



## Fairfield CARES Community Coalition

### Minutes

September 23, 2020

View a recording of the meeting on our [YouTube channel](#)

**Welcome:** Cristin McCarthy Vahey welcomed all to the meeting at 8:35am

**Attendance:**

**Co-chairs** Cristin McCarthy Vahey (Government) and Mike Cummings (School)

**Members:** Colleen Ahmad (Youth Serving Org), Steve Baker (Parents), Wendy Bentivegna (Community Member), Steve Bogan (Community Member), Leonora Campbell (Community Member), Kelsey Ciarleglio (Health Care), Bernadette Coppola (Community Member), Gabrielle Diaz (Government), Philip Dwyer (Civic/Volunteer Org), Cathy Hazlett (Staff), Tom Hennessey (Parent), Reini Knorr (Parent), Lori Mediate (School), Emily Melnick (Evaluator), Tim Morris (School), Giovanna Mozzo (Substance Misuse Org), Michael Patota (Health Care), Karin Shaughnessy (School), Margaret Watt (Substance Misuse Org). ( ) indicates community sector.

**Secretary for the meeting:** Philip Dwyer agreed to serve as Secretary for this meeting. We no longer have a Secretary to handle minutes, etc. Cristin asked for volunteers for this ONE meeting, and we will continue on a rotating basis. Phil Dwyer volunteered.

**Ice Breaker:** For the first meeting of the new season: Using ZOOM, we took a short six question survey to see how much we know of Fairfield's history. It varied about 25% correct to 85% correct answers.

**2020 – 2021 Meeting structure:** Coalition Coordinator Cathy Hazlett reviewed how we will operate going forward. She covered several themes:

- We will use ZOOM technology to break into committee groups for some portion of the meeting, to save time creating separate meetings.
- Each meeting will include a "Data Dimension" component since data is important in making decisions and tracking results.
- Each meeting will include a mini-training so that coalition members learn something new or learn a skill.
- The 12 Sector diagram was reviewed. Representation from all is important. We will ensure all 12 "required" sectors are represented, and perhaps look at other dimensions as well.
  - Margaret Watt encouraged Fairfield CARES to adopt the "10 cups of coffee" approach to recruiting and engaging volunteers
  - She indicated that future meetings will include an update workshop on Prevention Strategies and shared a flyer from Westport on that subject.
  - She offered a survey instrument used by other coalitions to recruit new members to the coalition, and Co-Chair, Cristin McCarthy Vahey agreed Fairfield CARES should also use it.

**Mission and Vision Statement & By-laws Updates:** Cristin McCarthy Vahey reported that the By-laws have not been reviewed since being adopted a few years ago, and that the coalition's mission and vision statements on the web site are not up to date. She asked for volunteers to review and recommend appropriate changes. Michael Patota and Tom Hennessey volunteered. Cristin suggested that current language prefers the term "Substance mis-use, not Substance Abuse". The Statement of Purpose in the By-laws is good, but it does not include serving young adults, suicide prevention, and mental health issues, topics that Fairfield CARES does address.

**Drug Free Communities Grant Application:** Phil Dwyer stated Fairfield CARES intends to apply for this five year, up to \$ 125,000/yr federal grant that will focus on two substances being used by youth. He reported that Cristin McCarthy Vahey, Cathy Hazlett and Phil Dwyer met with superintendent Michael Cummings to ask the Board of Education to serve as the sponsor and fiduciary of this grant. Mike stated that he is very interested in pursuing and supporting this grant, since he wishes to form a stronger liaison with Fairfield CARE. It is under review by his staff. The grant is due next spring, but work on it must start now. Key decisions will need to be made by the Coalition and they will be presented for discussion and decision at later meetings. Leonora Campbell would like to be engaged in this effort.

**Youth Committee:** Cathy Hazlett reported on behalf of Katy Rosenfeld. Positive Directions will hire a Peer Advocate/Prevention Intern for 5 hours/wk, \$ 15/hr. The Prevention Intern will meet with the Youth Committee monthly and help to collect additional youth data. The Intern will represent the youth voice on our coalition. The Intern will work with you on two topics: Vaping and Underage Drinking. The #Life Not Wasted social media campaign is being expanded with a focus on middle school children. The potential messages and photos were reviewed with the coalition and comments will be shared with the Youth Committee for a final decision.

**Effective Prevention Strategies:** Cathy Hazlett reviewed the seven strategies for prevention and talked about the three underlying dimensions of Family, Community and School. Reini Knorr reviewed the Fairfield CARES Facebook page, highlighting various programs that are upcoming.

**Hub Update:** Giovanna Mozzo has returned from maternity leave. She is hiring an assistant to help her with her responsibilities.

**Respectfully submitted**

**Philip Dwyer**  
**Temporary Secretary**

Attachments:

- 12 Sector Representation in Prevention – Local Problems Require Local Solutions
- 10 Cups Of Coffee

## 12 Sector Representation in Prevention – Local Problems Require Local Solutions:



## **“10 Cups Of Coffee” Model For Recruiting New Coalition Members**

**Purposes: spread awareness, gather ideas/concerns/anecdotes, and identify new potential members.**

1. Introduce the coalition & its mission
2. Provide a couple of local stats of interest
3. Explain why *you* care about this issue (make it personal, but short!)
4. Ask them for *their* concerns/ideas related to youth wellness/substance use.
5. Explain why the coalition needs a range of different people/perspectives:
  - to help us understand parent & youth perceptions and behaviors, cultural norms, etc.
  - to help us come up with messages and strategies that will be appropriate and relevant.
6. Explain what's involved:
  - Coalition members are asked to come to one meeting a month where we will share information with them so that they can feel informed, ask them to share what they know about the community and provide feedback on strategies.
  - Coalition members also have the option to join subcommittees or do more if they want. There are always many options for volunteering!
7. If they don't want to join:
  - Anything they tell you may still be useful qualitative/anecdotal data! If they have any examples or quotes, please send them via email afterward!
  - Would they be willing to like and follow us on Facebook and Instagram and repost messages to their networks to share awareness messages?
  - Can they recommend someone else who is passionate about this topic?