

**MINUTES OF THE
CRANBURY TOWNSHIP
MUNICIPAL ALLIANCE COMMITTEE ON
DRUG ABUSE AND ALCOHOLISM**

February 16, 2021

TIME AND PLACE OF MEETING

The scheduled meeting of the Cranbury Township Municipal Alliance Committee was held remotely via computer on February 16, 2021 in the Town Hall Offices, located at 23A North Main Street, in Cranbury Township at 3:30 PM.

CALL TO ORDER

Chairperson, Joann Charwin called the meeting to order at 3:33 PM.

STATEMENT OF ADEQUATE NOTICE

Pursuant to the Sunshine Law, adequate notice in accordance with the Open Public Meetings Act (N.J. S. A. 10:4-6) was provided on January 8, 2021, of this meeting's date, time and place, and the agenda was posted on the Township bulletin board, mailed to those requesting personal notice, and filed with the Municipal Clerk. Notification of remote access meetings, until further notice, was posted on the Township website on April 24, 2020 and sent to the Trenton Times, Home News and Cranbury Press on April 24, 2020.

ROLL CALL

In attendance was Joann Charwin, Susan Engelbert, Erin Santise, Krista Santoro, Mike Owens, Walter Wright and Dr. Susan Genco. Alternate #1, Robyn Skeete was present. Kristine Fulton was unable to attend the meeting. Hannah Lovaglio was absent.

MINUTES

With a correction on one error requested by Mike Owens, a motion to approve the January 19, 2021 Minutes was made by Susan Engelbert and seconded by Mike Owens. A corrected copy of the Minutes will be issued for the website and for Township records. All in favor.

STUDENT REPRESENTATIVES IN ATTENDANCE

Elisio Moncada, Shaan Zaveri

STUDENT REPRESENTATIVE REPORT

Elisio liked the Zoomfest, it was very enjoyable, good time. Joann stated she was part of the Zoomfest event and asked Shaan if he had any comments about the Zoomfest. He feels the same as Elisio and thought it was a successful, fun event.

NON-MEMBERS IN ATTENDANCE

Dr. Barbara Rogers, Board Liaison, Brendan Hansen, Susan Saravalli, Andrew Harrison and Dr. Ware

POLICE REPORT

LEAD Conference will be held on April 25 -April 28 in Atlantic City. Event is hosted by the LEAD Project. He extended an invitation for all the Members to attend. Mike feels it would be very informative for the Members. He will send the link to the event to Secretary Warnebold and asked her about having it posted on the Township website.

Mike is looking into drug and alcohol educational resources to share with the other Board Members. He said State Police has many resources, including for mental disorders, AA resources and drug monitoring.

Joann thinks all is very valuable and she will post the link on the Board's Facebook page. Good information to get out for facts week. She thanked Mike for his resource contributions.

LIAISON REPORT

Dr. Rogers had nothing to report, except opening dialog on a possible virtual Health and Wellness Fair. After a brief discussion, it was decided that dialog will begin on that event in March, with an emphasis on the ongoing pandemic and the unknown future opportunities to host an event like that. Consensus among Board Members and others is it is an important and necessary function for the community. More discussion will ensue next month about it and hopefully a decision will be made. Dr. Genco asked about the possibility of having the Fair at the school. Dr. Genco is unable to answer that right now due to the ongoing and ever-changing pandemic situation. Subject will be revisited at a future date.

BUDGET

Per Township Administrator, budget will be what was submitted by the Board back in the Fall. However, until budget is adopted, Board cannot spend money. Joann didn't see that as a problem as no short term events are imminent.

OLD BUSINESS

NEW BUSINESS

Robyn Skeete prepared a narrated slide show presentation which began with a background on herself including her education and goals for health and mental wellness. She is a mom and college student in her Junior year. Main course of study is Environmental Psychology, with an emphasis on Social-Cultural Anthropology. She is a strong advocate for social awareness and has a strong desire to share her experiences and knowledge to help others especially in these difficult times. The slides highlighted projects she is working on and plans on implementing in her work. Joann took over as Host to present the slides on Robyn's behalf.

The work Robyn is committed to is comprehensive and very important at a high level. She is happy to share a look into her work with the Members which Joann would welcome she share with the Members.

Robyn highlighted several topics she is focusing on in her presentation. Some examples of which were; Goals and Objectives, which is all about learning and educating; Mental and Physical Healing, reinforce knowledgeable decisions, positive changes; Communities and Future Professionals working together; Strategic Methods - CARP (Controlled Adult Re-entry Project), 1-2 peer holistic mindset training; Soil Production Therapy/Horticulture Therapy. Important to focus on an individualized curriculum-based education with an emphasis on cognitive behavioral therapy. Another slide was about CBT, DBT Mindfulness Coping Strategies, which encompasses purposeful volunteer work and learning problem solving.

In another set of slides, Robyn highlights the following topics; Helping Positivity Thrive, different forms of modern and innovative research; New Holistic Coping Strategies – focusing on addictions, mental health stigmas and trauma management; Benefits – redirect negative thoughts; Volunteer Summary – to begin to understand how to help those who cannot cope. Learning how to identify those individuals who need help.

Robyn offered her contact emails at www.treehavensafe@gmail.com, rskeete@cranbury-nj.com and robyn.skeete@students.mccc.edu and thanked everyone for watching her presentation. She then asked if

anyone had questions. Joann thanked Robyn for sharing her story and vision and for sharing her personal experiences dealing with serious challenges and for offering her services to the Board and her community.

Joann asked if anyone had comments. Dr. Rogers said her objective is to work with the Board of Health with mental illness struggles. She offered if Robyn would like to contact her and maybe they could get together to talk about ideas for helping the community. Dr. Rogers wanted to clarify with Robyn if her vision is to just help adults right now. Robyn hasn't found anyone herself yet, that is acclimated to work with children but is open to finding someone. Robyn has other options in the works. Her push is to see where we are in the community with regards to where she can best utilize her training and talents.

Joann was in touch with Laura Collins regarding the Board of Health Wellness Campaign. They are putting together a wellness team to do a Zoom wellness series on February 24, 2021 @ 7:00 pm. Eating Your Way to Health is the topic of this first meeting. These meetings will be on the first Wednesday of each month and if anyone is interested in participating on that team to contact Laura via the Township website. Dr. Rogers thought it was a great idea to have discipline crossovers from Board to Board to utilize everyone's knowledge in their respective fields.

Dr. Genco mentioned (in response to Robyn's presentation) the adults working in an aquaponics program. The school already has that program in place for the students. Adults could come after school hours perhaps. It would involve planting and harvesting which would be a good stress reliever and it would be serving two needs – helping adults as well as the students. Dr. Rogers thought that was a great idea, especially during the summertime when school is out. Joann mentioned utilizing working the two front garden beds. Dr. Genco agreed that is also a good idea. Discussion by Dr. Rogers about creating a community garden. Robyn said she has a good base of ideas to develop and focus on for the time being.

Mike Owens thanked Robyn and complimented her on a beautiful presentation. He also offered to assist her in any way he could, should she need anything. Mike then concluded by wishing Robyn much luck in her endeavors. Joann thanked her again for sharing and thought it was a wonderful presentation. There are concerns about money issues being linked to an uptick in substance use and abuse. Sadly, many people are currently out of a job.

Susan Engelbert discussed the possibility of having a Homecoming event for the Fall, depending on the pandemic status. It would be an ideal time to have the event. Ideas include making it a two-part event which would include having one group of students attend earlier in the day, with a second group attending later in the day and having a dance. Having it under a tent, possibly in Village Park for a group of approximately 20 people. Other ideas were discussed and a suggestion was maybe the Municipal Alliance could cover rental cost of tents if Susan was unable to borrow. There is no formal subcommittee formed on this yet as these are early ideas. Suggestion to have it maybe in the evening of Cranbury Day, if that event happens this Fall. Susan mentioned the idea of a dance. She will talk to the Student Reps to see what they think. It is probably more prudent to have the event away from the school to make it more of a community-wide event. Susan concluded by saying she will look into park reservation. Robyn Skeete offered to help out setting up. She was asked what student age range would be at the homecoming event. Susan replied dance would be for the Middle School students.

Joann asked for a vote to add this dance to the future list of events. Mike Owens motioned to add to the list. It was seconded by Dr. Genco.

Joann mentioned acquiring student speakers. Dr. Genco asked Joann to coordinate a phone call with speakers so she and Kristine Fulton could discuss topics and discussions for the students. Joann thanked Dr. Genco for offering to look into speakers.

ONGOING BUSINESS

Update on marijuana legislation; there seems to be a compromise on the Clean Up bill as there was a debate over penalties. Examples of which are the following: \$50.00 fine with possession between the ages of 18-21 and just a written warning to people under the age of 18. The amended Bill goes to the Governor's desk for signature this Thursday, February 18.

Mike Owens mentioned his Officers made a lot of arrests lately with regards to marijuana. There has been an ongoing uptick in marijuana-related offenses. Joann said the Board will discuss more in depth at next meeting.

DISCUSSION

Joann Charwin thanked all the Members for volunteering on the board. Joann was very happy that Susan Saravalli is joining the Board as the future Alternate #2 Member. Susan will be appointed at the March 2, 2021 Township Committee Meeting. Susan has broad and varied experience. She has her PhD and also serves in the CHPC Historic Preservation Society as Docent Coordinator at the History Museum in town and is a swimming instructor.

PUBLIC COMMENT

Joann asked members of the public in attendance if they had any questions or comments. There were none.

ADJOURNMENT OF THE MEETING

Joann thanked everyone for attending and appreciates their service and time. She asked if anyone had any questions or comments. As there were none, Motion made at 4:36 pm by Dr. Genco to adjourn the meeting. Seconded by Mike Owens.

CERTIFICATE OF SECRETARY

I, the undersigned, do hereby certify, that I am the duly appointed Secretary of the Cranbury Township Municipal Alliance Committee on Drug Abuse and Alcoholism and that this document, consisting of three pages, constitutes a true and correct copy of the minutes of the meeting held on February 16, 2021.

Kathy Warnebold, Secretary

Approved Minutes March 16, 2021