gallo, Jim Garstang, Justine Griffin, Kristen Guida, Sarah Lamb, Shane Lockwood, Tom Lombardi, Morgan Maccione, James McAloon, Chris Palmieri, Joshua Rinas, Josie Rogala, Trever Rogers, Sue Saucier, Denise Sicotte, Carson Stifel, Rachel Wache.

**Staff Attendance:** Meredith Fenwick, Kelly Leppard.

**Honorary Attendance:** John Myers.

**Call to Order:** The meeting was called to order by Advisory Board President, Jim Garstang, at 4:33 p.m. Jim welcomed and thanked everyone for attending the meeting.

**President Remarks:** Jim said that he wanted to mention that at the executive meeting last week, there were awesome reports that were submitted through the team leaders. He said that it was a huge improvement from last month and it is amazing to see how many impactful projects and initiatives there are going on in our community. Jim reminded everyone that it doesn't have to be a huge project... simple things that you may not think is a big deal is collectively it is a big deal.

Jim also mentioned that this morning on the Today show, there was a segment regarding pediatric exam guidelines. He said that in the new guidelines, there are new questions that haven't been asked before. Jim said that it made him think of our survey and noticed that they ask about mental health issues, depression and specifically if you've been in a car with someone who had been drinking. He said that he was touched that the work we are doing is much bigger than STEPS and the things STEPS is asking the kids is spreading and turning into a much bigger forum than just us.

**STEPS Moment of the Month:**

Pastor Joshua Rinas presented the moment of the month. Joshua said every Monday night, he meets with the youth of his congregation for confirmation class and they talk about substance abuse and the use of alcohol and drugs in the context of 'how to do that as a person of faith?' He said that they talk about stewardship of their bodies and that staying away from drugs/alcohol will keep their bodies healthy. He said that he was particularly surprised with some research that he learned about that adolescent binge drinkers are twice as likely to be life-long alcoholics. He thinks that is startling, and in sharing that he has had sober reactions from the youth in his congregation.

He also said his congregation now has two new STEPS banners in the church and they are looking forward to having those up and promoting their participation in STEPS.

### **Board Action:**

**Approval of Minutes:** Advisory Board Secretary, Chris Palmieri presented the November 2015 Advisory Board minutes. A motion to approve the minutes was made by Shane Lockwood and seconded by Heather Clinger. The motion passed unanimously.

**Financial Report:** Advisory Board Treasurer, Shane Lockwood, reported that there is currently a balance of \$18,039.92 in the STEPS Donation account. A motion to approve the financial report was made by Susan Saucier and seconded by Chris Palmieri. The motion passed unanimously.

### **Staff Report:**

#### **Kelly Leppard, Youth Prevention Coordinator, reported on the following:**

1. Kelly reported that on January 26<sup>th</sup> the survey will be given to the 7<sup>th</sup>, 9<sup>th</sup> & 11<sup>th</sup> graders in the district with the 28<sup>th</sup> as a snow date. She said this is the fourth time administering the survey and it will be interesting to see where the results come out this year. She said that we should receive the results at the end of February and can go over them in March.
2. Kelly said that there will be a Q&A session about the survey held by the Board of Education in the Municipal Center on January 13<sup>th</sup> at 6:00 p.m. She asked that board members save the date and hopefully plan to attend to show their support.
3. Kelly said that the executive committee met and decided not to have a forum this year. She said that they have a few possible ideas instead: media or social norming campaign with town mailings with selected information we want share or a world café type meeting.
4. Kelly said that we are going to use the survey results as our main focus of the board retreat where we can look through the data to come up with questions and pick out data for a media or social norming campaign.

#### **Meredith Fenwick, Administrative Assistant, reported on the following:**

1. Meredith handed out STEPS ornaments to new board members.

### **Sector Reports:**

#### **Youth Council:**

#### **Trever Rogers, Committee Member, reported the following:**

1. Trever reported that at the Youth Council meeting in October, they focused on reputations and decision making. They created questions such as ‘who is impacted by your decisions?’ and ‘how do you fix a bad decision?’ and everyone wrote their answers on cardstock, which was then made into a short video. The video was then showed to the board.

2. Trever then said at the November meeting, members from the Youth Council created a Kahoot game regarding the decriminalization of marijuana and played it with the rest of the Youth Council to educate the group. Trever presented the game for the board. James McAloon won with the highest score.

Sue Saucier said this would be good to play this game with other groups in town. Officer Tom Gallo offered a few suggestions to include in the presentation if they are going to use the game with other groups in the future.

3. Carson Stifel then reported on behalf of the Youth Committee. Carson stated that this past Friday, the Youth Committee helped prepare for the Christmas party at the Armory by wrapping presents for children. They then helped out at the actual event this past Sunday. She said that this Wednesday, they are bell ringing at Stop & Shop from 4:30 p.m. to 9:00 p.m. She said they still need volunteers to fill some of the time slots if anyone is available. She also said that this Saturday, the Youth Committee will be helping out the Calvanese Foundation with their annual Holiday Party at the Aqua Turf for families from Community Services. She said that it is from 10:30 a.m. to 2:00 p.m. if any board members would like to help.

### **Military Sector:**

#### **Rachel Wache, Committee Member, reported the following:**

1. Rachel reported that the military sector had a great party at the Armory with about 250 people. Rachel said it took the whole community to help put this on – Joanne Salerno and her daughter provided face painting and balloons; the Aqua Turf donated 6 dozen gingerbread men that the kids decorated; Southington Care Center loaned chairs/tables; the American Legion Auxiliary donated crafts and coloring books; Frontier Communications provided crayons and pens; Southington Community Services provided gifts, desserts, scarves, mittens and hats for the kids; CVS gave a large amount of candy for the attendees and the STEPS Youth Committee wrapped all of the gifts and bags of candy. Rachel said that the fire department was a big hit – they brought in Santa Claus and everyone really enjoyed that, even the adults because it was such a nice surprise. She said that one of the biggest things was the SBOE Veterans Committee who provided a turkey along with the Rotary Club that donated \$250 and the Police Union also donated \$250 and it took about \$1800 to get 100 turkeys from the store. She said that Charlene Luponio and Kim Dandelski were there with about 10-12 of the STEPS Youth Committee members and they helped do everything – it was a huge success and they definitely outdid last year and they were so very appreciative.

### **Media Committee:**

#### **Dick Fortunato, Committee Member, reported the following:**

1. Dick said that he would like to reinforce something said by Pastor Joshua during the Moment of the Month and Jim in his opening remarks. He said that he thinks that we aren't alone pursuing what we do – there are many organizations that are keenly aware of this as well. He said that he recently ran into one called Shatterproof, which is a national organization.
2. He said that on December the 15<sup>th</sup>, from 3:00 p.m. until 5:00 p.m. Walmart will match all the money that is collected at the bell-ringing during that time. He said that last year the community and Walmart together raised \$86,000, it is a very successful event for Community Services.

3. He also said that he is looking for an intern to work with him in the media sector. He said that media sector is in charge of marketing and promoting at STEPS – it could be someone in school considering a position in marketing who could benefit from school credit for the internship. He said that the person would write newspaper articles and press releases – cultivating media relationships with local media and over social media.

Jim suggested that we publicize this availability on the website.

### **Education Committee:**

#### **Nancy Chiero, Committee Member, reported the following:**

1. Nancy said that she has been chairing the Training for Tomorrow program at Southington High School for 5 years and they work with the Chamber to get high school students involved in internships and shadowing for their careers. Nancy said that 500 students of the senior class were presented with a Kahoot game about their program. She said that they also presented to the junior class about the internships. She said that every day more applications came in and every day they are placing students. She said that they primarily try to stick with businesses in the town but they can't always do that. She said that the program is great because it gets kids seeing role models and getting out into the community. Tech committee is 7am this Thursday morning.

### **New Business:**

1. Sue Saucier said that every month, Meredith asks board members to log their volunteer hours and the end of the federal fiscal year was September 30<sup>th</sup> so STEPS has to file an end of year report. She said that this year she reported that members had \$178,000 of in-kind donations from their time, \$58,000 more than required for this year. She said that she wanted to thank everyone for their work and tracking it, it is really great.
2. Tom Gallo said that Saturday, December 19<sup>th</sup> the Stuff A Cruiser event will be at Walmart from 10am-2pm and everything collected will go to Southington Community Services.
3. Mark Fazzolari said that people most don't realize it but over 1600 individuals in the town qualify for the services in town. He said that the support that they get in the town is amazing.

**Next Board meeting:** The next meeting is scheduled for Monday, January 4, 2015 at 4:30 p.m. in the Southington YMCA Administrative Building Meeting Room.

### **Meeting adjourned at 5:36 p.m.**

Respectfully submitted,  
Meredith Fenwick