

**Cambridge Kids' Council Meeting: 17 November 2011 at 6:00pm
City Hall Annex, 344 Broadway, Cambridge, MA**

Present: Mayor David Maher (chair), Sally Benbasset, Ellen Semonoff, Bob Haas, Betty Bardige, Shubham Dhital, Jessica Daniels, Ken Reeves, Charlotte Avant, Sara Daniels (Ramsey Beckett), Tina Alu, Nancy Tauber, Andrea Collymore, Mary Wong

Absent: Jeff Young, Louis DePasquale, Susan Flannery, Neil Michaels, Humbi Song, Barbara Kibler, Sam Seidel, Steve Swanger

Guests: John Clifford, John Lindamood, Ashley Correia, Esther Jules, Daniel Ruben, Lee Gianetti, Claude Jacob, Isobel Schpeiser, Meron Teklehaimanot, Ayana Aubourg, Allentza Michel, Catalina Nguyen, Shawn, a junior, Ash Rahman, Miles Daniels, Luc De Marrais, Zach Spitz, Jason Vasquez-Li, Santiago, a senior

A. Call to Order

Meeting is called to order at 6:20 pm by Mayor David Maher

Welcome & Introductions

Mayor Maher welcomes everyone to the meeting, and has those present introduce themselves. They do this. He then asks for how many of those present is this their first meeting of the Council, and roughly a third raise their hands.

He mentions there are a few procedural items on the agenda, followed by a task from the Youth Leadership Subcommittee.

B. Review/Adoption of Minutes

September 15, 2011

Mary Wong asks for a motion to approve the minutes from the previous meeting of the Council.

Action Taken: Tina Alu moves the adoption of the minutes from the previous meeting. Ken Reeves seconds the motion. It succeeds by unanimous voice vote. The minutes from the meeting of 15 September 2011 are adopted.

C. Public Commentary

Mayor Maher seeks comments from the public, but no one interested in commenting.

D. Updates & Announcements

Mayor Maher asks Mary Wong if there are any updates or announcements.

Mary asks the Council if there are updates or announcements.

Ramsey Beckett shares that tickets are on sale for Cambridge Rindge and Latin School's fall musical, *Hairspray*.

Ellen Semonoff announces that Cambridge has, for the fifth time, been named one of the 100 best communities for youth, and that the Youth Involvement Subcommittee of the Council is among the reasons.

Ken Reeves suggests that kids should go to the next meeting of the Mayor's Red Ribbon Commission on Central Square, as there hasn't been much youth input in that process.

John Clifford adds that the City Manager has appointed a Central Square Advisory Commission to implement the recommendations of the Red Ribbon Commission. The Advisory Commission will be meeting on Tuesday nights.

Claude Jacob reminds the Council that it is flu season, and announces that the next Family-Friendly Flu Clinic is on Wednesday, 30 November at the King/Amigos School.

Mary points out the timeliness of the flu announcement, as Council member Barbara Kipler is missing the meeting on account of the flu.

Tina Alu announces the 45th Anniversary Celebration of the Cambridge Economic Opportunity Committee, which will be occurring on 7 December, with Dr Paul Farmer as keynote speaker.

Catalina Nguyen announces that she and Shawn, another student, have just run their first event with the performance-planning business they have set up with the help of the Possible Project.

Mayor Maher asks Catalina to share more about the Possible Project.

Catalina responds that it is a new initiative, founded by Mark Levin, to promote entrepreneurship among youth.

Mayor Maher adds that Mark Levin, of Millennium Pharmaceuticals, and his wife have put a great deal of time into this project, and asks if anyone else in the room is involved. Ramsey raises her hand.

Nancy Tauber asks for more details of Catalina and Shawn's business.

Shawn responds they provide performance opportunities for teenage performing artists.

Ken wonders if this is tied to make money in any way.

Shawn responds that, in order to make the best possible performance event, they do charge for their services.

Ken asks if they are working under a capitalist model, or some other model.

Shawn says it is capitalist, and they do try to take a little bit of the earnings home with them.

Nancy assures Catalina and Shawn that this is a good thing.

Ken points out that if they're only taking home a little bit of it, that's not quite capitalistic.

Mary announces that she has sent out the Conflict of Interest Policy Summary and that she has the form which Council members must sign by today, acknowledging receipt of the policy.

Ken asks if all must sign, or only members of the Council from the community at-large.

Mary responds that those on the City's payroll will have signed it in other contexts, which is sufficient.

Mary announces that she will be leaving her position as Executive Director of the Council. She shares that she has been honored by the privilege of serving the Council, and that she wishes everyone, and the Council, the best in moving forward.

Mayor Maher thanks Mary for her service. *There is much applause.* He continues, noting that one of Mary's greatest strengths has been in recruiting people, especially the youth members, to serve on the Council.

Mary points out that in the last three years, Allentza Michel has been a big help in that effort. *There is much applause for Allentza.*

Ellen notes that the initiative to bring youth members to the Council was Mary's. The vision was Mary's, says Ellen, she brought the rest of us on board, and it is an important legacy.

Ken thanks Mary for being the soul of the Council, for being the glue bringing together all the different elements of and visions for the Council, and for her skill with leading youth.

Jason Vasquez-Li asks who will be taking over for Mary.

Mary responds that the Executive Committee has begun the conversation by looking at how the job has changed and how it should be structured for the future.

Shubham Dhital suggests that Allentza would be a well-qualified candidate for the position, and suggests the assumption that she would take over.

Ken responds that questions of successors aren't questions Mary could answer, and that anyone interested in the position, Allentza included, will have the opportunity to apply for it.

Ellen assures the students that Allentza will continue to provide the support she has provided.

Mayor Maher asks if there is anyone else with questions on Mary's departure, and then seeks one more round of applause for her.

Mayor Maher turns the meeting over to the Youth Involvement Subcommittee for the next item on the agenda.

E. Youth Involvement Subcommittee

Getting Acquainted and Connecting on Issues with the Kids' Council

Shubham Dhital and Ramsey Beckett introduce themselves as the elected co-chairs of the Youth Involvement Subcommittee.

1. FY2012 Project Topics

Shubham explains that the Subcommittee chooses two topics on which to focus their advocacy in each year. The topics this year are MBTA student policies and alcohol and drug abuse.

2. Small Group Discussions

Shubham introduces an activity for the Council, in which the adult members of the Council and the members of the Youth Involvement Subcommittee will have the opportunity to meet each other.

Shubham explains the process, whereby groups of adults will remain stationary while groups of youth will rotate around the room and join in a guided discussion.

Ramsey adds that someone in each group of adults should take notes, as each group will have a moment to present on their discussion at the end.

Ramsey then conducts the Council through the exercise.

The groups discuss their questions, with Ramsey and Shubham facilitating the experience and keeping things on-track.

3. Report Back to Large Group

Ramsey instructs each group to present what was said in the group.

Jessica Daniels reports that her group discussed the racial achievement gap at CRLS, and whether students noticed it, and whether it should be a focus of YIS. They discussed whether the students thought about how to pay for college. They discussed whether guidance counselors were seen as expressing bias in their recommendations to students.

Ellen Semonoff reports that her group discussed the advising environment at CRLS and whether students of different backgrounds were equally pushed to take on challenges. They discussed the importance of the Subcommittee, and how it is an important achievement of the Council.

Mayor Maher reports that his group discussed the role that the Subcommittee can play as youth advocates to department heads. They discussed the openness of drug and alcohol abuse at CRLS. They discussed middle school, and whether the students had felt challenged at the time. They discussed how better to work with families which have been difficult to reach in the past.

Claude Jacob reports that his group discussed how information is disseminated to youth and to families. They asked the students to think about, from five years from now, what they would look back wanting to have done. The Subcommittee was a large part of the answers to this question.

Ramsey thanks everyone for participating in the exercise.

Mayor Maher thanks Ramsey and Shubham for leading the exercise.

F. Implementation of Strategic Plan

Updates on Status Report on Children and Families Development

Mayor Maher updates the Council, stating that the chart which has been handed out lists the metrics which are being considered for the status report, and that the Executive Committee has been looking over these metrics and narrowing down the list.

Mary Wong adds that the chairs of the outcome subcommittees chose, from among the possible metrics their subcommittees has identified, which ones would be collectable in the short term. The list which has been handed out is this shorter, pared-down list.

G. Next Steps

Next Kids' Council Meeting: January 19, 2012 (6:00 – 8:00pm)

Mayor Maher states the next meeting will be occurring on 19 January. He asks Allentza Michel to begin the final piece of the meeting.

Allentza says the youth have something to share.

Ramsey Beckett presents a cake to Mary Wong, and thanks Mary for all she has been able to learn from her in the last few years.

Shubham Dhital echoes Ramsey's sentiments, and adds his hope that someone with as much dedication as Mary be found to fill the post.

Mary states that it was truly a pleasure and honor to work with the youth who have come through the Youth Involvement Subcommittee and offers that the Council should applaud them. *There is applause for the Subcommittee.*

Mayor Maher instructs Mary to cut the cake. He also reminds those students for whom this is their first meeting of the Council that there is not cake at every meeting.

Claude Jacob jokes that as long as the cake is free of trans-fats, he has no concerns.

Mayor Maher seeks a motion to adjourn the meeting.

Action taken: Sally Benbasset moves that the meeting be adjourned. Ellen Semonoff seconds the motion. At 7:56, the meeting is adjourned.

Meeting documents: 1) 17 November 2011 Kids' Council Meeting agenda; 2) minutes of the Kids' Council meeting on 15 September, 2011; 3) Kids' Council Meetings, September 2011 to May 2012; 4) Kids' Council Five Outcome Subcommittees—Short List of Indicators and Measures