

NEWTON YOUTH COMMISSION Meeting

January 7, 2009 MINUTES

Location: Newton City Hall Cafeteria

Present: Marianne Cook, Joe De Vito (Chair), Richard Dyer, Chris Fortunato, Donna Gordon, Matt Green, Peter Harrington, Police Officer Jeffrey Mace, Ellen Manning, Stephanie Pelkowsky, Stephen Ross, Terance Sack, Robert Staulo, John Staulo, Kirsten Tuohy
Students: Jennie Krems, Tamra Matama, Zoe Pepper-Cunningham, Ariana Tabatabaie

Regrets: Anthony Bibbo, Joanne Kazarian,
Students: Sam Arsenault, Allison Clott, Maya Guttman, Greg Kelley, Kyle Russo, Adam Sangiolo, Annie Staulo

Staff: Beverly Droz, Director, Human and Volunteer Services

Guests: Tyler Large (NNHS student)

The meeting was opened at 7:05pm and chaired by Joe De Vito.

Introductions were made and we welcomed new student Tyler Large.

A motion to accept the minutes of December 3, 2008 passed.

Treasurer's report: Payment for the city custodian bill for use of City Hall for the 10/19/08 Autumn Invasion event was paid. It was noted that at \$370.50, it was less than previous years. The balance of the current operating budget is now \$2,086.89 - leaving us ample funds to run 2 FCD seminars. The revolving account balance is now \$786.12 as Bev has sold left-over water, soda and chips from the Oct. event and made \$105 to date.

A motion to accept the Treasurer's Report passed.

Announcement: Recognition was given to Stephan Ross as his son is now President of the Boston City Council.

Business Items

Project New Media Literacies

Peter introduced Erin Reilly, Research Director for **Project New Media Literacies** (NML) at MIT. Erin noted that her background included starting a digital media and learning project in Maine for girls to excel in sciences and math. She saw the potential for learning and education in this medium. Professor Henry Jenkins at MIT invited her to join his department. She has been working on a white paper on participatory culture which is funded by the McArthur Foundation.

- NML is expanding upon all media that has come before us. It is interdisciplinary. Rather than add another thing for teachers to do, they are shown how to integrate info, synthesize it and use it.
- NML starts from the premise that appropriation, rather than the theft of creative work is the ability to meaningfully sample and remix media content and it can be a creative activity that allows kids to engage deeply with text but also pay tribute to creative works that matter to them.
- NML has a Teacher's Strategy Guide which utilizes 2 works of "Moby Dick" as a "then and now" example of a remix.

- NML has a Learning Library to house a collection of interactive learning experiences, offering teens a rich variety of ways to explore and practice the skills needed in the new media culture. Tools imbedded in the site allow you to load it to any other site.

Erin noted that 7 schools are testing this model. She noted that “fair use” is an issue. The tool teaches attribution to identify authorship. It’s like a universal design but simplified to plug and play. Erin passed out some materials and noted that there is a conference on April 18 which we can learn more about through the website. (www.projectnml.org)

Marianne noted that the Mass. Aggressive Reduction Center has many helpful free tools.

PROGRAMS

FCD Seminar

- Joe described how we’ve been sponsoring FCD (Freedom from Chemical Dependency) seminars in both the high schools for 4 to 5 years now. About 500 students are estimated to be exposed to it.
- Ariana reported that the speakers touch the kids who need it with their stories of struggle and reality.
- Matt said it is a worthwhile expenditure of Youth Commission funds, but it would be nice to receive more publicity for the Youth Commission since we sponsor it.
- Kirsten said if we know the dates ahead of time we can schedule New TV to cover it. It was also mentioned to invite a TAB reporter, and that we would have to clear it with FCD ahead of time if it’s okay to do so, since speakers are in recovery.
- Chris asked if FCD has done any study to show the effectiveness of its programs. No one knew.

A motion was made and passed to move forward with FCD seminars in the 2 high schools.

Donna said there also is a need for programs on “transitioning to college” and Chris agreed.

March Madness

Donna reported that the only date available for the Newton South High School field house is Sunday, March 29. Committee members will stay after this meeting to discuss planning this event.

Fundraising

Matt Green hosted a fundraising meeting but only Joe attended. He will re-schedule and Bev will email the information out. The idea is to have students attend and discuss ideas. Also, fundraising can provide visibility for the Youth Commission in the community at large.

Announcements

It was noted that former Newton Police Officer Jim O’Loughlin is back to work in the Boston Police Department, following his serious accident early last fall.

Bev noted that the 41st annual Martin Luther King Jr. Newton Community Celebration will be held Jan. 19 and the flyer detailing the event is printed on the back of tonight’s agenda.

Marianne brought flyers about the Safe Schools/Healthy Students upcoming free parent workshop “What you need to know about cyber-bullying and internet safety” on Jan. 29 at NNHS.

Meeting was adjourned at 7:55pm.

The next meeting will be Wednesday, FEBRUARY 4 at 7:00pm in the City Hall cafeteria.