YOUTH SERVICES COMMISSION
EAST GRANBY, CONNECTICUT

MINUTES
February 24, 2025

1. CALL TO ORDER

A regular meeting of the East Granby Youth Services Commission was held Monday, February 24, 2025, at East Granby Farms in the white house. Robert Ravens-Seger called the meeting to order at 6:33pm. Members also present were Art Reardon, Mia Hines, and Evan Hanks. Alicia Van Neil and Becky Hayes (Program Coordinators) were also present. Bonnie Jones and Sara Kleinman were absent.

2. PUBLIC COMMENT

None.

3. CORRESPONDENCE

None.

4. APPROVE MINUTES

The approval of the minutes from January 27, 2025, is tabled due to lack of quorum.

5. OLD BUSINESS

A./B. Programming/Prevention-

Alicia Van Neil reported that both book clubs are underway. Glow Kids is about the effects of social media. This book club is being offered at the library with the Farmington Valley Health Department and will be a hybrid meeting held on only one night. Good Inside is the book for families being offered through Youth Services and will be held over the course of 4 weeks. It will be held in May, and the subject is about families with children who have special needs. Windsor Locks, Granby and Suffield will be invited as well to have enough interest to run the program. The first round of Hangout at Seymour ended and went well. A second round will be offered due to its popularity instead of Boys Circle, and then Boys Circle will be offered later in the spring. Girls Circle still needs a facilitator. Alisa Ruggerio is interested in being trained to be the facilitator for next year. The middle school reset program is going well. Becky Hayes mentioned that during the Valentine's Day program they shared the message that Valentine's Day is not only showing love for others but also showing love for yourself. Two full-length mirrors were present where students were able to post positive messages about themselves. Alicia Van Neil also met with Mr. Ziff, the middle school health teacher, about bringing substance abuse info to 8th grade classes and Mental Health awareness to 7th grade classes. Justine from FVHD will also attend. Dog Therapy is also continuing at Allgrove and Seymour and will be brought into the high school the week before finals. Alicia Van Neil also mentioned that the Resilience Grows Here section, a resource area, will be at the library this spring. The Shattered Dreams program has been put on hold for this spring. The hope is to observe it this year in another town.

1. Samantha Forbes from Amplify, one of five regional behavioral health action organizations, shared information about her organization. Amplify provides

support and services to anybody in the north central region. They are also a fiduciary for the local prevention money that comes through federal programs. This money goes towards a specific focus, which has been vaping prevention for the last couple years. The new cycle starts in September, and next year's focal topic may be vaping prevention again. So, if an activity held by the Youth Services Commission includes vaping prevention and awareness, then the grant money can be used towards it. Amplify also supports the regional suicide advisory board as well as the state opioid response to provide prevention programs. There is also a tobacco treatment specialist and a cannabis prevention coordinator on Amplify's team that can go out to schools in the region to talk about what are some best practices for preventing misuse. Amplify is not a federal agency, but rather a nonprofit who gets funds from the state of Connecticut and federal to run these programs.

C. YAC Update-

High School- Evan Hanks reported that the following activities have or are occurring: Valentine's Day cards were made for the elderly, mid-year check-ins with the facilitator are underway, QPR and Mental Health First Aid Training, Sport's Day, and there are some community service opportunities.

Middle School: Alicia Van Neil reported that the group will meet with the Veterans for an info session. They will be working with Nourish My Soul about food insecurities and will cook a meal. Plans for an Earth Day celebration with clean-up are underway. Great Skate will take place on March 29th at Twin Rinks in Enfield. Mentorship will be next Wednesday with the topic of conflict resolution with the 3rd grade. The 8th grade will start joining the high school meetings in April.

D. JRB Update- A Reardon talked about the year-end wrap up. The state does a survey of whether the group met their goals or not. The state average is 2.2 (on a 1-3 scale), scoring on training, equity, and diversity; individual plans for juveniles, data collection, restorative practices, youth and family engagement and guidance, and structure. A Reardon shared how much progress the group has made this year to improve in these areas. The statement of purpose with the town was re-worded and defined membership. The state would like members to have term limits, which can be difficult to make. This board doesn't have terms, but each member gets reviewed every 2 years, so people can step down as needed. The board could also ask someone to step down if there are too many similar people and the board is missing a different target area such as law enforcement, or if a person has been on the board for a very long time and may need a break. Background checks have also been added. Onboard training is now being given to new members. Case management could use some improvements. Currently cases are being processed quickly, and it has been suggested to stretch them out to 6 months instead of 2, to have more interactions with the youth through the case manager. The diversity of our members could be better. There is gender diversity but no racial diversity. Different community members are represented: Student Resource Officer, school administrator, and social worker. It is something to keep in mind when looking for new members. There is now ongoing training for current members: Restorative Justice 101 and 102, Mental Health First Aid Training. Training is difficult for JRBs made up of volunteers because it is difficult to schedule around work schedules. Outreach is improving.

Becky Hayes updated a pamphlet that police officers can hand to families looking for people to reach out to.

6. NEW BUSINESS

None

7. PUBLIC COMMENT

None

8. ADJOURNMENT

A motion was made by E Hanks and seconded by M Hines to adjourn the meeting at 8:06pm. Votes were unanimous. Motion carried.

Respectfully submitted,
Jennifer Kovaleski
Youth Services Commission Clerk