



**Fairfield CARES Community Coalition Meeting
Minutes**

March 17, 2021

View a recording of the coalition meeting- YouTube with the link: <https://youtu.be/tuqg5YUBUI0>

Welcome & Call to Order - Cristin McCarthy Vahey welcomed all to the meeting at 8:32am

Members: Co-chair Cristin McCarthy Vahey (Government/State Rep, Parent), Reini Knorr (Parent, Community member) Wendy Bentivenga (Parent, Community Member), Philip Dwyer (Civic/Volunteer Org), Donna Fletcher (Health Care), Cathy Hazlett (Staff), Emily Melnick (Evaluator), Tim Morris (Student, Assistant Counselor FLHS), Pam Walker (Student Assistance Counselor FWHS), Alison Seyal (Government/Social Services, Parent), Coreen Ahmad (Youth Serving Org/Gov), Vicki Gustafson (Kiwans Club), Leonora Campbell (Parent, Community member), William Hass (Rotary, SHU), Matt Danzar (Treatment Center), Diana Liptak (alco (YMCA), Alida Ward (Co-Pastor Greenfield Hill Church), Steve Bogan (Parent, Community member), Kelsey Ciarlegio (Community youth prevention), Beth Leetch (Detective Youth Bureau - Fairfield Police), Bridie Murray (Parent), Lisa Labella (CFJ community org), Victoria O'Neil (HUB), Sue Horn (Parent), Kim Fahey (Parent), () indicates community sector.

Approval of Minutes Philip Dwyer made the motion to approve the February 17^h Coalition Minutes and Coreen Ahmad seconded the motion. The following changes were made to the minute, Matt Danzar noted he is not a parent, Coreen noted her last name is Ahmad. One the changes were made; the motion was unanimously approved.

Co-Chair Update – Cristin, shared that she is busy with a number of legislative business - and will continue to be available and present as best she can.

Advocacy Training – Cathy shared there was discussion for an Advocacy policy and wanted to have the coalition members understand the differences between Lobbying, Advocacy, and Education. We are hoping to receive a Federal grant prohibits us from lobbying.

A PowerPoint with slides was presented to share information regarding how the process works and what is effective.

Advocacy - arguing in favor of a cause or idea. – Focus on the topic, cause, or an idea.

Lobbying – attempting to influence specific legislation. -

- **As members of a non-profit or a coalition**, you can *EDUCATE* and *INFORM* on an issue. Reach out to your legislator and time? You can ask for a call or a meeting. They want to hear from their constituents.
- **As a member of the public**, you can *TESTIFY* on a specific piece of legislation.

Advocacy on three levels:

Federal -

State – State Representatives and Senator: **In Fairfield: State Reps:** Cristin McCarthy-Vahey, Jennifer Leeper and Laura Devlin and **Senator:** Tony Hwang

Local - Advocate locally w/ BOE – RTM – local agencies – police, schools etc. In terms of addressing issues, go to your local representatives and state senators and connect directly through email, call, or handwritten note in the mail.

Tracking Current Bills Website CGA Connecticut – 36-Senate members 151-state representatives

Review of the link to the www.CGA.ct.org was reviewed. Calendar, daily information, and Bill tracking was viewed.

Learning to know how to navigate and follow the bills and connecting with your representatives.

Connect with organizations who have full-time lobbyists' or have staff who track this information and make the information available about bills.

Discussion of 2 types of Creating Testimony- Oral and Written and the discussion of the format and understanding what a member of the coalition can and cannot do.

Environmental changes – where policy changes do have impact on the issues the coalition addresses.

DFC Grant (Drug Free Communities Grant)

-Logic Model to Address Underage Drinking and Cannabis

-Sector Representation and CIAs

Grant is administered from the Center for Disease Control and just came out on 3/5/21- Leadership will be meeting to review and dissect the application(RFP) and divide up areas to be worked on.

Purpose: It is a substance prevention grant and also building capacity in the community.

Goals:

- 1) To establish and strengthen collaboration among communities, public and private nonprofit agencies as well as federal, state, local and tribal governments, to support the efforts of community coalitions working to prevent and reduce substance abuse among youth (18 and younger). (building that community collaboration and strengthening that to address prevention and reduction of youth use)
- 2) Reduce substance abuse among youth and overtime reduce substance abuse among adults by addressing the factors in a community that increase the risks of substance abuse and promoting the factors that minimize the risks of substance abuse.

-Logic Model to Address Underage Drinking and Cannabis:

Helps with you to identify the root problem and create the statements. Systematic way of thinking about and dealing with the specific problem statement. PowerPoint presentation to explain the process of addressing the issues and root causes of the problems. Data information and resources that will be used to help support the grant application development and completion.

Discussion was had about what the specific areas the grant will be focusing on two areas - substance specific – not avenue of use which that was an agreement and coalition support for - Alcohol and Marijuana to be used in the grant application – and using the data to help support what will be discussed.

Four core measures – 30-day use – Parental use – Perception of Peer Use and Perception of Parental use -

Wendy highlighted that LPC Grant is focused heavily on Vaping and efforts to address this specifically – LPC= Local Prevention Council grant – the coalition applies for and receives, where the hope will be that the DCF grant provides a substantially greater source of funding.

-Sector Representation and CIA's:

Specific Coalition Involvement Agreements - representation of one of all the 12 sectors we need involved in the coalition and then include in the grant: Youth, Parent, Media, Business, School, Youth Serving organization, Law Enforcement, Religious or Fraternal organization, Civic or Volunteer groups, Health Care, professional health organization, state, local or tribal government agency with expertise in misuse - substance use and another organization in reducing substance misuse.

Asking all members of the Coalition to signoff on a CIA – as a way to know that you may be asked to be one of those sectors and also who you might know to recommend and make a leadership member aware who those sectors are and you have thinking about. Having all those 12 sectors reiterates that it takes entire- “all sectors” of a community to communicate prevention efforts.

Committee & Grant Updates:

Wendy Bentivenga shared that the Vaping postcards – all four have been sent out. There seems to be some issues with the delivery and mailing of the cards to parents and families in Fairfield. Some parent members of the coalition were asked if they had received, and it seems to be a mixed response with some receiving all four and some possibly only two. There was also a link and information about the survey in the last postcard sent and the hope is that parents will see the link and respond. It has also been noted that parents will be informed about the survey through the schools. Reini shared a link to the Fairfieldct.org website that has all four postcards available for viewing and resource of information.

Resources Committee:

By-Laws review is currently being worked on. Scheduled to have formatted and prepared for the May Leadership Team meeting to approve and then for final approval at the Business meeting in May. Several sections are being looked at Coalition membership – attendance and participation. It was suggested to look over the CIA document to add into the BY-laws and assist with clarification. There is a working draft on google drive and encourage any coalition members to look at and make any suggestion to the committee.

Resource committee ready to assist with the DCF grant.

Programming Committee:

Reini saved and shared all the links for the meeting in the chat, they will also be included in the minutes. Next week is National Alcohol and Drug Facts Week follow information on all the Fairfield CARES social media to see what is going to be posted. It will coincide with the partner groups in Westport and Norwalk- please share and like to promote the information.

Thursday, March 18th Webinar with Speaker - Blunt Conversation about Cannibals – Coalition members and a panel of experts who are speaking and participating in the program. Help register – other folks.

April is Alcohol Awareness Month and Sexual Assault Awareness Month

Saturday, April 24th – National Take Back Drug Day

Wednesday, April 28th – Presentation from Center for Family Justice – Healthy Relationships & how alcohol plays a role.

May is Mental Health Awareness Month – Many different programs with mental health related this theme in place.

– Decorate the Tree of Hope on the Sherman Green –

May 12th – Change the Script Van

May 19th – Matt Callacci - Comedian who will be presenting – wrote a book “ Natural Highs.” He will be sponsoring on a Zoom with the capacity of 1000 people able to attend.

May 26th – Laughing Yoga Session

Summer Events:

Plan to sponsor and coordinate with the Peanut/Butter Jam concerts – Slam Jam Movie Nights as well with tables and information.

Through June/July still emphasize and reinforcing the Social Host messaging regarding graduation and going away to college parties and events.

August:

August 31st International Overdose Awareness Day – hope to organize a Vigil – and have this in person if possible.

September: Suicide Prevention Month

September 5-11th – Suicide Prevention Week - Day September 10th

Fairfield Center Stage Theater – one person play about Everything is Brilliant – a suicide prevention comedy. either virtually or online.

My Friend Abby – Suicide prevention group out of Trumbull – a highly active group will be screening a documentary “ My Ascension” April – Fairfield CARES will help publicize the – spread hope about suicide.

Reini is asking for any coalition member who has any interest in any of the events being planned to please connect to help her out.

Announcements from Coalition Members

Lisa Labella from CFJ - Thank you for the collaboration and, they have a one sheet that has information for support and other events going on. Please look at Instagram, Facebook and Twitter accounts for CFJ for other events and activities. Coreen – from Wakeman who has 127 High school students and 62 Middle school students who can be utilized for a events and programs – they meet monthly, and if there is presentations or opportunities please let Coreen know. QPR Training this month (Question, Persuade -Refer) suicide prevention training with coalition members and bring it back to the community.

Adjournment: Cristin closed the meeting at 10:04 am.

Respectfully submitted,

Leonora P. Campbell

Secretary

Additional information and links discussed in the meeting are as follows:

Advocacy related:

https://www.cga.ct.gov/asp/menu/Clerkdoclist.asp?house=X&doc_type=bul

<https://www.cga.ct.gov/default.asp>

<https://www.cga.ct.gov/asp/content/yourvoice.asp>

Social Host Law:

https://www.fairfieldct.org/filestorage/10736/12858/17079/19537/95087/FFC_SH_Flyer_11x8.5_FINAL.pdf

Full Survey Report from 2019:

[https://www.fairfieldct.org/filestorage/10736/12858/17079/19537/80251/Fairfield CARES Search Survey 2019 Aggregate Report.pdf](https://www.fairfieldct.org/filestorage/10736/12858/17079/19537/80251/Fairfield_CARES_Search_Survey_2019_Aggregate_Report.pdf)

Vaping Postcards: <https://www.fairfieldct.org/fairfieldcaresnews/?FeedID=4112>

DRAFT - FAIRFIELD CARES COMMUNITY COALITION BY LAWS

https://docs.google.com/document/d/13e-hPjmBDIW_vnWAxGf7AhgMtnWpoGRTQ46XPo4JkGg/edit?usp=sharing

My Friend Abby Movie Screening: <https://www.myascension.us/>

Center for Family Justice - see social media links on website <https://centerforfamilyjustice.org/>