

CORNER HOUSE BOARD
APPROVED MEETING MINUTES
July 14, 2021
by videoconference

Members in attendance: Danita Ishibashi, Wendy Jolley, Cecilia Mathews, Henry Polanco, Joanne Parker, Maritoni Shah, Dwaine Williamson.

Student Representatives: none

Staff in attendance: Gary De Blasio, David Errickson, Tracy Kindelsperger, Jean Woodman.

Guests: Mayor Mark Freda, Freeholder Andrew Koontz, Ellen Li.

- I. Wendy Jolley opened the meeting at 6:03 PM. Wendy read the following notice into the record.

Notice of the Board's regular meetings as required by Sections 4a, 3d, 13 and 14 of the Open Public Meetings Act has been provided to the public. On December 22, 2020 public notice of the meeting date was posted on the municipal website. On July 7, 2021 public notice with a videoconference link and a draft agenda were posted on the municipal website. All notices were also published by Planet Princeton.

- a. Introductions – The Board welcomed Dr. Maritoni “Candy” Shah, who began her term as Corner House Foundation Board President on July 1.
 - b. The May 12 minutes were approved as distributed by common consent.
 - c. The agenda was amended to allow Dr. Oliver Crocco to present first.
- II. Review of Programs – The Board heard a review of Corner House programs, with time for questions and comments.
- a. Study on leadership development programs:
“Developing Students Who Lead in Their Communities” -- Oliver S. Crocco, Ed.D, Louisiana State University. Dr. Crocco has been studying leadership development in the students who participate in Corner House leadership programs. He has conducted focus groups with the students, and the students have completed the Student Leadership Practices Inventory®.
 - i. Dr. Crocco identified areas where students in Corner House’s leadership programs grew in both knowledge and behavior, and their areas of growth in metrics of leadership and learned behaviors. He particularly noted the increase in substance abuse awareness while in the program, and the students’ use of their leadership skills to overcome the challenge of the pandemic.
 - ii. Both students and facilitators took the survey.
 - iii. Dr. Crocco would like to do another round of this study, as well as study program alumni from the past 20 years.
 - iv. Board questions and comments included:
 1. The three programs operate simultaneously, but the CHSB (Corner House Student Board) is open only to students who have already completed the TAG (Teen Acceptance Group) or GAIA (Growing up Accepted as an Individual in America) programs.
 2. The program appears to have a positive impact on leadership conceptualization, notably for those students who continue into the second year. Dr. Crocco thinks it would be useful to measure the community role and impact of participants and alumni.
 3. Qualitative comments from students and the program leaders might add a layer of richness. Dr. Crocco noted that, due to physical distance,

qualitative data might be difficult to gather, but he is open to a parallel study that would focus on qualitative factors.

4. Several leadership program participants refer to the workshops in which they participated while in middle school, and how this participation encouraged them to apply to the leadership programs.
5. Many students who participated in leadership programs have gone into social services fields. The program speaks for itself.

b. Clinical programs – David A. Errickson, MSW, LCSW, LCADC, CCS

- i. Dave reported that clinical programs have resumed in the facility and client counts are slowly increasing. In-person and telehealth appointments are available, and telehealth groups are running. The goal is to resume full intensive outpatient (IOP) services around Labor Day.
- ii. Staff morale is good. Today staff gathered in-person for the first time since March 2020, to say farewell to a clinician who is leaving for another job.
- iii. The pandemic has underscored the need for community mental health services. The municipal Health Department and Corner House are collaborating on an application to the State for a health clinic. Corner House would be the mental-health provider for this effort, focusing on the uninsured and underinsured community.
- iv. Board comments and questions included:
 1. The proposal is a joint effort by municipal and Corner House staff, particularly Tracy Kindelsperger. The Board can support the proposal by speaking with the Princeton Council and County officials, and publicizing the community need and how the plan addresses the need.
 2. Corner House could supply the Board and Council with a task list so each body knows what it needs to do to make the program a reality.
 3. The proposal's Mental Health Outreach Coordinator would target the Princeton community, particularly because municipal funds would be supporting the effort. If additional funding became available, such as through the County, the program could be expanded.
 4. The Human Services Department's Outreach and the proposed Mental Health Outreach Coordinator would have different areas of focus.
 5. This program could address the community mental health concerns raised a few months ago.

c. Student prevention programs – Riva Levy, MSW, LSW

- i. Riva described the prevention programs in the middle and high schools.
 1. Academic Success Today (AST): mentoring for 6th, 7th, & 8th graders. Students are paired with mentors, mostly from Princeton University. Mentors help students with homework and offer recreation and play. Referrals come via school counselors, siblings, and friends
 2. Super Teens Acting Responsibly (STAR): 6th, 7th, & 8th grade girls who meet at lunch to discuss topics such as social media, peer pressure, self esteem, and relationships. This program was a challenge to do during the pandemic but the girls found it rewarding to meet, even virtually.
 3. High school – leadership programs in four area high schools (Princeton High, Princeton Day, Stuart, and Hun).

- a. Teen Advisory Group (TAG) – This program is open to juniors, who develop and present workshops for 5th – 8th grade students about substance abuse, consequences, and prevention.
 - b. GAIA – These juniors present workshops on how to stop hate, promote peace, combat bullying, and learn acceptance of others. Their audience is primarily 5th and 6th graders.
 - c. CHSB – Participants are high school seniors who are alumni of TAG or GAIA. They create drug- and alcohol-free events for high school students. This year they started “Seniors-2-Seniors” with the Princeton Senior Resource Center. It matches high school seniors with senior citizens to meet and develop relationships.
 - d. Princeton students are under a great deal of stress. They come to Corner House weekly and have a safe space just to talk, and just to be who they are. Alumni recall it favorably.
 - e. The leadership program students kick off their academic year with a Leadership Institute, privately funded by the Griffin-Cole Foundation.
- d. Student outreach programs – Rhodalynn Jones, MPH described the three robust outreach programs Corner House offers.
- i. PYP/WOWY (Princeton Youth Project/World of Work for Youth) – These programs provide Princeton High School junior and seniors with access to higher education after high school.
 - ii. AYP (Advocacy for Youth) – This helps 9th and 10th graders enter high school and access resources and life skills that help them have a successful high school experience.
 - iii. Student participants are widely diverse in nationality, first language, gender, religion, and economic status. The programs strive to meet students’ needs holistically.
 - iv. AYP, PYP, and WOWY promote wise health decisions. Program leaders access the community network to help address food insecurities by offering a meal, connecting students to food and housing programs if needed. Meeting these essentials makes the programs and Corner House a safe, trusted space. Students can then focus on making healthy decisions such as building healthy relationships and deciding on work and education for after high school.
 - v. The programs fund college tours and offer help with the applications and applying for financial aid. Weekly meetings with like-minded peers have helped students reinforce decisions not to use drugs and alcohol. They also learn to eat more nutritiously and keep active. Advocacy, access, counseling, social support.
 - vi. The Outreach Coordinators and students are happy to meet in person again starting this summer. The students say they feel like youth again; they can go to activities at the community pool, kayaking, movie nights, etc.
 - vii. Gary noted WOWY was the first Corner House student program he started 21 years ago. Community member Cheryl Punia started AST 36 years ago. PYP was added at the request of municipal government when gangs were becoming an issue in Princeton. Over 95% of our seniors further their education after high school. Gary expressed his pride in the leadership and outreach programs; they have been a big part of his time here.

- III. Director's Report – Gary DeBlasio – see attached report.
 - i. Two staff members are leaving and Gary is retiring. Gary's position has not been posted. His plan is for David Errickson to succeed as Executive Director.
 - ii. Turnover is high because staff are leaving their \$40K jobs for \$70K positions elsewhere. Gary has met with Bernie Hvacovic, the new municipal business administrator, about the need to offer competitive salaries.
 - iii. Financial Report – Jean Woodman presented a summary of clinical revenue for the year to date.

- IV. Corner House Foundation and Development – Tracy Kindelsperger, Coordinator of Grants & Development, Dr. Maritoni Shah, Corner House Foundation Board President:
 - a. Tracy reported the May fundraiser was highly successful, both in terms of funds raised and in terms of results.
 - b. Corner House's 50th year begins in August, a yearlong celebration.
 - c. Candy noted it is bittersweet to see Gary leave, but the 50th year will be a great time to see Corner House's benefits and look forward to the future. She recently gave an interview to a news reporter regarding Gary's retirement.

- V. Municipal Liaison – Dwaine Williamson
 - a. Dwaine summarized the status of the project to build 80 or more units of housing on Franklin Street.
 - b. Discussion continues regarding keeping the Nassau-to-Paul Robeson section of Witherspoon Street one-way northbound, vs. becoming a pedestrian zone. The Engineering Department continues to study and develop plans.
 - c. Three new police officers have been hired. Evan Moorhead has taken over as Executive Director of Princeton Recreation Department.
 - d. The Cannabis Task Force recommended and Council agreed, to opt out of a cannabis license at this time. The requirements would not have been met in a timely fashion. Council can still decide to opt in at a later date.
 - e. The Community Center task force, formed in response to a petition for a community center per the Master Plan, is studying the feasibility of a center. Dwaine noted a physical facility is only part of the question. The task force seeks to identify what community services are, and what is already being done.
 - f. Council is considering an ordinance to restrict the use of gasoline-powered landscaping equipment, in light of the noise and pollution. Concern includes the fact that many equipment operators are immigrants.
 - g. Wendy Jolley invited Mayor Freda to comment. The Mayor affirmed his support for Corner House, and for Gary.

- VI. Old Business – none

- VII. New Business
 - a. Wendy Jolley wished Gary well in his upcoming retirement; it has been a delight and a pleasure to work with him. Wendy, Lance Liverman, and Dave Errickson are planning

Gary's retirement party. Cecilia Mathews volunteered to serve on the retirement party planning team.

VIII. Public Comment – none offered.

- a. Gary De Blasio noted he was brought on 21 years ago because Princeton wanted a youth center, but there is still no youth center.

IX. Adjournment

- a. The meeting adjourned at 7:30 PM. Motion Cecilia Mathews, second Wendy Perello, approved.

Next regular meeting: Wednesday, September 8, 2021 at 6:00 PM.

Meeting Schedule for 2021:

- September 8
- November 10

Respectfully submitted,
Jean Woodman, Corner House Board Secretary
Minutes approved September 8, 2021

Director's Report July 2021

Administrative Updates: Bradley Nussbaum has announced his resignation effective July 15, following a four-year career at Corner House. Conner Romanowsky will also be leaving July 30, 2021 following a two-year career at Corner House. We wish Brad and Conner well on their new career adventures. They will be missed. Both left for significantly higher salaries than Corner House can offer an issue addressed with the new Administrator.

This will be my final Director's Report and the last Corner House Board meeting that I will attend, it is with bittersweet emotions that I say good-bye after twenty-one years of service to the Princeton Community, as I bring to an end a forty-four year career that has spanned four states . I want to thank each of you for your belief in Corner House over the last two decades, and especially the tremendous support I have personally received from so many of you. A special thank you to everyone for the wonderful notes, emails and phone calls I have received since announcing my retirement. They have meant a great deal to me!

Tonight we will review the current standings of each area in our Treatment and Prevention Programs. Dr. Oliver Crocco will present the initial findings of his research on our Student Leadership Programs.

Corner House Foundation and Development Office Updates:

DIRECT MAIL: \$87,406.00

INDIVIDUAL DONATIONS - TOTAL RAISED \$40,736.15

Includes gifts in honor/memory of individuals that were given separate from the Direct Mail campaign. ***Includes anonymous \$25,000 donation***

Events- Total Raised \$53,450.00

- **Tunes and Tulips:**
 - Sponsorships- \$27,000.00
 - Tickets- \$6,000.00
 - Donations- \$6,250.00
 - Night-Of Donations- \$17,300.00
 - **Expenses: \$10,279.72.00**

NET RAISED: \$46,470.28

GRANTS - TOTAL RAISED \$75,500.00

MacMillan Family Foundation-\$10,000
Church & Dwight-\$8,000
Church & Dwight (Barry Bruno) - \$2,500.00
Tikkun Olam Foundation-\$10,000
Starr Foundation-\$15,000
Griffin-Cole Fund- \$30,000 (for Leadership)

GROSS FUNDRAISING TOTAL FOR 2020-2021: \$260,192.15

Treatment Program Highlights:

Currently we have no wait list for clinical services. We have had 15 requests for services in May 15 requests in June. We currently have 7 Drug Court clients.

We have begun limited groups at this time: Act Your Values (4), Relapse Prevention Group (6), Thoughts and Feelings (4), and Women's Trauma (1).

Leadership Program Highlights:

Leadership programs have ended for this school year. New teams will begin their roles at the Corner House Student Leadership Institute on August 3rd, 4th, and 5th. Approximately 90 students will participate in the Institute, including about a dozen former leaders. It will take place at Community Park and Princeton High School. The year ended with the presentation of the Harriet Robertson Leadership Award to Hannah Van Dusen from PDS.

Seniors for Seniors: The program ended with a live get together of our leadership students with their senior mentors. One of the participants from the Senior Resource Center described the get together as, "magical", the first time student leaders and seniors met live. Please remember a video of the program is live on our website.

Corner House Student Board: Student Board ended the year with a pizza party where they received their Corner House Water Bottles, a tradition that began two years ago. A group of the students presented at our Tunes & Tulips benefit and did an excellent job of presenting their work to our guests. The 2021-22 Student Board will be the largest in Corner House history, featuring 30 students from PDS, PHS, Hun and Stuart.

Project GAIA: GAIA held a successful end-of-the-year Awards Ceremony and an informative Orientation Night for next year's leaders and their families. GAIA has completed the school year, and leadership institute planning will happen over the summer. Many of the GAIA team will move on to the Student Board.

The TAG Team has completed their year with many of their students moving on to the Student Board.

Outreach Program Highlights:

AYP/PYP/WOWY: Students did well in their classes and completed final projects and assignments for the school year. Most students have begun working in the Summer Youth Employment Program and enjoying their summer. They will be collaborating with Community House on activities and working with Khristina Gonzalez at Princeton University. For summer outings, they are planning to do kickboxing, karaoke night, dodgeball, exercising at YMCA and Princeton University track, scavenger hunting, cooking, and art projects.

Several of our PYP and WOWY seniors were honored at the FUND 101 awards ceremony via zoom. They will be attending several colleges in the fall, including TCNJ, Rowan University, Montclair, MCCC, St. John's University, Temple, and Boston University. The seniors will be graduating from Princeton High School on June 23, 2021. The recipients of the Marian Levine Memorial Scholarship are Kyia Pennington and Pierre Legrand. Congratulations Kyia and Pierre.

Prevention Program Highlights:

***Academic Success Today* (AST) facilitator Martha Land has been:**

Mentees

- Sending information on summer camps and helping research specific camps.
- Receiving applications for rising sixth graders for AST program for the fall.
- Held an End-of-Year Award ceremony, PUMS teachers made award recommendations for the AST students. The ceremony was outside in front of middle school. Many AST students, parents, teachers, the principal and all the school counselors attended. It was a fun luncheon. Handed out t-shirts from Princeton University, the awards, and token gifts to rising ninth grade-students.
- Attended Mental Health and Wellness Fair at the middle School at end of May. Many students came to learn about Corner House's programs and received flyers about Academic Success Today and the STAR program. Highlighted programs to the JW staff.
- Planning to meet with middle school counselors to discuss how to connect AST parents with the students' mentors when parents do not use email or text frequently.

Mentors

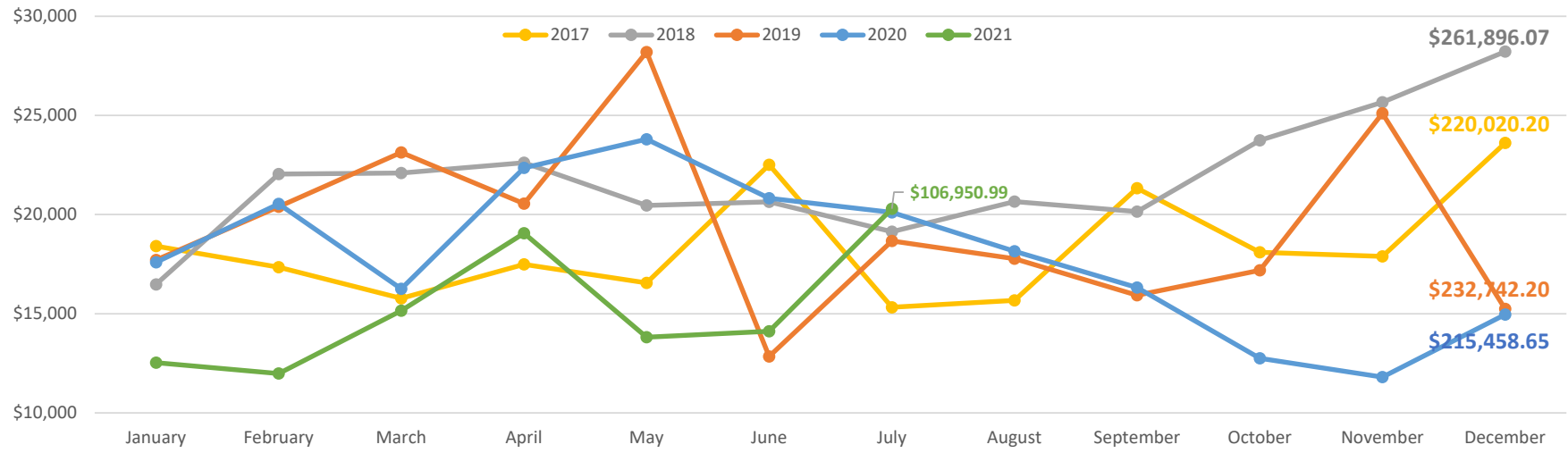
- Working with mentors to plan Zoom meetings over the summer. Some possible hands-on activities include painting, cooking, acting and yoga. Will try to deliver supplies when needed for participants.

Lawrenceville

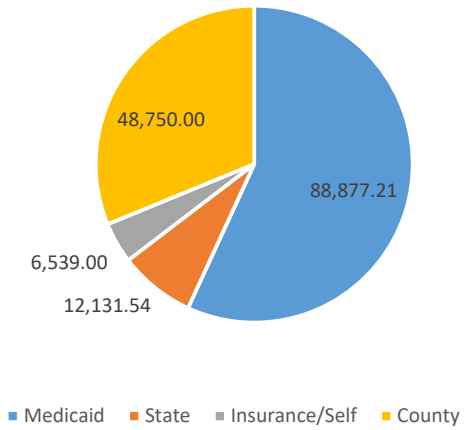
- Preparing to hold after school tutoring sessions with Lawrenceville student volunteers at the Lawrenceville School in the fall.

STAR: (Super Teens Acting Responsibly): The eight-grade girls ended their year with a meeting focused on fun and discussing highlights of the year, especially the weekly check-ins.

Fee-for-Service Revenue, 2017 - 2021
excluding county grants



Revenue by Payer, 2021



Revenue by Program, 2021

