

Hilltop Health & Wellness Commission

8/2/2021 6pm

Attendees: Todd Marsh (School Board Member, Committee Chair), Mary Kerr (Strafford County Public Health Network Emergency Preparedness Coordinator, Stewarts Ambulance), Maggie Larson (School-Board Member), Don Austin (City Councilor), Lori Lane (Superintendent), Dana Hilliard (Mayor, SAU Office), Nancy Michaud (SAU56 Director of Student Services), Bob Belmore (City Manager), Suzanne Weete (Community Partners), Ashley Wright (Strafford County Public Health Network), Mary Boisse (SOS Recovery Community Organization) Rick Michaud (City Counselor), Jenny Holmes (Mayor's Assistant)

1. Call to Order

The meeting was called to order by Committee Chair Todd Marsh @ 6:02pm

2. Reading of Commission Mission

Committee Chair Todd Marsh read the mission of the Committee and explained the importance of this collaborative work to the members and attendees. He also discussed that the work of this Commission will be ongoing until the goals of the group are realized, and that there is no sunset date for this Commission.

It is the mission of the Hilltop Mental Health and Wellness Commission to examine, study and implement systems which foster, promote, and support mental health, wellness and recovery support to all city and school employees, students, and citizens of the Hilltop City. While creating a mental health, wellness, and substance recovery friendly Somersworth.

3. Welcome and Introductions

Facilitator Suzanne Weete welcomed Committee members and other attendees to the first meeting and discussed the importance of welcoming different perspectives and experiences in this work. Commission members, facilitators and other attendees introduced themselves, discussed their different roles in the Somersworth community and explained their interest in being involved in the Commission, referencing professional and personal experiences.

It was identified that these efforts cannot be just those of the school or just of the community, but should be a discussion of what can be done to support and respond to the needs of our students, employees, families and the community as a whole. The need to normalize conversations about mental health challenges to reduce stigma was also discussed.

4. Agreements, Expectations & Definitions

Facilitator Mary Boisse led the group in outlining agreements and expectations that will be used to guide discussions as the Commission develops its work, including being respectful of each other's time, perspectives and experiences. She also led the group in developing definitions to create a shared understanding of commonly used words and terms in substance use and mental health-related fields. Among those definitions, the Commission explored the differences between

substance use disorders and substance misuse, and those between mental health challenges, mental illness, and mental wellness.

5. Logistics

Facilitator Ashley Wright reviewed the goals of the Commission and what is needed to meet the mission and to determine a sunset for the Committee. These goals are to identify and engage community stakeholders, create the parameters for a mission and vision statement that will guide the work after the Commission, and to identify the first steps to be taken after the work of the Commission has concluded. Once we have a clearer understanding of what is needed to meet these goals, we will be able to determine an appropriate timeframe for completion.

6. Understanding Perspectives Activity & Discussion

Facilitator Ashley Wright led the group in an activity that allowed the members to share their thoughts and perspectives regarding substance use and mental health in general and in Somersworth, as well as what resources currently exist in Somersworth and what resources are needed. Commission members were asked to share their thoughts on paper and were then guided in a discussion about their answers.

7. Next Steps/ Future Meeting Dates/Suggested Agenda Items

Committee Chair Todd Marsh led Committee members in a discussion about a meeting schedule. It was proposed that the Committee meets monthly on a set day and time. Marsh will work with the facilitators to develop a survey that will be sent to Committee members to help determine the best day and time for those meetings. It was decided that these Committee meetings will be between 75-90 minutes in length.

The Committee will attempt to meet once more in the month of August, which will be decided by polling Committee members via email.

8. Other

9. Public Input

a. N/A

10. Adjournment

The meeting was adjourned by Committee Chair Todd Marsh @ 8:02pm

Respectfully submitted,

Ashley Wright