



HEALTH AND HUMAN SERVICES DEPARTMENT

Shin-Yi Lao, Commissioner

1000 Commonwealth Avenue
Newton, MA 02459-1544

City of Newton Youth Commission Advisory Board

Meeting Minutes

Wednesday, February 4, 2026 – 6:30pm

This meeting was held in person at the Newton Free Library in the Druker Auditorium.

Attendance: Melissa Bernstein, Artistic Director, Newton Theater Company (YCAB member); Matt Colella, Youth Officer, Community Services Bureau, Newton Police Department (YCAB member); Naman Dadlani, Newton South Sophomore (Youth Commissioner); Andrew Feinberg, Newton South Senior (YCAB member); Amanda Feiner, Newton South Sophomore (YCAB member); Hana Futai, Newton South Senior (Youth Commissioner); Armine Freeman, Newton South Senior (Youth Commissioner); Alex Gusenoff, Brown Middle School 8th Grade Student (YCAB member); Leyla Gustin, Newton North Junior (Youth Commissioner); Meri Haas, Assistant Director, Human Services, City of Newton (Advisory Board staff); Nicole Kahn, Brookline Resident; Amelia Kessler, Newton North Sophomore (YCAB member); Stephanie Lapham, Recreation Program Manager, Newton Parks, Recreation and Culture (YCAB member); Chloe Lee, Newton North Senior (Youth Commissioner); Lauren Lele, Senior Director, Community Health and Volunteer Services, Newton-Wellesley Hospital (YCAB member); Jeff Lemberg, Executive Director, Newton Food Pantry (YCAB member); Joshua Levitt-Horne, Newton South Junior (YCAB member); Chloe Lyons, Newton North Senior (Youth Commissioner); Deirdre Madden, Resource Navigator, Health & Human Services, City of Newton (YCAB member); Simbarashe Makura, Roxbury Latin School Senior (Youth Commissioner); Grace Mitrokostas, The Rivers School 8th Grade Student (YCAB member); John Rice, Chief of Community Services (City of Newton Employee); Sharyn Roberts, Newton Resident & Representative of the Newton League of Women Voters; Gene Roundtree, Assistant Superintendent of Secondary Education and Special Programs, Newton Public Schools (YCAB member); Alexander Savoulides, Belmont Hill School Junior (YCAB member); Laura Tavares, Executive Director, WPS Institute (YCAB member); Beatrix van den Bosch, The Windsor School Freshman (YCAB member); Delia Walsh, Newton North Freshman (YCAB member)

- I. Meeting began at 6:35pm
- II. Advisory Board members in attendance voted unanimously to approve January 14th meeting minutes.
- III. John Rice, Chief of Community Programs for the City of Newton, introduced himself and spoke to the group about his role. A handful of YCAB members asked follow-up questions.

- IV. The remainder of the meeting time was used to work in subcommittee groups:
youth opportunities, Newton Civic Spotlight planning, mental health/substance
use
- V. The meeting ended at 8:02pm