

**City of New Haven**  
**Meeting Minutes (Short)**  
**Youth Committee**

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**Wednesday, January 28, 2009**

**5:30 PM**

**Aldermanic Chambers**

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ALDERMANIC NOTICE - NEW HAVEN

The Youth Services Committee of the New Haven Board of Aldermen will hold a workshop at 5:30 p.m. on Wednesday, January 28, 2009 in Meeting Room 3 of City Hall, 165 Church St., to discuss:

- An update on a comprehensive youth plan for the city.
- New and continuing business.

Per order: Frances T. Clark, Chairwoman; attest, Ronald Smith, City Clerk. For a disability-related accommodation, please call 946-8122 (V) or 946-8582 (TTY) at least three business days prior to the meeting.

## MEETING MINUTES

## MINUTES

Youth Services Committee

January 28, 2009

Chair Bitsie Clark called the meeting to order at 5:38 p.m. in Meeting Room 3. Present were Ald. Edwards, Jones and Plattus.

Also present were Che Dawson, director of the city's youth department, Rachel Herema of the Citywide Youth Coalition, and a Yale Daily News reporter

The chair gave a brief overview of the city's various attempts at a comprehensive youth plan. She referenced a recent letter from Kica Matos, Community Services Administrator, in response to a request from the Board of Aldermen's Black and Hispanic Caucus. The letter, which is in the meeting file, discusses various issues and circumstances around the city's current attempts to improve youth services.

Alderwoman Edwards discussed an upcoming youth event which requires participants to read a book called "Melting the Ice."

There was a discussion of possibly sending youths with the city's delegation to the National League of Cities convention. The chair said she mentioned it to the Legislative Services Director, who said it has not been done before due to cost. However, they do have \$7,500 in Youth Council money that could possibly be used for this. It is estimated to cost \$2,500 per youth. Dawson said his experience is that any traveling youths would need close mentoring and guidance from adults on the trip; otherwise they would be overwhelmed.

Che Dawson discussed the Pregnancy Prevention Council, New Haven mentors, and the Youth Council. The pregnancy program hopes to offer contraceptive prescriptions in the school health clinics. The chair wondered how controversial this would be. Dawson said parents have to sign off on the service. The New Haven Mentors program, he said, is still operating but not at an optimum level. It is a youth mentoring program that needs more adult volunteers. The young people definitely want mentors. The mentors are drawn from the ranks of city employees, who are given time off work to participate. Dawson also gave some background on the Youth Council for the benefit of Herema. The Youth Council is planning a workshop series with a Yale organization.

Alderwoman Edwards said youths need a safe place to socialize. They also need creative outlets such as music studios, poetry writing, and Ipods. She related anecdotes about youths from her neighborhood.

Dawson distributed a flow chart for "Broadening the City's Approaches to Addressing Youth Issues" along with an outline for addressing the needs of youth, which are in the meeting file. He said the concept of a comprehensive youth plan, addressing all needs of all youths, is overwhelmingly broad. He discussed his theories of how New Haven's youths can be better served, using these documents as an outline for his broader ideas.

He said the new web site his department is working on will be called "Youth Link" and there will also be a telephone hotline.

In response to the chair, Dawson said he hopes to engage elected officials and the public in his plans.

There was a wide-ranging discussion of ways to involve the community in improving youth services.

Adjourn: 6:33 p.m.

An audio recording of this meeting is available in the Office of Legislative Services.

Respectfully Submitted,

Michael Mercier  
Legislative Aide