

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

**June 21, 2022**

**TIME AND PLACE OF MEETING**

The regular meeting of the Cranbury Township Municipal Alliance Committee was held by remote access, videoconferencing in response to Covid-19 and the updated Open Public Meeting Act guidelines on April 20, 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 3:31 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 filed on January 5, 2022, of this meeting's date, time and place, the agenda was posted on the Township bulletin board, sent to any requesting personal notice, and filed with the Municipal Clerk.

**ROLL CALL**

Answering present to the Roll Call were, Joann Charwin, Chief, Mike Owens, Robyn Skeete, Erin Santise, Alternate 1, Anjali Joshi and Alternate 2, Sasha Weinstein. Kristine Fulton was absent as was Dr. Susan Genco.

**MINUTES**

Joann asked for Motion to Accept the May Minutes. Motion was made by Chief Owens to accept. Motion was seconded by Erin Santise. All attending Members in favor.

**NON-MEMBERS IN ATTENDANCE**

Reverend "Mom" Amy Cornell – St. David's Church

**STUDENT REPRESENTATIVES REPORT**

Angela Wu and Andrew Wong were not present for the meeting. Joann was hoping they would join the meeting just so she could thank them for their participation during the school year.

**POLICE REPORT**

Chief Owens reported his department is continuing on speeding enforcement patrols. They have been busy with DUI arrests and are working very hard. His department continues to work in a very professional manner and he is very proud of them.

**LIAISON REPORT**

Ms. Spann joined the meeting at 3:58 pm. She shared that Cranbury Greene roads will be repaved in next few weeks. Although it will be a little inconvenient for a while, she considers it to be a hurray for the residents. She said Township Committee approved paving at the prior weeks' meeting. Ms. Spann also shared that at last Monday's Township Committee Meeting, there was a submittal of an application to be considered for Municipal Alliance which gets approved by Township Committee after being recommended by the Municipal Alliance. Ms. Elizabeth Grimaldi, Curricular Superintendent at the Cranbury School submitted the application and awaits the

recommendation of the Municipal Alliance Board. Township Committee is excited to have her on board. Joann thanked Evelyn and shared she has already spoken to Mrs. Grimaldi about what her function on the Committee would be. Mrs. Grimaldi did volunteer to be their connection between the school and the Municipal Alliance. The following Municipal Alliance Members will not be returning in September: Dr. Susan Genco is retiring, Krista Monks is on maternity leave and Kristine Fulton has other commitments. Mrs. Grimaldi stepped up to volunteer. Joann will follow up with Mother Cornell to see how she felt about the meeting and to see if she would like to submit an application.

Joann expressed the need to look for more volunteers for the Municipal Alliance Committee since they are losing 3 Members and encouraged current Members to get the word out. Evelyn recommended Mrs. Grimaldi to the Township Committee. Joann will get cards out the Student Reps, Angela and Andrew, Dr. Genco, Mrs. Fulton and Mrs. Monks to thank them for their service to the Municipal Alliance Committee.

### **BUDGET**

Joann asked all to look over the latest budget sheets showing current line item balances. Joann shared that the Student Representatives reported the vaping assembly was well-received and asked Sasha if she also had anything to share, since she attended. Sasha shared it was a good program and thanked Joann for making it available to the students.

### **OLD BUSINESS**

- Vaping Assembly (Discussed under "Budget")
- Health and Wellness Fair – Joann reported it went very well, albeit was very hot. Golf carts activity went well. The helicopter was unable to attend due to another commitment. As far as attendance, Joann didn't think there were as many attendees as the previous Fair. She attributes that to maybe a few factors, one being the high temperature, an event for Girl Scouts which was concurrently happening and there were also some other mental health events happening that day.

Joann shared a printout of costs for the Fair and thanked Sasha for getting balloons from Dollar Tree. Joann asked for questions or comments on utilizing remaining funds under line item "Community Outreach". Mike thought it was a nice turnout and it was nice seeing people out and actively involved in the community. Sasha thought the seeing eye puppies and dogs were a great addition and suggested maybe they could be brought back every year.

Sasha asked about Crepe Cart vendor and if they had enough business. Joann reported they did have some business and she wrote a great review about them. One of the Cranbury School parents previously reached out to Joann and asked if their daughter could have a lemonade stand at the Fair and donate the proceeds to the Seeing Eye Dog Foundation. Joann reported the young lady made \$100.00 and donated it.

Joann also reported Pedal Powered Smoothies was a popular activity as well. Joann thanked the Municipal Alliance Committee and Kathy Warnebold, Secretary for all their help with the Fair.

### **NEW BUSINESS**

- **8<sup>th</sup> Grade Transition to High School** – Sasha reported the incoming 9<sup>th</sup> graders will have an orientation on Thursday, August 25<sup>th</sup> at Princeton High School. Joann shared there is a \$3,500 balance under the line item Community Outreach. She then opened up discussion about using some of those funds to provide lunch and to ask for volunteers to help with orientation by handing out information about the

Municipal Alliance. Discussion on dedicating up to \$2,000 to provide lunch and refreshments. Joann asked for Motion to dedicate \$2,000.00 for lunch. Mike asked if they will need to budget a little more. Joann asked the Municipal Alliance Members if they were in agreement with budgeting \$2,500.00 for the high school orientation. Joann asked for a Motion to approve a budget of \$2,500.00. Motion was made by Mike Owens and seconded by Anjali Joshi. Joann then asked for a Roll Call vote to spend \$2,500.00 for the Orientation Picnic. Erin Santise, Aye, Joann Charwin, Aye, Mike Owens, Aye, Robyn Skeete, Aye, 1<sup>st</sup> Alternate, Anjali Joshi, Aye and 2<sup>nd</sup> Alternate, Sasha Weinstein, Aye. All in favor, voting Aye.

Sasha shared she was re-elected to her 4<sup>th</sup> term as PTO President and will be at the orientation. Joann will also be there. Reverend "Mom" Amy said she will attend. Sasha will ask for parent volunteers. Joann thanked Mother Amy and Sasha for their assistance.

- **Fall Programs** – Joann suggested hiring Speaker, Matt Bellace to have programs dedicated to the senior community. Mr. Bellace offers programs highlighting the dangers of mixing prescription medications with cannabis. Joann shared Sasha heard positive things about Mr. Bellace's programs and she and Sasha heard him speak. They think he has a great program to offer for the Fall. However, Joann shared that he requires a 50% reservation deposit. Municipal government is unable to pay out deposits to hold spots for events. Joann asked Sasha to reach out to Mr. Bellace to see if he can work with the Township to bill afterwards for his services. Joann said dates could be flexible.

Joann shared Cranbury Day will be on Saturday, September 10<sup>th</sup>. Last year, she and Erin Santise set up a table with health information for the community. Several people inquired about unused prescription medication and syringe drop off locations. Susan Engelbert found a place at the hospital where people can drop off those items. Erin thinks Municipal Alliance definitely should have a table at Cranbury Day. Erin shared there was a lot of positive feedback from their presence last year. It is important to have a presence since Municipal Alliance and their purpose isn't that well known around town yet. Joann asked if anyone can donate time for the table. Sasha can help man the table. Anjali volunteered to do a few hours. Joann will coordinate a schedule and asked Robyn Skeete if she was having a table again this year. Robyn will and will let Joann know.

Sasha searched online for Mr. Bellace's fee to speak. It is \$1,000.00. Joann thinks it is important to offer help to the entire community.

Joann also shared National Mental Health Awareness Day is on October 10<sup>th</sup> and feels is a great event for the Municipal Alliance to be present at. Municipal Alliance held a hike past 2 years. Joann discussed focusing on mental health stigma this year. Other fall activities include: Red Ribbon Week, which school has drug prevention activities during that week and Halloween, where Joann does a giveaway.

Joann welcomed Liaison, Evelyn Spann to the meeting at 3:58 pm.

Sasha and Robyn shared their thoughts and ideas on creating a campaign with new ideas and resources. Sasha pointed out that ways of dealing with mental health issues are very different now than 30 years ago. Robyn agreed and shared there are many more tools and resources now than in the past. Robyn is starting an organization for mental health and awareness and has a group of women who advocate. She has tools through the Mental Health Institute and Outreach Center, which Robyn can bring into the Cranbury community. Robyn suggested another resource which is Recovery Centers of America. They

offer Tele-Doctor services and other presentation tools and courses. Goals and messages behind these programs are to make places and space for those individuals to feel ok to ask for and look into help.

Joann shared she and Robyn are on the Mayor's Wellness Committee. They provide monthly programs in the evenings. Maybe Municipal Alliance can work with Mayor's Wellness to create some kind of a session in October on mental health stigma. Maybe Robyn can find people who are willing to speak at a session. Joann also suggested to Robyn that maybe someone from the Princeton Engagement Center could offer to speak or combine a program. They have many different programs Joann asked if everyone thought that was a good topic for October. All agreed. Joann thought maybe Municipal Alliance and Mayor's Wellness can get together in educating community on the mental health stigma.

Joann discussed the costs for Health and Wellness Fair, which was \$6,435.00 which leaves a balance of \$3,500.00 for Community Outreach. If they spend \$2,500 for Princeton Orientation Picnic, one thousand dollars will be left in that line item. Joann added that she usually purchases giveaways for fall programs and would use the balance of those funds. Actual amount left would be \$1,064.00 left. Joann asked for Motion to reserve balance of funds in the Community Outreach budget for fall programs. Chief Owens Motioned to reserve balance of funds for fall programs. Motion seconded by Erin Santise. A roll call vote in favor to reserve funds for fall programs was made. Erin Santise, Aye, Joann Charwin, Aye, Mike Owens, Aye, Robyn Skeete, Aye, 1<sup>st</sup> Alternate, Anjali Joshi, Aye and 2<sup>nd</sup> Alternate, Sasha Weinstein, Aye. All in favor, voting Aye.

## ONGOING BUSINESS

- **Princeton High School Update** – Sasha was voted for her 4<sup>th</sup> term as Princeton PTO President. Princeton Township Council decided not to have recreational cannabis in Princeton. It was very a surprising turn but very good to hear. Evelyn added her thoughts that for public to come out and speak their minds, they can make a big impact. Evelyn shared there was a lot of turnout and opposition when Cranbury was discussing cannabis sales.
- **Additional Ideas to Promote Mental Health and Well-being for the Community** – Joann shared they have a balance of \$8,000.00 in the budget for mental health programs". Joann shared the screen to show a blank template she created and wants to brainstorm ideas from the Committee for new programs. Many different program ideas were discussed. Some had costs involved and some were free. Joann filled in the template she created with the ideas.

Joann began by sharing information obtained from the Princeton Wellness and Engagement Programs, targeted for Fall 2022 and would be for all the population. Some of their programs are free, some have a cost. Some program titles are; Nutrition and Fitness, Eating Disorders, Stress Management, Understanding Your Thyroid, Seasonal Affective Depression Disorder for Winter Blues, New Advances in Headache Management and Mental Health First Aid. None of those have a cost except Mental Health and First Aid. That program is \$40 per person and is an 8-hour program. That program is intended for adults only. Joann asked if anyone had any other ideas. Sasha asked Joann how she knew about that program because she was going to bring it up. Joann heard about it through the Mayor's Wellness Committee and she and Robyn took the class which was split into two, 4 hour days. Joann felt it was extremely valuable. You don't have to have a background in mental health and there is no certification, but it does give someone tools to help someone who is going through a mental crisis.

Sasha shared that Cranbury resident, Nancy Schivone has been working with mental first aid as an Instructor and is part of a team who will be bringing this program to the Ewing High Schoolers. Joann would be interested in what Nancy Schiavone has to say and how her program could be offered to the

Princeton High Schoolers and what the cost might be. Robyn shared she heard about this program also. Julia DeSimone from the Health Research Institute came up with a mental health tool kit as well. Joann will reach out to Nancy Schivone to see how it would work out for the high schoolers and thanked Sasha for her information. Princeton Wellness and Engagement Programs can be coordinated with Mayor's Wellness Committee. Joann asked for other ideas. Anjali suggested a woman who lives in Cranbury, Lee Wegman. She is a Psychologist who owns a company named Personality Resources International. Ms. Wegman lives and travels between Canada and Cranbury. Anjali conducts a meditation program and met her through that.

Joann thanked Robyn, Sasha and Anjali for their information and asked for any additional ideas. Erin brought up an equestrian facility in Monroe that provides therapy riding. It is called Special Strides and offers group and individual horse therapy. Erin shared the possibility of the Municipal Alliance coordinating with them to provide group therapy dates. Joann asked if it would be for kids or adults. Erin believes it would be for either as she viewed kids at the facility. They offer several different programs and it is \$60.00 for a 45-minute session. Joann thanked her for her information.

Joann also shared another idea such as creative arts therapy, using music as one example. It is a different way to help people cope with mental health. Joann thinks it is worth looking into. She would need to research and gather information on creative arts therapies and maybe they could put it into the budget for next year. Joann thinks everyone had great ideas to share and thanked all for their participation.

Joann then shared another screen to show different exercise equipment ideas and quotes for Village Park. She suggested that this may be another mental health resource for the community. Since Joann is now a Member of the Parks Committee, there has been feedback from the community that they would like to have outdoor fitness equipment for teens to use in the Park. Parks Committee has also found since the pandemic, there is an increase in popularity of outdoor fitness equipment. She reached out to a company called Game Time Outdoor Fitness Equipment to get a quote.

Robyn shared that RCA (Recovery Centers of America) which has a facility in South Amboy, Middlesex County and offers tours of their facilities and offered to set up a tour for herself and Joann to gather information about the facility. It is for people 18 years old and above. Joann acknowledged they could be utilized as a resource and thanked Robyn for her suggestion. Joann also suggested gardening for mental health as a summer activity. Robyn added would be good for age bracket 20 to 40 years old or actually any age.

Joann asked for thoughts from the Committee about the ideas discussed. Evelyn suggested looking to Chief Owens to see what he thinks would be the most helpful and suitable. She also suggested to Joann to look to EDAC as a possibly resource for social media. Evelyn pointed out there are no links for help resources on the Township Website for those who may be in a crisis situation. Mike shared that Middlesex County is rolling out a new program for officer training. It is the "988" program for mental health crisis situations. Some officers are getting trained currently. Evelyn was happy to hear that.

Robyn also suggested another resource named, "Peer Lead Mental Health Roundtable Programs". Evelyn wanted to thank Joann for her research and dedication to providing fitness equipment for the park, however, she suggested to let Parks Committee take care of any outdoor fitness equipment as they have budgeted funds for same.

Anjali shared she volunteers with a 24/7 non-profit called 741741 and is trained as a counselor. People in crisis just need to dial those numbers and will be put in touch with a counselor. Evelyn asked about her training. Anjali shared they have their own training to certify someone.

At 5:00 pm, Evelyn had to leave the meeting and suggested to Joann to compile a list of activities or information on mental health to have for Cranbury Day.

Joann expressed her appreciation to all Members for offering different, great ideas and options on promoting positive mental health and coping with mental health crisis. She asked all to provide her with the information in writing before Cranbury Day, so they can discuss and at the September meeting.

#### **PUBLIC COMMENT**

None

#### **ADJOURNMENT OF THE MEETING**

Joann asked for a Motion to adjourn meeting. Motion was made by Joann Charwin to end the meeting at 5:10 pm. Motion was seconded by Erin Santise. All in favor.

#### **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 6 pages, constitutes a true and correct copy of the minutes of the meeting held on June 21, 2022.

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Kathy Warnebold, Secretary

Approved Minutes September 20, 2022