

SOUTH WINDSOR BEFORE AND AFTER SCHOOL CARE ASSESSMENT COMMITTEE (SUBCOMMITTEE OF THE TOWN COUNCIL)

**MINUTES
SPRENKEL ROOM**

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**REGULAR MEETING
October 10, 2018**

1. Call Meeting to Order

The meeting was called to order at approximately 5:34 pm.

2. Roll Call

Members Present

Tiffany Caouette, Principal of Pleasant Valley Elementary School/Superintendent's Designee
Beth Esstman, Board of Education
Raymond Favreau, Director of Parks and Recreation
Matthew Galligan, Chairperson/Town Manager
Shelby Kosa, Recreation Supervisor/Director of 4th R Program
Anthony Leone, Resident/Parent
Karen Lydecker, Resident/Parent
Craig Zimmerman, Board of Education

Members Absent

Audrey Delnicki, Town Council
Andrew Paterna, Town Council
Vanessa Perry, Assistant Town Manager/Director of Human Resources

Guests Present

3. Approval of Minutes – August 13, 2018

Mr. Ray Favreau made a motion to approve the minutes. Mr. Craig Zimmerman seconded the motion. The motion was approved unanimously, with Ms. Beth Esstman abstaining.

4. New Business

General Discussion and Updates

Mr. Galligan informed the Committee that the YWCA has purchased the Mother Goose daycare facility. They will be sending out a flyer announcing the reopening to parents in the Orchard Hill school district. They have all of their approvals and the program is ready to go. Mr. Galligan has suggested to the YWCA that they get in contact with the Board of Education to arrange bussing.

Mr. Galligan mentioned having a conversation with Mr. Sparrow, the head of the YMCA, about using the Wapping School facility as a location for their program. This is unfortunately not an option, as there are a few other programs already using space there. Also, the cafeteria will be under construction for 6-8 weeks and cannot be used. Even if the building was available, the YMCA would need a 90-day turnaround to set up a program there.

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The YMCA is working with the Avery Street Church to move forward with that facility's program. Reverend Poolman has communicated that the program would be ready to open by January 1st at the latest.

The Committee discussed the costs of different bus services. The YMCA is trying not to add the expense of a bus. Mr. Favreau said that the current YMCA program that would have been held at Temple Beth Hillel (and is temporarily being held in Vernon) has bussing arrangements already set up for their current enrollment, and that transportation would not be an issue unless enrollment exceeds 50 children.

Mr. Galligan said that he has been in contact with a representative of some national daycare centers. He is looking at two parcels of Town-owned land in South Windsor, as well as some privately-owned land parcels.

The Committee discussed safety measures in response to what happened with the Temple Beth Hillel program. There was concern that the Avery Street Church program would be a risk due to its being held in a building that the public has access to. Mr. Zimmerman said that the Committee should reach out to the YMCA and the church to make sure that these concerns are addressed.

Mr. Zimmerman announced that he will be stepping down from the Committee. He is willing to be called in as needed for consultation on Board of Education related topics. He added that he speaks only for himself, not for the Superintendent or for the other Board of Education members.

Mr. Leone asked for more details on the national daycare company development. Mr. Galligan reiterated that there are a few areas that are being looked at in Town, including a couple of parcels on Buckland Road. The company is reviewing their options. There is also a different company looking to move into Evergreen Walk, and that project is still moving forward.

Mr. Galligan said that a martial arts studio in Manchester, which was discussed in a previous Committee meeting, has contacted him regarding the after-school programs that they offer. The studio already sends a bus to some schools to pick up children. Mr. Galligan suggested that the studio could be mentioned to families on the waitlist as another option. Mr. Favreau said that the Recreation Department does not publically endorse any daycare centers or childcare providers, for liability reasons. He asked where the line would be drawn for other facilities and businesses. The schools cannot publically endorse them either, for the same reason. Ms. Lydecker suggested that the martial arts facility could advertise on social media, and that way the Recreation Department and the schools would not be endorsing them.

Ms. Lydecker asked how many families actually need a short-term solution for care. Ms. Kosa said that she could not be sure of the exact numbers. More families have been accepted into the 4th R program, and there has been movement on the waitlists. She said that she is not sure what families on the waitlist are doing for childcare. Signups for the YMCA program at the Temple were lower than expected. If the program had opened as planned they could have taken up to 50 children, but only 24 children were actually signed up. Mr. Galligan said that many families may be staying on the waitlist because they want to be in the 4th R program, not

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because they need to be. Ms. Kosa said that registrations on the waitlist have slowed. Ms. Lydecker asked if the Committee really needs to come up with a short-term solution, as it seems that families are finding other childcare options.

Mr. Favreau echoed Ms. Lydecker's question, on what the Committee's charge is now that a short-term solution may not be needed. Mr. Galligan said that the Committee should show support for the Avery Street Church program as it develops. The church is building classroom space to accommodate 30+ children, and then will be looking to renovate the basement for additional space in the future. The church will also have to have the approval of its congregation, and a special exception from the Planning and Zoning Commission. In addition to this, there are businesses potentially being brought in to provide new childcare facilities, which will be a long-term solution. Mr. Zimmerman said that the Committee should come up with an alternative option in case the Avery Street Church program falls through.

The next meeting of the Committee will be arranged once more information has been gathered, or if a new development arises that the Committee needs to discuss.

5. Adjournment

The meeting was adjourned at approximately 6:30 pm.

Respectfully submitted,

Samara Haddock
Recording Secretary