**Keene Youth Commission - Meeting Minutes 8/5/26**

**Board members present:** Lili Vivas Biesemeyer, Devon McCabe, Corissa Clark, Bronson Lawrence, Sadie Kaltenbach, Ann Hough, Jenna Cho
**Absent:** Skyler LaBounty, Michelle Bullock
**Others:** Haley Garno Potter, KYC Summer Program director

1. **Election of secretary**
    a. Lili nominated Jenna. Devon seconded. Unanimously approved.

2. **Debrief: Incident #1 at KYC Summer Program**
    a. Lili: Asked board member involved in incident not to participate in this discussion so as to avoid any appearance of a conflict of interest.
    b. Incident involved a 7-year-old camper (white) who made a racist comment directed at a 13-year-old counselor-in-training (black).
    c. CIT reported the incident to Haley, who talked to the camper.
    d. Immediate measures Haley took:
        i. Made the camper sit out for the first hour of the field trip they were on. During that time, the two discussed the incident.
        ii. Disclosed the incident to both sets of parents.
        iii. Held a group discussion with everyone in the Summer Program. No specifics about the incident, just a broad discussion on appropriate behavior and how to speak up to help friends feel safe.
        iv. Disclosed the incident to a couple of KYC members.
            1. Lili: Deferred to Haley, who was handling the matter as program director and in line with KYC Code of Conduct.
        v. Emailed all parents of children participating in Summer Program reiterating our policy and how we can keep our children safe.
        vi. Held counselor trainings.
    e. Per Code of Conduct, this constitutes a warning. If second incident, the camper would be suspended pending a review.
    f. Parent of CIT has escalated the incident, notifying the town board, BOE and KCS superintendent as well as calling Lili directly multiple times.
        i. Asked for an apology from the family of the camper.
        ii. Asked the BOE to review its policy on racist incidents.
        iii. Asked KYC to review its policy on racist incidents and ensure future children are protected from such incidents.
        iv. Has pulled her children from the program.
    g. Lili who spoke with both parents, the town and school boards, and Mark Bennett regarding same and recommended an apology to parent of camper.

h. Parent of camper has decided not to issue a formal apology because they felt enough had been done to address the issue and as per Code of Conduct.
i. Parent of CIT pulled children from Summer Program.
j. This remains an isolated incident.

**3. Debrief: Incident #2 at KYC Summer Program**

a. One camper put another camper in a headlock. Kids are 10 and 11.
    i. Parent claimed lack of staff supervision at camp.
    ii. Parent said they would call the police next time.

**4. Debrief: Incident #3 at KYC Summer Program**

a. Cellphone policy at the program: Campers are allowed to use them on the bus.
b. Camper asked if they could text their mom to pick them up.
c. Haley said no, because communication re: pickup should come from the program. There could be miscommunication otherwise. Campers should also not just ask to go home because they're bored.
d. Parent of camper said that if their child wanted to go home, Haley shouldn't stop them.
e. KYC next steps:
    i. Review cellphone policy.

**5. Counselor behavior**

a. Some veteran counselors are going around Haley's recommendations when making decisions, such as whether to abort a big hike (Gothics) in questionable weather and opt instead for an alternative hike.
b. KYC next steps:
    i. Empower Haley as program director to make final decisions.
    ii. Review town employee handbook for problematic behavior.
    iii. Consider new counselors for 2027.

**6. KYC next steps on incidents**

a. Consider to what degree we investigate such incidents.
b. Consider revisiting the Code of Conduct.
    i. Was the response (and speed of response) to the incident adequate?
    ii. Do we need to make changes to hopefully prevent incidents like this in the future?
    iii. Institute a zero tolerance policy for certain conduct? If so, who enforces it?
    iv. Consider a kid-friendly Code of Conduct and ask parents to go over them with their kids? Ask both parents and kids to sign?

c. Review other summer camps' policies for reference and guidance.

7. **Aug. 12 meeting on Community Center building plans**
    a. Ann will attend. Bronson and Sadie are maybes.

8. **Funding**
    **a.** Keene Community Enhancement Fund
        **i.** Sadie may write the grant
    **b.** Essex County Youth Sports Funding ($1,500)
        **i.** Bronson: We have some money left over from last year's grant. Could spend on first-aid kits, infrastructure, snacks, soccer balls, jerseys. If we need anything, send wish list to Tina and cc Bronson.

9. **KCS back to school newsletter - any KYC info for it is due 8/12**
    **a.** Corissa already sent Jenn the flier on soccer program.
    b. No need to send anything else.

10. **Bake sale and gear swap is 8/13**

**Next meeting:**

- Review other summer camp policies/codes of conduct
    - High Peaks Camp policy
    - KCS
    - Others
- Post-mortem on Summer Program
    - Review final numbers and finances
    - Consider any changes for next year
    - Should there be backup food for campers who need more food?
- Fright Night (grades 7-12)