

PARTNERS IN PREVENTION

Town of Somers

WESTCHESTER COUNTY, N.Y.

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KATHY CUCCHIARELLA
CHAIRWOMAN

SOMERS TOWN HOUSE
335 ROUTE 202
SOMERS, NY 10589



MEETING MINUTES April 8, 2026

The meeting was called to order at 7:05 p.m.

The following members were in attendance: Andy Casimir, Carol Cirieco, Kathy Cucchiarella and Lauren Johnson.

Margaret DiLorenzo and Pat Otis were absent.

Somers Middle School Youth Prevention Coordinator Amanda Casey and Somers High School Youth Prevention Coordinator Jessica Pereira were also present.

Minutes – A motion was made by Mr. Casimir to approve the minutes of the March 11, 2026 meeting as submitted. Mrs. Johnson seconded the motion. All were in favor.

Town Budget Expenditures – \$3,000 was approved for the 2026 budget. Mrs. Schirmer was reimbursed \$40 for St. Patrick's Day coins for a Gambling Awareness activity at the Somers Middle School. The balance in the account is \$1,547.

Drug Free Communities (DFC) Grant:

Dr. Brenna Van Frank, Pediatrician and Senior Medical Officer on Smoking and Health at the CDC will be the speaker at the next K.N.O.W. 2 Prevent webinar on April 22nd from 7:00 to 8:30 p.m. The presentation is titled "Nicotine: New Package, New Health Claims, Same Risks for Youth Health and Wellness. Mrs. Cucchiarella will be a moderator and oversee the Q & A. The flyer should be distributed next week. All are reminded to please mark their calendars and be sure to register for this presentation.

A Steering Committee meeting was held and an agenda item was the school code of conduct which Mrs. Cucchiarella, Ms. Casey and Ms. Pereira were asked to review as well as make suggestions. It was suggested that energy drinks be prohibited, but a decision was made not to amend the Code of Conduct to include but rather to talk about the negative effects of this item in health classes and youth groups. This topic could be

beneficial at exam time and to also talk about how this subject can be broached with family members who may drink them. The Bylaws were adopted by the Steering Committee on March 24, 2026.

The Year 9 DFC Annual Performance Report request was completed by Mrs. Cucchiarella. Typically, responses as to future grant approval happen in August.

Mrs. Cucchiarella attended a POWER Against Tobacco and a PAVE - Behind the Buzz: Helping Kids Navigate Nicotine Stress and Mental Health meetings as well as the Westchester Coalition meeting.

A request was made of the County by Mrs. Cucchiarella to borrow the DUI simulator. She got an email acknowledging her request. It will be available at the Senior Breakfast on June 12th.

Mrs. Cucchiarella wanted everyone to be aware of a bill in the State Legislature to legalize hallucinogenics and psychedelics. K.N.O.W. 2 Prevent will be hosting a Westchester Training Forum via Zoom on April 28th for purposes of educating all prevention professionals, law enforcement, government personnel and healthcare professionals as to what the science says about the therapeutic mechanisms of psychedelics, the challenges of ensuring safety and regulatory oversight, and the lessons history offers for creating policy.

The new Somers High School Athletic Director Tommy Albano and Mrs. Cucchiarella met to discuss Substance Free Athletics among other things.

Student Assistance Services Counselors – Ms. Casey had information available for the students for Problem Gambling Awareness Month in March. She also sponsored an activity for the student which generated great conversation. April is Alcohol and Marijuana Awareness Month. Some of the students are creating posters to be hung around the school and a healthy brain activity will be offered.

Ms. Pereira and five High School students attended the Youth Leadership Task Force Conference in White Plains on March 10th. She said it was amazing and probably the best one she has ever went to. There were two keynote speakers, one of which was Ken Nwadike who spoke about his Free Hugs Project. Ms. Pereira would really like to have him present at the High School next school year. She offered a spin the wheel activity for the students in March for Problem Gambling Awareness Month. Tomorrow, Ms. Pereira and three students will attend a CODA program via Zoom. In April, JCK will present at the high school and a Healthy Brain Day will be held to recognize Alcohol and Marijuana Awareness Month in April.

Both Ms. Casey and Ms. Pereira promote all types of awareness in their twice monthly distributed newsletter to the parents.

Somers High and Middle School Updates – Mr. Rodriguez and Mrs. Mangone were not present.

Youth Programs Updates – Hopefully some Somers High and Middle School students will be willing to attend the Partners meetings, especially since they are Zoom meetings.

Somers Police Chief Updates – Police Chief Linkletter reported that it has been quiet and in March, 30 pounds of pills were brought to the incinerator in Valhalla.

OLD BUSINESS

Youth Vaping Initiative – A \$5,000 grant was awarded to create a Youth Vaping PSA with a celebratory event for the students involved. The hope was to create a PSA about vaping to be played at the Carmel movie theatre, while at the same time offering SMS and SHS students a ticket to see the movie that will play the PSA, a soda and popcorn. Unfortunately, the movie theatre closed, but was to re-open under new management which seems to be taking forever. Mrs. Cucchiarella, welcomes other ideas to see this to fruition, but in the meantime, she has asked Ms. Casey and Ms. Pereira to work with some of their students to create the PSA so it is at least finished.

Narcan Training – Mrs. Johnson and Mrs. Cucchiarella were supposed to Narcan train the Somers Middle School staff last March, but that date had to be postponed. We will revisit this training for the fall of next year.

Freshman Peer Leadership – Mrs. Cucchiarella hoped to coordinate with students with the assistance of Doug Packard to move forward with an addition to the current Freshman Peer Leadership program and hoped to have Andy Duran, CEO of LEAD, run a one-day workshop. This project has been put on hold as DFC funds are limited at the moment.

Lion's/Leo's Partnership/Opportunities – Mrs. Cirieco will reach out to the new contacts for the Lion's Club and Leo's in hopes that a partnership with these two groups can be formed. Unfortunately, she missed the last two meetings but will move forward on this endeavor.

Hang Up and Drive – The Partners will have an informational table at the PTA sponsored Hang Up and Drive at the Somers High School on April 14th at 7:00 p.m. Mrs. Schirmer will send out an email to remind everyone of the commitment to assist at this event.

Somers Medication Take Back – The Medication Take Back Day will be held on Saturday, April 25th from 9:00 a.m. to 1:00 p.m. at the Somers Police Station. Mrs. Johnson had a postcard announcing the event printed. One side is in English and the other in Spanish. Mrs. Schirmer will send out an email to remind everyone of the commitment to assist at this event.

NEW BUSINESS

Cruisin Into Spring Car Show and Vendor Fair – Ms. Casey is interested in having an informational table at the Somers Middle School PTA's Cruisin Into Spring Car Show and Vendor Fair on April 12th. The fee is \$50 to register, which Ms. Casey has already

paid for and she has some students that will join her.

The meeting was adjourned at 7:50 p.m. and the Partners will meet next on May 13th at 7:00 p.m. via Zoom.

Respectfully submitted,

Denise Schirmer, Secretary
Somers Partners in Prevention

cc: Partners in Prevention
Town Board
Town Clerk