



VILLAGE OF RIDGEWOOD

131 N. MAPLE AVENUE, RIDGEWOOD, NJ 07450

Ridgewood Stigma-Free Committee Meeting Minutes 4.15.25

Present:

Beth Abbott, Karen Acker, Lynn Benson, Danielle Caputo, Angela DiBlasio-Funk, Sarah Lenzi, Angela Musella, Corinne Scarpa, and Councilmember Siobhan Winograd

Item 1: Welcome

- Danielle began the meeting by reporting that Jan Bottcher has decided to step down from the Stigma-Free Committee. As per her email to Danielle, she feels that Reverend Sarah will have a greater impact on the Committee regarding places of worship than she can and feels comfortable with her decision to leave. She also stated how grateful she was to have been a part of the Committee. Danielle expressed many thanks to Jan for having served on Stigma-Free.
- Danielle announced that on March 28th the Health Department received notice that federal funding supporting the grants that she and Surbhi work under are immediately being terminated. Their grants were supposed to continue until March of 2026. A request for an injunction from 24 states has been served and granted to stop the termination of federal funds. However, no guidance from the New Jersey Department of Health has been given to local health departments as to how to proceed. Everyone expressed their disappointment at hearing this news. Anyone wanting to advocate for the continuation of public health funding please contact Danielle.

Item 2: Program Announcements

- Beth shared that the Community Center of Ridgewood Foundation is sponsoring “Adaptive Gardening: Growing Better with Age” on April 22nd. She also promoted “National Take Back Day” to be held April 26th. The flyer for this event is pending approval. Danielle offered to follow-up with Carol from Village Hall to check the status of the flyer.

Danielle announced the following upcoming programs:

- Free Mental Health First Aid Training that Stigma Free is cosponsoring- Monday, April 28th 8:30 am to 4:30 pm at Village Hall. Danielle would appreciate everyone’s help in promoting this event. Karen stated that she has shared the flyer.
- Stigma-Free Symposium sponsored by Bergen County Stigma Free-Friday, May 2nd, 8:30 am at the Terrace in Paramus. Everyone is encouraged to attend if possible.

Item 3: Stigma-Free Campaign for Mental Health Awareness Month

- Danielle shared a version of the Ridgewood Stigma-Free Logo with a tagline as well as several messages that she composed for Mental Health Awareness Month in May. The messages will be sent out weekly during the month. All present praised the logo and the

messages. Danielle will forward them to Carol for approval. Siobhan proposed that possibly Keith should add the messages to his social media.

- Lynn advised that the County has an excellent one-page flyer that explains when to call 988/211/911. Lynn suggested that we circulate this flyer. Danielle stated that this flyer is posted on Ridgewood's municipal website, it is titled "NJ Crisis Service: Who Should We Call?"
- Siobhan mentioned that there is a very good pamphlet for seniors. She said it was very age friendly and finds it helpful when responding to questions from residents.
- Danielle asked who is responsible for writing proclamations. Siobhan advised that two proclamations for Mental Health Awareness Month have already been written and were read at last week's Council meeting.
- Danielle informed the Committee that there has been no word received from Danielle at the County about the lawn signs for Stigma-Free. She did share that she found a 5' by 8' Stigma-Free Flag in her office. She inquired as to if the flag can be displayed on municipal property. Siobhan will ask for guidance from the Village attorney. Corinne stated that New Bridge has a big ceremony to raise their Stigma-Free flag on May 15th.
- Lynn would like the Committee to provide more in-depth education on mental health topics such as anxiety, depression, bipolar disorder, OCD, etc. Also, publicizing Peer O, which can help young people learn about intrusive thoughts and how to treat them. A short discussion was held about placing hyperlinks in the social media posts for Mental Health Awareness Month.
- Danielle also asked if anyone from the committee would like to table and represent Stigma-Free at Ridgewood Pride Day on June 7th. Siobhan added that she would love to see Stigma-Free represented at Ridgewood Pride Day. She hopes that the Committee's presence there would generate some community conversation.

Next meeting will be held on May 20th at 3pm via Zoom.