**Woburn SEPAC Meeting Minutes for Tuesday, October 20, 2020**

Open Meeting on Zoom

· Board Members Present: Julie Cotton, Adam Chapman

· School Committee Members Present: none

· Voting Members Present: 6

**AGENDA**

1. Call to Order

Adam calls meeting to order at 6:35; Julie seconds

2. Old Business

Open House last month with Dr. Baldassarre, Maureen Ryan. Detailed Q&A in September Meeting Minutes on SEPAC website.

3. New Business

*a. Upcoming Meetings*

Basic Rights workshop on Evaluations and Eligibility coming up on Tue. 11/17. Hosted by Tracey Morgan

*b. How to make the Most of Community Connections during the Pandemic*

Started with introduction w/Cassandra Connolly, Woburn native and 2-year teacher in RISE program, recently became a member of Woburn’s Disability Commission. Just getting started; doesn’t have much information yet, but has made her e-mail address available for questions/comments: cconnolly@woburnps.com. Planning on joining us at future meetings to bring Disability Commission and SEPAC together for advocacy work.

Discussion centered around difficulty accessing programming in Woburn (i.e. at Woburn Public Library. Library Admin. was invited to tonight’s meeting; they did not attend.). Brainstormed some ideas for how to advocate to make places in our community more accessible for families and kids with special needs in Woburn.

First ideas: centralized hub of services/programs available in Woburn, short list of contacts at various city entities,

*Spaces where families have found supportive access:*

Flag football (through Northshore Flag Football Assoc.) Coaches have been good about taking information on kids, setting them up for success. Same thing for Woburn Youth Soccer/City League: coaches have been helpful for the most part.

Woburn Boys & Girls Club: does a great job of providing for kids with special needs even with their limited resources. Same situation with Woburn Rec.: effort being made despite limited personnel and financial resources.

Overall, having access to programs with a slower pace--educational, sports, etc.--is key. Will instructors stop, slow down, repeat directions, etc.? Personnel & training are key. Volunteer personnel, especially teens, could be key.

Middlesex Sheriff's Dept. Summer Program: they provide a point person for campers who request one. 4-5 counselors per 20 campers, so good ratio. Point person and secondary person available for help and intervention when needed. Side note: providing extra information about your kid to program providers is key.

Best Buddies: Mixed bag of feedback from parents who have had kids in the program. Concerns about student volunteers involved solely for YES hours/resume building. Special needs kids need more positive experiences; it would be good for the program to be truly inclusive and to be a source of the positive experiences that they need. Identifying Best Buddies as another place SEPAC can interface with leadership (maybe via Disability Commission). Julie planning on reaching out to Brian Skeffington at the Kennedy for more information.

Swim lessons: SPED parents always looking for affordable, local options. Bigger picture: do we develop a SEPAC resource/worksheet that helps parents ask the right questions/share the right info so they can get the support they need in these programs?

Future meeting theme: tips for parents on how to prep program providers.

Julie took course on advocacy training: <http://mfofc.org> Not training on how to be a professional advocate, but on how to advocate for your kid. It’s a free, annual training and they offer a childcare stipend as well. One takeaway from training was a Care Map, documenting/keeping track of people in your kid’s sphere of providers: <http://mindmapfree.com>

Question from chat re: WPS ending TeachTown access. SEPAC will reach out to Dr. B. and Ms. Ryan to inquire about reinstating access or finding another, similar app. Also, a page on the website where parents can access apps and information on what apps are available.

4. SEPAC Election – Nominations

Secretary is still open; e-mail if you’d like more information

5. Treasurer’s Report

Hanging onto the $475 in budget until post-COVID so we can spend it on a more robust programming option, i.e. big-name speaker.

6. Review minutes from past meeting

Adam motions to accept June and September 2020 meeting minutes at 7:37; Julie seconds

7. Adjourn Meeting

Julie motions to adjourn at 7:38; Adam seconds.