



BOAT meeting minutes

November 12, 2019

Present: Jill Panto, Gail Gramarossa, Phyllis Ducomb, Kim Dion, Kevin Pacunas, Neil Lozier, Carrie Latulippe.

Guests: Brian Cameron, Superintendent of Schools; Mike Knapp, School Committee Chair; Ruby Bansal, School Committee Member; Nick O'Connor, Selectman; Scott Chapman, Fire/EMS; Chris Pronovost, Chief of Police; Kyle Thibault, Recreation Director.

Gail G. presented an overview of the Federal Drug Free Communities Grant. RFP's generally come out in January, with submission deadline in March. Awards are announced in September.

The DFC grant focuses on addiction prevention in youth (18 years old and under.) Grantees are able to collaborate on programs for 18-24 year olds, but the main objective is to provide evidence based prevention strategies for youth.

This is a 5-year grant, with an option to extend for a second 5 years. The award is for \$125,000 per year. 100% matching funds/in-kind service values are required. The in-kind services consider volunteer time of all involved for meetings and related events, space allowed for an office, time utilized for record keeping by the awardee, etc. Generally, the match can be covered through in-kind, rather than an actual budget item.

The grant takes a public health approach to prevention. Some items that might be considered through the grant are the expansion of the Life Skills program in Belchertown Public Schools, parent education and access to training for retailers of substances.

The general reaction of stakeholders who were in attendance was positive.

The questions that need to be answered are: Where would the financial management lie? Under what department would the staff be employed? A ¾ to full time staff person would be needed to act as a convener, and to spear head action planning.

It was agreed that representatives of BOAT would attend the next Board of Selectmen meeting to introduce the proposal to apply for the grant, as a community. That meeting will take place on November 18.

Should it be decided to apply for the grant, Gail will provide assistance, as she has experience in grant writing.

Gail also presented information on Youth Mental Health First Aid, and evidence based 8 hour training for lay people, especially those who work with youth. The group was interested in seeing this training be offered locally, to include coaches, teachers, youth program coordinators, etc. Gail is a trained trainer. To hold a training, space, manuals (\$19 per person), printing and the equipment for a slide presentation are needed. 10-25 trainees is an ideal

group size. For teachers, this could be counted as professional development. The consensus was to schedule/offer a training locally after the first of the year.

BOAT's business continued after the MHFA discussion, with the school representatives, Mr. O'Connor, and Chief Pronovost having left the meeting.

The 12 community sectors that are required to be represented in support of the DFC Grant were discussed in order to create a plan of the best route forward with regard to participation.

We currently have or are suggesting:

- Law Enforcement: Neil Lozier, Kevin Pacunas
- Schools: Phyllis Ducomb, *Brian Cameron (Superintendent)
- Youth Services Org: Kyle Thibault/John Soja – Rec Dept.
- Media: Wyatt, "The Sentinel"/Lew Louraine, BCTV
- Health Care: Kim Dion, Carrie Latulippe
- Parents: *A PTO Rep, Jay Krol
- Religious/Fraternal: Pat Heggerty, Linda Racicot, Fr. Dave Darcy
- Youth: Check with the BHS Athletic Director/Ms. Vaz of Student Council
- Substance Abuse Org: Jill Panto, SOAAR
- State/Local Govt: Gail Gramarossa, DA Sullivan, Kristy from Probation-Btown Court
- Business: Banks, Bell & Hudson, *Dr. Kimberly Dewey-pediatrician
- Civic/Volunteer Org: *BOAA, Lions, VFW, 4H, Scouts (Neil Priestly)

Phyllis will be seeing Dr. Dewey in the coming weeks, and will request her participation.

Scott Chapman agreed to be the contact person/liason between BOAT and Fire/EMS. He is also willing to share educational resources and is a Narcan trainer, along with CPR, etc.

Harm reduction and safe consumption sites were discussed. There is work being done on the State level to legalize safe consumption sites in Massachusetts. Studies show that individuals who use these sites are 5x more likely to find recovery than those who do not. It is an opportunity to build relationships and trust with medical staff who can guide them toward recovery when they are ready.

Harm reduction apps are becoming available to monitor breathing, movement, to contact selected friends when the phone hasn't moved in a certain period... Harm reduction resources are growing.

As of October 21, 2019, BOAT's name has been changed to Belchertown Overcoming Addiction Together, via a vote of the Board of Selectmen, per BOAT's request.

Next meetings: Dec 17, 9am. Jan. 14, 9am.

minutes accepted 1/24/2020
Vote: 7-0-2
Jano