

WEST HARTFORD PREVENTION COUNCIL

REGULAR MEETING

THURSDAY, DECEMBER 8, 2022

ROOM 217

- 1. Roll Call**
- 2. Approval of Minutes. Minutes of November 10, 2022**
- 3. Old Business**
 - a. 2022 Council achievements, 2023 Recommendations**
 - b. Review of 2023 calendar**
 - c. Potential Board members**
- 4. New Business**
- 5. Standing Reports**
 - a. Social Services**
 - b. Public Health**
 - c. Police**
 - d. WHPS**
 - e. YSB (The Bridge)**
 - f. Prevention Partnership**
- 6. Public Comment**
- 7. Adjournment**

Next meeting is Thursday, January 12, 2023

Anyone requiring auxiliary aid or service for effective communication or modification of policies or procedures to participate in a meeting, service, program or activity of the Town of West Hartford, should contact Suzanne Oslander, ADA Coordinator, at suzanneo@westhartfordct.gov or (860) 561-7580, as soon as possible, preferably seven days beforehand.

WEST HARTFORD PREVENTION COUNCIL. 2022 ACCOMPLISHMENTS AND RECOMMENDATIONS TO TOWN COUNCIL. JANUARY 2023

With the COVID 19 pandemic and ongoing issues for everyone, the typical activities and programs related to the Prevention Council were necessarily amended and abridged to meet State and Federal guidelines. Most of our meetings were held by Webex until face to face meetings were allowed. Preexisting systems and collaborations often required revitalization and or renewed, or no longer existed, so had to be re invented. New partners were found, and systems created, creative collaborations formed, and new priorities emerged given the profound isolation, and critical mental health and substance abuse issues in our town, state, and country.

1. Over the course of 2022, final clarification was achieved as to the separate and distinct roles of the West Hartford Prevention Council, versus the West Hartford Prevention Partnership. This clarification created new challenges for the Town, which was validated by Corporation Counsel, and ultimately successful due to the enormous successful collaboration between the 2 bodies. Social Services created new internal mechanisms and roles to compensate for the added duties and responsibilities, and once again fully met the goals and objectives of the 2022 Amplify grant, to reduce vaping by 5% in the Town of West Hartford, as defined by DMHAS. Multiple separate prevention activities were done under this banner, primarily enacted by the Prevention Partnership
2. The Wellness Assessment Summary was redistributed and reviewed, and assisted in driving mission for the Council for 2022. Opioid overdoses, substance abuse, depression and suicide were some of the major areas of focus identified in the survey, and helped to substantiate our work, lending credibility to the focus in all age groups we targeted.
3. A review of Ct legislation regarding children mental health and substance abuse issues again validated our findings, as well as validation from school staff, police department, and other Board members.
4. The passage of marijuana legislation identified an opportunity for towns who opened a dispensary to tax them at 3%, with the funds to be used for prevention activities. Given this, the Council wrote a letter in the spring recommending these funds be used to hire a full time Prevention Coordinator, similar as to what other Towns have done. This would greatly advance the prevention agenda in our town. Combined with the receipt of opioid settlement funds, West Hartford could potentially create an inherently comprehensive recovery plan in these arenas, using multiple existing resources as well as newly collaborative ones, to address crucial deadly issues in the Town.

Recommendations for 2023

1. Explore hiring of full time Prevention Specialist, for collaboration with Council, Partnership, community organizations, Social Services, DMHAS. Integrate information gleaned from town wide Wellness Assessment, recognizing potential for funding from Ct. legislature for school system, 3% from potential marijuana dispensary, and Opioid Settlement funds, all in the context of inadequate, insufficient clinical services.
2. Update and maintain contacts established through Wellness Assessment, particularly State Epidemiological Workgroup, as data for 6 year grant for improving mental health and

substance abuse services state-wide through evidence based services will be available. This is using nationally validated Strategic Prevention Framework, State Incentive Grants required and substantiated by the Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration.

3. Collaboration with Amplify, other funded groups for goals and objectives related to addressing depression, anxiety in West Hartford. Collaborate with groups and individuals to promote addressing opioid,, alcohol, prescription drug, marijuana, and all types of drug abuse in West Hartford. Focus on Wellness and Recovery, using Dimensions of Recovery model.

Carl Shields