

AGENDA

TOLLAND MENTAL HEALTH & SUBSTANCE USE ADVISORY TASK FORCE

July 18, 2022 – 7:00 P.M.

ZOOM REMOTE MEETING

1. Call to order
2. Approval of agenda
3. Approval of minutes
4. Public Participation
5. Points of Information
6. Update on forming a subcommittee
7. Review of Weyland proposal
8. Next steps for Task Force
9. Public Participation
10. Points of information
11. Adjournment

To join Zoom Meeting, either click:

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Or call: 1 929 205 6099

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Tolland Mental Health & Substance Use Advisory Task Force

REMOTE ZOOM MEETING

June 20, 2022 – 7:00 PM

Members Present: Becky Moore (Chair), Madhu Renduchintala (Vice Chair), Jacob Marie (Secretary), Jayden Regisford, John Reagan, Susan Salem, Colleen Yudichak, Tony Holt, Carleen Oehmsen, Darrell Irwin, Rita Malenczyk

Members Absent: None

Others Present: Maureen Flanagan (Assistant Director of Human Services), Bonnie Smith (Weyland Consulting)

- 1) **Call to Order:** Ms. Moore called the meeting to order at 7:03pm.
- 2) **Approval of the Agenda:** Mr. Renduchintala moved to amend the agenda by combining items 7 and 8 and placing them under item 9. Mr. Marie seconded the motion, and it passed unanimously.
- 3) **Approval of the Minutes:** Mr. Renduchintala moved to approve the June 6th minutes. Mr. Holt seconded the motion. All were in favor except Ms. Malenczyk who abstained.
- 4) **Public Participation:** None
- 5) **Points of Information:** None
- 6) **Weyland Consulting:** Ms. Flanagan stated that this firm was recommended by The Village for conducting a survey or needs assessment. Ms. Smith provided an overview of the firm's work, stating that they use a data-driven approach to identify and address mental health and substance use issues. Ms. Moore provided an overview of the data available for Tolland. Ms. Weyland asked if the Task Force wanted a youth focused survey. Ms. Moore answered that it is looking to survey all age groups. Ms. Smith asked if the Task Force wanted a firm to identify gaps in the data or if it was looking to conduct a survey right away. Mr. Marie answered that the Survey Subcommittee has a good idea of what gaps exist, and that those gaps were identified in a report given to the Task Force at an earlier meeting, and that he will give Ms. Smith said report. Ms. Salem added that it was mental health data in particular that was lacking (versus substance use). Ms. Smith noted that mental health data is actually quite similar across different demographic groups and that a survey might want to focus on other questions. Mr. Irwin asked how the firm conducts surveys that ask personal questions. Ms. Smith answered that she avoids asking direct questions on sensitive subjects, and she makes it clear that the surveys are

assessments rather than part of a research project. Anonymity is strictly maintained, and all questions are multiple choice. The survey form does not collect IP addresses, although a separate form that does collect them is used to allow participants to enter to win a prize. Ms. Smith noted that it is hard to get participation unless there is an incentive, and that you can't figure out who entered what answers based on the prize submission form.

- 7) **Overview of Condensed Recommendations:** Ms. Moore provided a summary of the condensed and updated recommendations she made based off the initial October 4th 2021 draft list (this is a working document that will be continuously updated and is shown as it was at the end of this meeting):

Hire a Prevention Coordinator (in progress)

- Partner with Mental Health and Substance Use professionals to provide services
- Support drug awareness programs for people of all ages
- Create a public awareness campaign to destigmatize mental illness in town
- Partner with the library for mental health/substance use talks and presentations
- Share mental health and substance use services with other communities
- Create a social media presence for Mental Health/Substance Use Task Force in Tolland
- Focus on reducing risk of future violence
- Support mindful language to promote tolerance
- Support project graduation
- Information hub for mental health/substance use resources

Progress: Recommendation was made to TC, TC sent to ARPA subcommittee to discuss if funds could be used for position.

6/21/22: Task force determined that the survey/needs assessment needs to be completed prior to hiring a prevention Coordinator. Maureen will pass on information from Bonnie Smith at Weyland Consulting to ARPA Subcommittee when received, ARPA subcommittee will discuss and bring back to Town Council.

- **Create a Diversity and Inclusion Task Force (in progress)**
 - **Progress:** Formed subcommittee lead by Madhu
 - 6/20/22: Combine Diversity/Inclusion Subcommittee with Mentoring Subcommittee
- **Seniors (this may go under the prevention/wellness coordinator)**
 - Continue programs for seniors
 - Mental health Screenings for Seniors
- **Schools/Education**
 - **Skills for Adolescents**
 - **Result: Funding included for BOE 23 Budget**
 - **Teen Leadership**
 - **Result: Funding included for BOE 23 Budget**
 - School/town staff wellness
 - Create a mental health/substance use support system in the schools
 - Support an educational module for abnormal psychology
- **Mentoring/Positive mentoring program**

- **6/20/22** created subcommittee to begin exploring ideas
- **Increase recreational opportunities in Tolland**
 - **Result: PT Rec coordinator in FY 23 Town Budget- new position**
- **Survey families in Tolland**
 - Progress: Subcommittee lead by Jacob Marie concluded a survey would be beneficial to gather data directly pertinent to the town of Tolland. Currently exploring ways to get this data before presenting recommendations to Town Council.
 - **6/20/22:** Met with Weyland Consulting, Bonnie will send “menu” of items to Maureen

Mr. Reagan provided an update on the Prevention Coordinator recommendation, stating that it has been referred to the ARPA Committee and the question is now about funding. He added that if it isn't funded through ARPA money, it will need to be part of the next budget. Ms. Yudichak added that the ARPA Committee has discussed the recommendation and the Committee would like to know whether to partner with the Hockanum Valley Community Council (HVCC) or The Village, and that it needs a funding estimate. Mr. Renduchintala noted that it makes more sense to conduct the survey first to determine exact needs before partnering with an organization. Ms. Yudichak added that the ARPA Committee would also need a cost estimate for the survey. Ms. Flanagan stated that a survey would probably cost between \$8,000 and \$20,000. Ms. Moore moved on to the proposed Diversity/Inclusion Task Force recommendation. Mr. Renduchintala, who chairs the committee tasked with writing the recommendation, stated that he is still looking for volunteers for the committee. Ms. Moore suggested that a Board of Education member and Town Council member join the committee. Ms. Moore then moved on to discuss the senior citizen recommendations, stating that it might be okay to lump them under the Prevention Coordinator recommendation. Ms. Moore discussed municipal government recommendations next. She asked if the “information-hub” recommendation should go under the Prevention Coordinator or even Human Services. She also asked about the Juvenile Review Board (JRB) recommendation. Ms. Flanagan stated that she is working to improve the JRB, but luckily there is not a large volume of Tolland referrals. With respect to the information-hub recommendation, she stated that the town tries to put information out there by updating its website regularly and including relevant Human Services information in the e-blasts. Ms. Moore asked if the Task Force should keep these recommendations. Mr. Marie stated that it should get rid of the JRB recommendation and put the information-hub recommendation under the Prevention Coordinator recommendation. The Task Force was comfortable with this suggestion. Ms. Moore moved on to school-based recommendations. She noted that the Task Force helped to keep the Skills for Adolescents Class and Teen Leadership program in the 2022-2023 BOE budget. The Task Force hasn't addressed town/school staff wellness or recommendations regarding a mental health/substance use support system or the creation of an abnormal psychology class. Ms. Malenczyk asked if the district has a postvention plan if a student commits suicide. Mr. Marie stated that he will investigate whether such a plan is in place. Ms.

Oehmsen asked if Mr. Marie could check if the district has a crisis action team; Mr. Marie stated that he would look into that as well. Ms. Moore discussed the Youth Recommendation next, noting that it has been sent to the Town Council and is in-progress. She added that the Survey Recommendation is also in progress. Ms. Moore suggested that the Task Force should focus on the Positive Mentoring recommendation while the Survey Recommendation is in progress. She stated that she would like to create a sub-committee for this and asked if anyone would be willing to chair it. Mr. Renduchintala offered to chair the sub-committee. Ms. Flanagan noted that the Task Force may not want too many sub-committees because the town has a limited number of zoom accounts. *Mr. Renduchintala moved to combine the Diversity/Inclusion Sub-Committee with a newly formed Positive Mentoring Sub-Committee. Mr. Irwin seconded the motion. There was no discussion and it passed unanimously.* Ms. Moore appointed herself, Mr. Renduchintala, and Ms. Oehmsen to the Sub-Committee, making Mr. Renduchintala Sub-Committee chair. The Task Force reached consensus on the edits made to Ms. Moore's condensed recommendation document, and was comfortable with Ms. Moore emailing the Town Council the adjustments it made to its Prevention Coordinator recommendation.

- 8) Next Action Steps for the Task Force:** Ms. Moore summarized the changes made to the condensed recommendations in Item Seven. Ms. Moore stated she will email the Town Council with an update regarding the survey along with changes it made to the Prevention Coordinator position. Mr. Renduchintala noted that he would like to have a speaker attend a meeting to discuss technology addiction in kids. The Task Force agreed that such a presentation would be useful.
- 9) Public Participation:** None
- 10) Points of Information:** The Task Force discussed having a special meeting in July since only one was scheduled. By consensus it was decided to keep the one meeting and give the Diversity/Inclusion Task Force and Positive Mentoring Sub-Committee more time to work on its recommendations.
- 11) Adjournment:** Mr. Renduchintala moved to adjourn the meeting. Ms. Salem seconded the motion, and it passed unanimously. The meeting adjourned at 8:23pm.

Respectfully Submitted,

Jacob Marie

**Proposal for Tolland Human Services on behalf of Tolland Mental Health and
Substance Use Advisory Task Force, June 2022**

Background: Tolland Mental Health & Substance Use Advisory Task Force, herein noted as “TF” has been in a process of inventorying available town-specific data across the lifespan on mental health and substance use/misuse. They have determined that a Prevention and Wellness Coordinator may be needed to address community issues across the spectrum of prevention/awareness to treatment/recovery. However, they wish to utilize and collect additional data to determine the priority needs to guide the direction of this position, should it be created. With this background, the B. Weyland Smith Consulting, LLC, herein noted as “The Consultants,” have established the following goals and objectives in keeping with their interpretation of the TF’s vision.

For more information on B Weyland Smith Consulting, LLC, please see: <https://bwsmithconsulting.com/>

The following include Consultants’ interpretation of the TF’s Goals with suggested objectives that can be fulfilled by the Consultants depending upon the TF’s budget and timeline.

Goals:

- 1) Prioritize substance use/misuse and mental health concerns, with associated risk factors across the lifespan for Tolland residents.
- 2) Ensure that the TF has data needed, at the town level (or from comparison communities) for substance use/misuse and mental health concerns, prioritization, ongoing needs assessment and to support possible state and federal grant applications in the future.

Objectives:

- 1) Implement an anonymous online survey of Tolland adults ages 18 and older regarding their knowledge of community and area resources, ability to access resources, comfort accessing resources, knowledge and attitudes related to substance misuse and mental health concerns (but not personal experience), their perceptions of priority issues and wellness topics they wish to have more information on as well as the medium they wish to receive this information.
 - a. Supports and Deliverables-creation of online survey tool, guidance from consultants on implementation of an online survey with suggested incentives, analysis and reporting of outcomes of the survey, provided via a slide deck.
 - b. Possible Timeline
 - i. Create survey by August 31, 2022
 - ii. Implement the survey between September 15, 2022-December 15, 2022, or until at least 350-400 responses are collected.
 - c. Cost-\$2,500
- 2) Crosswalk of recent Tolland school survey data from the Substance Use and Risk Behaviors Assessment Report (SUBRA) with required federal (and state) National Outcome Measures (NOMS), that are essential when seeking federal or state prevention grants, as well as other “useful” measures when seeking such funds, against survey tools approved by the Drug Free Communities Program (CDC) and Strategic Prevention Framework-Partnerships for Success grants (SAMHSA).

B. WEYLAND SMITH

C O N S U L T I N G

PROGRAM EVALUATION • NEEDS ASSESSMENT • GRANT PREPARATION

This will highlight where required data have been obtained and where the data set may have gaps in these measures.*

- a. Deliverable: Document identifying which outcomes are addressed in the recent Tolland Survey and which are missing or not comparable to Federally approved survey tools.
 - b. Possible Timeline-by August 31, 2022
 - c. Cost-\$400
- 3) Inventory of available substance use/misuse data, or comparison community data, provided in a comprehensive slide deck that will be utilized to inform decisions via a prioritization process (see Obj 4), will support short-term grant applications, and serve as baseline for any programs or strategies implemented as a result of prioritization process.
 - a. Deliverable: Slide Deck
 - b. Possible Timeline-by August 31, 2022
 - c. Cost-\$1,500
- 4) Presentation of data inventory slide deck to TF and other key community leaders to initiate a structured prioritization process, by age group for both mental health and substance use/misuse. This would occur over 1-2 sessions, (1- session is 4 hours, 2-sessions is 2.5 hours each) virtually or in person and result in a logic model including the priority problems, risk factors, local conditions with identified evidence-based strategies for the TF or other town leaders to select from to address the priority issues. This process would also include the identification of data gaps, possibly not identified in the TF previous data inventory process with suggested next steps on how to address them.
 - a. Deliverables-facilitation of sessions, report on outcome of session including logic models (4-8, depending upon outcome of process) and consultation on planning of sessions including identification of key leaders etc.
 - b. Suggested Timeline-to be determined by TF, but would occur after adult survey data were available
 - c. Cost Range-\$3,500-\$4,500, dependent upon whether one long session or two shorter sessions and if sessions are in-person or virtual.

Cost Range for Proposed Services: \$400-\$8,900

**In the interest of full disclosure, B. Weyland Smith Consulting, LLC. provides student survey services to Connecticut school systems, called Youth Voices Count (<https://bwsmithconsulting.com/youth-voices-count/>). There is no expectation or obligation that the TF recommends or purchases this service in the future, but as experts in student survey services and Federal and State grants, the Consultants' experience in this is pertinent when considering youth survey data.*