



PUBLIC NOTICE

The City of Somersworth, NH, through the Office of the City Clerk, hereby announces that a meeting of:

the **HILLTOP MENTAL HEALTH AND WELLNESS COMMISSION**

will be held on **Wednesday, April 20, 2022 at 6:00 p.m.**
at the Somersworth High School Library
11 Memorial Drive, Somersworth, N.H.

Masking Optional

MINUTES

Attendees: Don Austin, Todd Marsh, Ashley Wright, Arielle Marquis, Maggie Larson, Chief Tim McLin, Mary Boisse, Spencer Barnes, Deb Evans, Suzanne Weete

1. Call to Order
 - a. Todd called meeting to order at 6:05pm
 - b. Ashley Wright is the minute taker
2. Approval of Minutes, March 23, 2022
 - a. Don motioned to approve
 - b. Maggie seconded the motion
 - c. All were in favor; minutes approved
3. Chair Reading of Commission Mission
 - a. Maximizes focus & minimizes mission creep
4. Welcome by Chair
 - a. Todd welcomed Commission members and other partners and thanked them for joining the meeting
5. Discussion and Activities (Meeting Facilitators)
 - a. **Review of the panel that was filmed this morning:**
 - i. **Purpose** of the panel was to begin normalizing the conversation around mental health in the Somersworth community, and to encourage people to join the conversation at the Summit being held later this Spring
 - ii. **Panelists:** School Board Member Maggie Larson, Chief Tim McLin, Dina Gagnon, City Councilman Don Austin, Liza Mockeridge
 - iii. **Facilitator:** Ashley Wright
 - iv. **Feedback:**
 1. Felt like it was well-facilitated
 2. Felt like we could talk forever
 3. Reigned in the conversation
 4. What you'll see in the final product, there were personal experiences shared which is important to talk about on-tape and remove stigma; which may echo in our community by giving people courage to share their

Proud past, bright future

stories – where you fall in life, being able to find support is an opportunity – can be a launch in the community

5. Thought the conversation flowed really well between the 5 panelists – no one was monopolizing the conversation; different perspectives complemented each other & there was good discussion about different procedures that exist & discussed the evolution of services we've seen over the past few years
 - v. Rapid Response Line was discussed & will be put on the screen
 - vi. There will be a resource page that will show after the Panel is screened & will be rotating regularly
 - vii. Need to post YouTube video on social media & websites, along with information & outreach materials for Summit
- b. Dover being a few steps ahead of us will help to identify some next steps that we might want to look at to help determine our own – we don't need to 'recreate the wheel', but we can look to them for examples
 - i. DMHA currently working to identify assets and gaps in the community-based response to someone with a mental health crisis – has recently received a good amount of funding from the City for this strategy
- c. Todd & Dana will work on scheduling the broadcasting & will let us know when to look for it.
- d. **Feedback from the Outline sent by NH Listens:**
 - i. Language – swap the order of “take time” & “make time” – make time needs to be the first step
 - ii. Should have “mental health & recovery” as a slogan or as a subtitle?
 1. Adding in “Recovery” – not sure if we want to specifically call out “recovery” because we're looking across the continuum of care at prevention, treatment, harm reduction AND recovery – the last sentence does say *“we'll focus on prevention, treatment, recovery & harm reduction”* – was this Michele's way to frame that we'll focus across this whole continuum?
 - iii. What's the header for this – *“Community Connection”* mental health awareness
 - iv. Changing “misuse” to “use”
 - v. Harm Reduction – can we look at more of what this means?
 1. **Discussion:** Someone might not be abstinent from using substances or they don't ever plan to be – we don't want to cast them aside, we provide them with resources they need to continue to do what they're doing in a safe way – it's seen as very radical when it comes to people using substances; but the hope around that is that we're trying to keep them safe and from additional harm; used as a way to prevent HIV, Hep-C and other infections; is practiced more widely in other countries and data shows the successes of harm reduction practices; rates of recovery are increased for those who are connected with harm reduction services
 - a. we have harm reduction already happening in our community like the Syringe Service Program from NH Harm Reduction Coalition and Naloxone distribution to prevent overdoses.
 - b. Other harm reduction examples include: Sunscreen, Seatbelts, resources for safe sex such as condoms, etc.
 - c. Data related to harm reduction increasing access to & entry into treatment and recovery services
 - d. Some of the Summit can be educational related to the different topics like prevention and harm reduction; a big part of this commission is to normalize these conversations and create safe spaces for people to have them; we spent some time at the

- inception to develop a shared understanding and create a baseline of knowledge among members about these kinds of topics
- vi. Could we remove the second “community” & add “connection” in the first section?
 - vii. Like the term “Somersworth Strong” – it’s a strong community that can show its strengths & discuss its weaknesses – it’s a very proud statement – a community that can tackle tough topics
 - viii. Take out the iteration of “shared” in the sentence *“Somersworth Strong is a day for...”*
 - ix. Questions:
 - 1. Don’t necessarily think it’s wrong or bad, but the questions are written in a way that asks “how do we help others”, “what do we need to provide” not really “how do we empower people to do what they need”
 - a. Looking at last question about basic needs; *how do we empower people to share what they need & then be a part of the conversations towards solutions*
 - 2. “What can we do as a community to take on shared responsibility to make Somersworth Strong”?
 - a. Active service is something that is key to it – you serve in a civil way
 - 3. We can put in homeless shelters, food access and community centers, but if we’re not going to people who are in need, we’re not serving them – we need to go to these people and identify how we make sure that questions are asked and people who are being served, are heard and have input into the solutions:
 - a. Don’t want to tell people what *they* need
 - b. How do we reach out for input?
 - c. This can be something that we talk about or ask at the Summit – *“there are people who aren’t here or who can’t be here – how do we connect with them & get their input?”*
 - i. Similar to the tsunami – people sent resources that they already had, but not ones that were needed
 - ii. Meeting people where they’re at and letting them tell us what they need is imperative
 - 4. We need to identify the community readiness to take on shared responsibility for mental health of all

A.) Community Mental Health and Wellness Summit Planning/Framing

- e. NH Listen's Cost/Funding
- f. Location
 - i. Flanagan Center as the proposed location
 - 1. Concerns re: high-ceilings & echo-effects during presentations
 - 2. Could be challenging for hearing impaired people
 - ii. Alternative – Fillian Terrace community center on Washington Street
 - 1. 50-60 person-capacity, but on-street parking
 - 2. Legion parking lot – we could ask permission
- iii. **American Legion – SELECTED LOCATION**
 - 1. Payment may be the only barrier
 - 2. No one is opposed to using the Legion as our space
- iv. Is the Warming Center being used for anything right now?
 - 1. Owned by the City of Dover
 - 2. Suzanne can talk to CAP to see who is in charge of it

3. Wondering if we'd send the message regarding people experiencing homelessness; making the unnecessary connection regarding substance use and homelessness
4. Some folks have been banned from attending the Warming Center; they wouldn't be able to attend
- v. City Hall could work for up to 100+ people
 1. It's available & transportation would be easier
 2. Could send a signal that the City is supportive of this
 3. May not be the most welcoming space for everyone in the community
 - a. Might be intimidating for some folks while business is open
 - b. It's a very formal, official place with microphones & cameras
 4. Location matters, but it could also matter for people on the fence – being able to find it
- vi. School/CTC – Black Box theatre or cafeteria
 1. Not opposed to the school, but folks who use drugs or may have drugs on them, they won't come to the schools
 - a. They may not choose to attend, but we have to make it accessible for them
- vii. June 29th (Wednesday) first choice, June 28th (Tuesday) 2nd choice, June 27th (Monday)
 1. Ashley & Maggie will coordinate reaching out to the Legion for proposed dates
 2. If we can't do these dates, we'll reach out to the group for available dates
- viii. If we need to find a different location (City Hall or Schools), we'll send out a poll for folks
- g. General Planning
 - i. Time – during the day could be a challenge for child-care, teachers, etc.
 1. Saturdays can be really challenging for folks in June
 2. Evening hours will likely work better for others, who work, have children, etc.
 - ii. Funding
 1. Cost for NH Listens – looking at \$3,000+ for planning, Summit & report
 2. Location & Food – Under \$1,000, maybe \$500-600
 3. Suspect that if we make an appropriate ask with the budget and a plan, we can likely get funding from the City for these costs
 4. Need to have that budget soon
 5. Other funding streams
 - a. Service CU – Spencer can reach out
 - b. Profile Bank?
 - c. Old Rail – donating food? – Ashley can reach out
 - d. 45 Market Street Bakery – Ashley can reach out
 - e. Teatotaller – Mary can reach out
 - f. Chamber – Mary can reach out
 6. Any potential federal funds
 - a. There is a possibility that grants could help fund, but it's not guaranteed and funding year is ending

6. Public Engagement/Outreach Efforts

a. -Recorded Panel Discussions/Media Outreach

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

- a. Next meeting: May 18th
- b. Suzanne will put a letter of ask together & we will keep a running list for outreach
- c. Ashley will put together a budget for food & location
- d. Suzanne will get an itemized invoice from NH Listens
- e. Don will check to see if the checks can be made out to the City?
- f. Todd will check-in with Dana regarding funding available to cover costs

8. Other

9. Public Input

10. Adjournment – Don moved, 2nded by Maggie

- a. Meeting Adjourned at 7:40pm

**This notice is in accordance with RSA 91-A, Revised Statutes Annotated of the State of New Hampshire.*

Called by:

Todd Marsh, Chairman

Respectfully submitted,

Ashley Wright