



## **Youth Council Meeting Minutes - December 21, 2022**

### **Item 1 | Call to Order**

- Chair Vanessa Westlake called the meeting into order at 5:04PM.

### **Item 2 | Attendance**

- Ahmed Othman, Ali Atoui, Dhruvi Upmanyu, Elizabeth Menjivar, Juliana Spaulding, Madeline Naper, Maya Palic, Sadie Lominac, Sofia Panighetti

### **Item 3 | Public Comment**

### **Item 4 | Approval of Meeting Minutes from November 9, 2022 and December 12, 2022**

- Chair Vanessa Westlake stated that the November 9 meeting minutes will not be reviewed due to a recording issue. Clerk Ali Atoui gave a summary of the meeting minutes from the prior meeting. Ahmed Othman motioned to accept the minutes, and Madeline Naper seconded; the minutes were approved unanimously.

### **Item 5 | Youth Action Team: Presentation on Later School Start Times**

- Youth Action Team advisor Amy Chiaravalloti and Youth Action team member Sienna Catizone represented the Youth Action Team during the presentation. The presentation was pre-recorded by Alexis Manzi, the lead person on the project, and the video was played at the meeting.
- The presentation highlighted the reasons and statistics for why school start times in Wakefield should be later, particularly medical statistics that tie early school start times to sleep deprivation and other issues. The presentation states that pushing school start times will have a positive influence on students, with evidence from communities in the Middlesex League and elsewhere.
- Ali Atoui asked about what time school would end if school start times were pushed to 8:00AM or 8:15AM. Amy Chiaravalloti stated that this would be up to the district and the teacher's union.



- Vanessa Westlake asked about the timeline for the enactment of this, and Sienna Catizone and Amy Chiaravalloti responded by saying that this could be enacted as soon as the start of next school year with the new contract. It could take longer however.
- Madeline Naper asked if this change would be done on a trial basis, for a year, or be permanent. Amy Chiaravalloti said that the Youth Action is advocating for it to be changed permanently.
- Vanessa Westlake also asked how shifting the high school start times would affect the middle and elementary school start times, and Sienna Catizone responded by saying that it could push everyone's start times back. Amy Chiaravalloti concurred, and said that another option is that elementary school start times would be swapped with high school start times.
- Councilor Jonathan Chines recommended voting on the endorsement at the next meeting to allow for absent members to contribute, and Chair Vanessa Westlake concurred and said that members could also do more supplementary research.
- Amy Chiaravalloti said that for next steps, she will be meeting with Superintendent Lyons alongside Sienna Catizone and Alexis Manzi on January 5 to present this information.
- Maya Palic asked if there was anything that could be done with liaisons with this, and Ali Atoui said that any promotion could be done in accordance with his liaison, Media and Communications. Amy Chiaravalloti said that once they are at the promotional stage, this would be positive. Catherine Dhingra suggested even the Youth Council cosponsoring this and co-present with the Youth Action Team.

#### **Item 6 | Liaison Spotlight: Council on Aging**

- Vanessa Westlake went to the Council on Aging meeting on Wednesday, but due to quorum requirements, they could not do much. Vanessa spoke about the Snow Angels and job opportunities page, and she also said she would be forwarding some volunteer opportunities.

#### **Item 7 | Liaison Spotlight: Safe Streets**

- Juliana Spaulding said that the Safe Streets working group made an appearance at the last Town Council meeting to promote their safe biking and pedestrian initiative.
- Catherine Dhingra asked about the shoveling initiative, and said that an email was sent to several people in town working on this, and that social media promotion would be coming shortly.
- In regards to accessibility, Juliana Spaulding spoke about having six-foot-wide sidewalks, and four-foot-wide bike paths with some sort of road barrier. This would be on North Ave. around the lake and in Downtown.
- Vanessa Westlake asked about safe streets to school with the new high school, and Juliana Spaulding said that work to make sidewalks safer has been discussed on Nahant Street, as well as the implementation of a traffic circle. Councilor Chines concurred with Nahant Street as well as other streets, and the traffic circle implementation. He also brought up realigning Hemlock Rd. to have a cleaner four-way-intersection.

## **Item 8 | Liaison Updates**

- Ali Atoui gave an oral presentation from his meeting with his liaison, Jenn McDonald who directs the town's Media and Communications.
- Major takeaways from the presentation consist of posting more regularly on social media (2-3 times a week) in order for more people to see Youth Council work, posting things that other groups in Wakefield are doing, making the posts accessible to all people (particularly those with reading limitations). Tagging other groups we are working with is another step we can take. Following the social media policy of the town is also important to continue doing.
- Other ways we can promote our events are using the community calendar, WCAT in-between programming, Wakefield Patch, posting fliers at the schools and the kiosks around town. A major takeaway was establishing a posting calendar for our social media, so we can begin to post more regularly.
- Next steps from the presentation would be creating a posting calendar to start regularly posting, creating the following growth goal, posting meetings again, utilization of the LinkTree, promoting the Youth Interest Survey, revamping Instagram, and linking Facebook to Instagram.
- Madeline Naper brought up utilizing Instagram Reels since the algorithms have been prioritizing them; these are shorter videos that are posted on Instagram.
- Councilor Chines said that an internal posting calendar edited by one person would be completely fine with Open Meeting Law.
- Vanessa Westlake asked if Ali Atoui had invited the new members to the Communications/Outreach Subcommittee, and he said he would do so.
- Vanessa Westlake said that Madeline Naper has begun to post the meet the members posts and that if you haven't sent her the photo, please do so.
- Dhruvi Upmanyu gave an update with the Wreaths Across America with his liaison contact, David Mangan. He said that the project laid wreaths on veterans' graves, and that a similar event could happen on Memorial Day. Madeline Naper said that she could post on social media for this event.

## **Item 9 | Snow Angels Project**

- Vanessa Westlake gave an update on the Snow Angels Project. A newspaper blurb was written for the Daily Item, and Catherine Dhingra would reach out to them again to confirm it was in the paper. For promotion, Catherine Dhingra is getting the flier onto the digital boards in town, Ali Atoui had the project in the high school morning announcements and on Patch, and Dhruvi Upmanyu had it in the middle school morning announcements.

## **Item 10 | Communications Sub Committee Update**

- Madeline Naper said the updates were the presentation given today by Ali Atoui and the meet the members posts.

## **Item 11 | Announcements**

- Councilor Chines gave an update from the Town Council, stating that the Massachusetts School Building Authority approved the funding for the high school building project, which was a major step. The next step would be a special town meeting and a special election to approve funding for the project. The special town meeting would likely be in January, and the special election in March. The MSBA also agreed to increase the funding cap by \$9 million on the project, meaning the state will be paying a greater share of the project than what was previously occurring.
- Another Town Council update is budgeting on the Town Council for the town.
- Vanessa Westlake gave an announcement on a volunteer opportunity for students. The Wakefield Human Rights Commission is also looking for student volunteers.

#### **Item 12 | Determine Next Meeting Date**

- The next meeting date is Wednesday, January 11; the next half day.

#### **Item 13 | Other Business Not Reasonably Anticipated**

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#### **Item 14 | Adjournment**

- Madeline Naper motioned to adjourn the meeting, and Maya Palic seconded; the meeting was adjourned unanimously.