

Stigma-Free Committee of the Borough of Dumont, NJ
January 15, 2020 Meeting Minutes

1) Notice of the meeting was provided by way of publication in the Record and the Ridgewood News. On roll call: present were Ms. Shelisa Foster, Ms. Vicki Iucci, Mr. William Paige, Rev. Elaine Wing, and Ms. Karen DeMarco; absent were Dr. Paul Barbato and Ms. Margaret Preis. A quorum was present. Council Liaison Carole Stewart was absent. Dumont Board of Education Liaison Janice Worner arrived after the meeting had commenced.

2) The following Committee Officers were unanimously nominated and seated for 2020: Chair, Karen DeMarco; Vice-Chair, Shelisa Foster; Secretary, Rev. Elaine Wing.

3) The following meeting schedule was unanimously approved and adopted for 2020:

Wed. 1/15, 6:30PM

Wed. 2/19, 6:30PM

Wed. 3/18, 6:30PM

Wed. 4/15, 6:30PM

Wed. 5/20, 6:30PM

Wed. 6/17, 6:30PM

Wed. 7/15, 6:30PM

Wed. 8/19, 6:30PM

Wed. 9/16, 6:30PM

Wed. 10/21, 6:30PM

Wed. 11/18, 6:30PM

Wed. 12/16, 6:30PM

Meetings will be held at the Dumont Public Library, 180 Washington Avenue, Dumont, Lower Level, Classroom.

4) Minutes of October 16, 2019 meeting were unanimously adopted without modification.

5) Chair Report

a) Karen DeMarco and William Paige have been reappointed to the Committee.

b) The Dumont Borough 2020 Calendar has been issued, including a DSFC page.

c) A Stigma-Free Task Force meeting held on October 23. There were a lot of volunteer sign-ups. An article with photos was published in the Patch on November 11. The meeting was very well

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received.

d) There was a front-page article in the Twin-Boro News on January 9 about the certificate presented to Dumont Women's Club by the Committee at the Mayor and Council meeting on November 12. Ms. Iucci said the photo had been submitted in November. The article included Ms. DeMarco's contact information for the Stigma-Free campaign; she has already received an email from someone who saw the article and is interested in working on the campaign.

e) Informational materials have been given to Donna Falborn for distribution to senior citizens. Ms. DeMarco needs to follow up with Donna about the status. There is an issue of people's willingness to openly take materials. Ms. DeMarco will follow-up regarding distribution at building on Aladdin Avenue.

6) Old Business

a) Mental Health First Aid classes are scheduled for February 22 and 29, 10am-2pm (Saturdays), and March 15 and 22, 1pm-5pm (Sundays). Ms. Preis will provide sign-up forms; they can be distributed at Dumont High School Mental Health Awareness Day. The courses need promotion via the Borough website, Facebook, Twin-Boro News, Patch.com. Ms. DeMarco will handle distribution at DHS Mental Health Day. She will also send out email notifications to "Save the Date"; both sessions will be mentioned. Ms. DeMarco has a list of people who have expressed that they want to do the training, including Task Force members.

b) In other Old Business, Rev. Wing suggested placing informational materials at the seniors' building at St. Mary's Church. So the three distribution locations would be the Seniors Center, the seniors' building on Aladdin Avenue, and St. Mary's. Ms. DeMarco asked Ms. Iucci if she could provide any additional materials based on her background in geriatrics. Ms. Iucci suggested checking with the AARP.

7) New Business

a) Ms. DeMarco needs to coordinate with the Library Director to determine what dates are available to use the auditorium, to schedule the next Task Force meeting. The Task Force will work on (1) a contest to locate all the Stigma-Free signs in town, and (2) a school poster contest. She suggested having a Task Force meeting once a month, in anticipation of Mental Health Awareness Month in May. Ms. Worner asked about whether there are any formal guidelines for stigma-free poster contests. Rev. Wing has some familiarity with school poster contests from the Shade Tree Commission.

b) The Committee will have a table at the "Mental Health Awareness Day" program at Dumont High School on January 27. The program will run from 8:30 in the morning to 3:00 in the afternoon. There will be handouts which Dr. Paul Barbato will review. Materials will be

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distributed. Can get sign-ups for next Mental Health First Aid classes. The DSFC table will be a good way to get high school students involved in the Stigma-Free campaign. Rev. Wing is available to be there; Ms. Lucci may be if the weather cancels her travel plans; Ms. Worner can devote some time in the morning.

c) There will be a free “Yoga for Mental Health” class for Dumont residents on January 22 at 7:00PM, sponsored by the yoga studio in the Pershing Building at Monument Circle (Leanna DeSheplo). Ms. DeMarco thought it was a great idea, because it’s doing something for Dumont Stigma-Free, and for mental health awareness and giving people a tool for stress and anxiety, and it isn’t costing anything. Ms. DeSheplo will do it as often as the Committee wants, including monthly. Any age group is welcome. The studio can fit 30 or 40.

d) Ms. Foster and three others from Bergen’s Promise are certified in Nurtured Heart Approach, which she explained as an interactional approach, providing training to teachers and parents to complement engagement with youth and families. At the Dumont School District’s Professional Development Day on Monday, they, along with other trainers from around the state, will be training around 200 of the educational and professional services staff in the Nurtured Heart Approach, splitting up their trainers to two at each school. This will be the largest concurrent training thus far in the state of New Jersey, being at all five of Dumont’s schools. Ms. Foster will be training at the high school.

e) Ms. DeMarco’s husband, Carmine, a Task Force member, will arrange the scheduling of “Talk Saves Lives”, a presentation by the American Foundation for Suicide Prevention for “Mental Health Awareness Month” in May. It is an introduction to suicide prevention – a community-based presentation that covers the general scope of suicide, the research on prevention, and what people can do to fight suicide. Attendees will learn the risk and warning signs of suicide, and how together we can help prevent it. Ms. DeMarco suggested Calvary Church as a potential venue. Mr. DeMarco needs to provide alternate dates for the AFSP to provide a presenter. “Attitudes in Reverse” also provides suicide prevention presentations. Discussion of possibly getting AIR to do a presentation in 2021; they are booked far in advance. Rev. Wing will work on availability dates at Calvary Church for “Talk Saves Lives”.

f) The Bergen County “Out of Darkness” Walk will be in October. Could be a big community event. Walk together with Borough officials and employees, Mayor, Council Members, Administrator, Clerk, Heads of Departments including DPW, Police Department, EMS, Fire Department, school administrators and teachers, children, parents - everybody. This could be another Task Force activity. Task Force member Carmine DeMarco will work with Mr. Paige and Board of Education Liaison Janice Worner on organizing this project.

g) Ms. Lucci suggested inspirational signs around town as another idea for Mental Health Awareness Month. Ms. DeMarco asked Ms. Worner about placing customized messages on general Stigma-Free signs; Ms. Worner suggested an attachment to the main sign via Velcro. Rev. Wing suggested coming up with 6-8 different sayings and having signs containing those

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messages. Ms. Worner said the prices have been coming down and can possibly be obtained for as little as \$9 each.

h) Ms. DeMarco questioned how the Dumont Police Department gets the purple decals they put on their vehicles for the American Cancer Society walk, for the Committee to have something similar for Mental Health Awareness Month. Ms. Worner works with someone who provides those services, including car wraps. There were suggestions of having such temporary decals on DPW vehicles and school district vehicles. Mr. Paige will ask the DPW Superintendent, Anthony Schiraldi, about how the decals are placed on the DPD vehicles, as well as some police officers he sees.

i) The Committee needs to request an allotment from the 2020 Municipal Budget, to ask the Borough for funding for the purchase of corrugated plastic lawn signs, t-shirts, printing of informational materials that are only available as PDF downloads, promotional materials (wristbands, etc.). Ms. DeMarco will contact the Council Liaison, Ms. Stewart, the governing body, and Borough Administrator with the request. Rev. Wing suggested requesting \$5000.

h) Ms. Foster reported that the Bergen County Mental Health Board had its annual membership meeting last month. They solicited interest for a county-wide Task Force sign-up. Ms. Foster and Ms. Preis have both signed up. The first meeting is tentatively scheduled for February 10, possibly at the county administration building. Ms. Foster will forward the information to the Committee, for anyone else who is interested.

The meeting was adjourned at 7:46 p.m.