

wRidgewood Municipal Alliance Meeting Minutes

Friday, March 22, 2024

9:30am to 10:30am

Zoom Meeting

Attendance: Deanna Schablik, Carolyn Holt, Claudia Fortunato, Surbhi Kapadia, SRO Sean Amoruso, Liz Lucas, Priya Trivedi, Anna Salerno, Kevin Feeley, Michelle Melucci, Tim Monahan, Stacey Swisniewski, Kelly Nacasone

Deanna welcomed everyone and asked each new member to give a quick introduction, as a few were new to the meeting. Tim Monahan also mentioned this was his first meeting as a Municipal Alliance member.

Breakdown of Financials:

Community Education -

Deanna mentioned that as of 3/22, the website domain and registrations were paid up for the grant year. Jaden Lee, a junior at Ridgewood High School, has been hired to be the Municipal Alliance Webmaster, and will offer to stay on for the FY25 Alliance Year. Sheila will send items to be posted to Deanna and will then share them with Jaden to post on the site. Deanna asked the committee to share any flyers with her so they can be posted to the site.

Vaping - \$1900

Stacey S. and Tim M. spoke about the Vaping programs presented to the students at both middle schools and parents. Stacey mentioned the presentation at BF was school-wide for the 6th and 7th graders. The students were engaged and it is important to continue to spread this message. Tim Monahan mentioned that Tim Shoemaker spoke to the 6th and 7th graders at GW. He did the "marketing tactics program" in regards to the Nicotine Industry manipulated the public to believe that by adding a filter to a cigarette makes it safer. Propaganda that then related to vaping as being a safer alternative.

Claudia felt it is still important to speak to the 8th graders, and hopes to get that grade level back in place for next year. Tim M. offered hosting all schools next year in the gym. Aligning schools to be sure that the same grade levels saw the same program. Claudia also mentioned that the parent presentation has not been well attended, so is there a way that we can reach parents better. Stacey suggested of maybe placing a time period on the flyer of the program which may be an incentive for parents knowing the length of the program. There was also a lot of conflicts in the district that evening, that pulled parents away from attending.. Carolyn Holt asked if a recording may be made available to offer to parents to watch at a later time if they cannot make the event. Anna mentioned that if you are not at the live event, the recording does not include the Q&A period. Maybe do virtual, with questions being allowed to be asked. Deanna mentioned that we should look at how many people attended the virtual meeting during Covid to see if the numbers were different, or are we still only grabbing that limited group of parents. Claudia mentioned that if a parent cannot make the evening event, allowing them to register for the daytime program in the school, that may be helpful. Incentives to students if parents attend. Kids would be motivated to ask their parents to go. (free homework passes, ice cream parties, etc). Kevin Feeley would like a way to know "what students are thinking" and getting more data to be sure we are reaching the parents and making sure they understand the concerns. Another thought was to spin the subject matter to offer an idea to attract parents; "what do you do if you find out your child is vaping". How we market it to the parents is something we should look at for next year. Change the angle of how Tim S. talks to parents and market that accordingly.

RHS Prevention:

Still utilizing Jim Stroker to work with leaders in smaller groups so unit lunches are being targeted now. Great turnout in late February with the students. 2 meetings in April and one in May with Jim and will purchase some materials for educational needs. Carolyn Holt asked how it works to be invited to a meeting with Jim. Kevin stated that any student is invited to attend the lunch time meetings. If someone is interested, that is wonderful.

Youth Programs: Deanna had a few updates in regards to our new webmaster from the CYC, and their role with the Health Department. Also mentioned the assistance and support from GCADA for the mixers. Claudia mentioned that they had 4 events over the year. Chill – Old School Friday (2 of them) & Active – Old School Friday (2 of them)

DEI Committee hosted an international dance night. Kids took to that and had 100 kids. 40 of those were from GW. Mixing the students from both schools is beneficial, and not having their phones out makes them speak to each other! Ice breakers are a great way to start the conversation. There will be a 6th grader mixer on June 5th, at BF if nice (GW if raining).

Other Business: Surbhi Kapadia from the Health Department mentioned that Marianny, the Health Inspector, met with the CYC students and they visited 3 locations that sell vapes during the Sting Operation. Viewings of Angst and Like were shown and attended, followed by a discussion. A few questions out there were whether the programs were for parents or kids. Tim M. stated that there was a good mix of parents and students at the showing at GW. People want more access to show to others who would benefit. Kevin did a great job at the Q&A session. Surbhi mentioned Dan Kilday was instrumental in gaining the locations, but grateful to the schools for being so accommodating. In May, Matt Bellace will be speaking to GW students on May 7 (1 for 6th and 7th and 1 for 8th graders). Due do logistical and technical concerns, the assemblies will be broken into two assemblies at GW according to Tim M. Collaborating with Stigma Free. Matt will speak at BF on May 8th. Stacey commented on Like and Angst and felt that the programs and the message was on point. She is looking forward to Matt's visit and presentation. There will also be a parent presentation across the district on May 7th at 6:30pm at BF. Deanna will touch base with Christine Corliss to get the flyer for the May 7th parent event.

Other Business:

SRO Sean Amoruso thanked Claudia for speaking to students at BF. He felt that his message was well received.

Liz Lucas mentioned to be sure to reach out if any resources are needed.

Tim M. spoke about Red Ribbon week and possibly putting together something in the fall through the alliance. He will reach out to Sheila to discuss.

Next meeting on Zoom, Friday, May 10th, 9:30am

Respectfully Submitted,
Deanna M. Schablik, CPRP