

Ridgefield Youth Commission
Minutes
October 1, 2008

Present

Ruth Liebowitz, Frank Orzechowski, Kelly Orzechowski, Stephanie Cinque McInerney, Denise Qualey, Connie Johnson, Shawn Platt, John Lionetti, Kelly Leavy, Sean Sulli, Zach Porterfield, and Rudy Marconi

Minutes

School Updates

RHS

*Many students have expressed a concern for the closing of The Barn and are anxious to get updates on what is happening.

*Jake Miller was accepted to Berkley! Congratulations Jake from all your friends at the youth commission!

*Ridgefield Prevention Council (RPC) will be hosting Family University on October 15th at Scotts Ridge MS

* There was an incident at Ballard Park last Monday between two young people – police were involved but no one was hurt.

*Internet Bullying –

There is a group meeting at St. Stephen's church concerning internet bullying at the RHS and the middle schools. Several people from the community, staff from RHS, Selectwoman Di Masters, Kids in Crisis Teen Talk Counselors from RHS and ERMS. They will be presenting their concerns at a town hall meeting. They are exploring developing a task force on the issue of cyber bullying. We will get updates at next months meeting from one of the Teen Talk Counselors.

*The Substance Abuse Coalition will reschedule the presentation of the survey results regarding substance use among young people.

Group Discussions:

The role of the Youth Commission:

There was a lengthy discussion about the structure of the youth commission meetings and ways to maintain members. All agreed a more focused meeting with clear goals and agenda that sticks with the mission of the youth commission would improve retention of members. It was also agreed clearly defined role of the commission would also make the meetings more meaningful.

The status of The Barn:

Rudy Marconi joined the meeting and updated the group about options he is exploring to reopen The Barn. Rudy met with a group of interested students that have expressed their frustration with The Barn being closed.

Several options were discussed such as: hiring a part time person to cover the hours we have funding for, partnering with another organization such as the Recreation Center or The Boys and Girls Club to share staff and program support. Many pros and cons were discussed with these options. One major concern for the students was The Barn not lose its identity as being a casual, unstructured, open environment for young people that often do not participate in other programs in town. However, several agreed in order to open it a partnership may be the best way. In conclusion it was decided a small group would convene a meeting with the parties involved and update commission next month.

Next Meeting

November 5, 2008

Bring a friend!