

**BYLAWS**  
**Metuchen CARES:**  
**Community Action for Recovery, Education, and Support**  
Date: March 9, 2023

**Article I – NAME**

The name of the Committee shall be Metuchen CARES: Community Action for Recovery, Education, and Support.

**Article II – AUTHORIZATION**

The Borough of Metuchen has authorized the Community Action for Recovery, Education, and Support Committee by way of Resolution No. 2023-126 and Ordinance No. 2023-08.

**Article III – MISSION**

The Mission of the Metuchen CARES Committee is to **prevent and** reduce substance use and behavioral addictions and to promote mental **wellness** in our community by raising awareness and providing education through the sponsorship of programs focused on prevention and recovery.

In carrying out its mission, Metuchen CARES shall:

- A. Determine, through an annual assessment of community-based needs, the scope and depth of substance use and behavioral addictions in our community and provide comprehensive community-based prevention programs and outreach
- B. Organize and coordinate efforts with the Borough of Metuchen schools, faith-based groups, **youth members of the community**, law enforcement, business groups, and other community organizations for the purpose of reducing substance use disorders and behavioral addictions, as well as promoting mental **wellness**
- C. Provide comprehensive substance use and behavioral addiction education, support, and outreach efforts for parents and other adults in the community

## Article IV – MEMBERSHIP

- A. Membership on the Metuchen CARES Committee shall be appointed by the Mayor and Council, and consistent with the Borough Code shall include but not necessarily be limited to representatives of the following groups:
- a. Mayor and/or governing body
  - b. Chief of Police (or designee) and other law enforcement agencies
  - c. A representative of the Board of Education
  - d. A volunteer psychological counselor
  - e. Youth Representatives
  - f. Student Assistance Coordinator or another student support services staff member
  - g. Representative of Parent-Teacher Organizations or Home School Association
  - h. Parents and/or Guardians
  - i. Representatives of local Faith Based Organizations
  - j. Individuals who have been affected by substance use disorders and behavioral addictions, including those affected by their own or a family member's addiction
  - k. Private citizens with interest in issues concerning substance use, addiction, and juvenile delinquency
  - l. Representatives of local civic or volunteer groups
  - m. Representatives from Youth Services Organizations
  - n. Representatives of local businesses
  - o. Older Adult Representatives
  - p. Health and Human Services agencies/professionals; especially healthcare professionals including pharmacists, physicians, or therapists
  - q. Representatives of public and private organizations involved in the prevention and treatment of substance use disorders and behavioral addictions
  - r. Representatives of the local communications media or public relations
- B. A member's term shall commence on January 1 and continue for three years unless appointed at a different period by the Mayor and Council. However, if appointed after January 1, the expiration of the member's three year term shall run from the January 1<sup>st</sup> prior to said appointment.
- C. Except for the Mayor and representative members as provided in Section 10-36 (A)(1)-(4) of the Borough Code, whenever a member of the CARES Committee fails to attend and participate in any meetings of the CARES Committee for a period of eight (8) consecutive weeks or two (2) consecutive meetings, whichever is longer, without being excused from attendance by a majority of the members of the Committee, at the conclusion of such period the membership of the absent member shall be deemed vacant; provided, however, that the CARES Committee may refuse to excuse only with respect to those failure to attend and participate which are not due to legitimate illness. If such a vacancy occurs, the Chairperson shall authorize the Secretary to advise the Borough Clerk of said vacancy.

## **ARTICLE V - OFFICERS AND EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE**

The officers of Metuchen CARES shall be a Chairperson, a Vice Chair, and a Secretary. Officers shall be elected for a term of two years at the January reorganization meeting and take office immediately and shall serve until the successful election of their successors. Officers may be re-elected; however, a member may not hold the same office for more than two consecutive terms. The Executive Committee shall be made up of the Chairperson, Vice Chair and Secretary.

- A. The duties of the Chairperson shall consist of the following:
  - a. Attend all general membership and executive committee meetings.
  - b. Preside over all general membership and executive committee meetings
  - c. Call special general membership and executive committee meetings
  - d. Construct agendas for general membership and executive committee meetings
  - e. Disseminate agendas and the prior meeting's minutes before each meeting.
  - f. Oversee the application and process of the Committee's distribution of grants, including forming a committee for the collection of applications, assisting in creating the criteria for the selection of grantees, and evaluation of sponsored programs on an annual basis.
  - g. Create and appoint ad hoc committees and their chairpersons for the effective operation of the CARES Committee
  - h. Work with the Borough Coordinator for Metuchen CARES, report the Committee's activities to the municipal government
  
- B. The duties of the Vice-Chair shall be as follows:
  - a. Attend all general membership and executive committee meetings
  - b. Provide support with all responsibilities of the Committee at the request of the Chair
  - c. Preside over general membership meetings in the absence of the Chair
  - d. Represent the Committee in the absence of the Chair
  - e. Discharge all of the duties and responsibilities of Chairperson in the event of a vacancy.
  
- C. The duties of the Secretary shall be as follows:
  - a. Attend all general membership and executive committee meetings
  - b. Record and prepare minutes
  - c. Provide the **Executive Committee** and Borough Coordinator with copies of the minutes
  - d. Provide or arrange for the Borough Clerk with to have access to all public records of the Committee.
  - e. At the direction of the Chairperson, report the Borough Clerk vacancies in the CARES Committee.

## **Article VI – MEMBER DUTIES AND RESPONSIBILITIES**

All prospective members should be apprised of the following responsibilities before they are

appointed:

- A. Members will attend regular bi-monthly meetings of the entire Committee which are anticipated to be held in January, March, May, July, September, and November. In addition, Members are expected to attend any Special Meeting of the Committee
- B. To the maximum extent possible, members should report their absences to the Chairperson or to the Borough Coordinator prior to the meeting for which they will be unable to attend.
- C. All members are expected to be working members, e.g., hold an office, be assigned or to join a sub-committee, and/or take a liaison position to one of the schools or other organizations in Borough with which Metuchen CARES' partners.
- D. Members are expected to attend and participate in two or more programs per year, sponsored by Metuchen CARES

## **Article VII – FUNCTION**

The functions of the Metuchen CARES Committee are:

- A. To create and foster a network of community leaders, private citizens and representatives from public and private human service agencies, all dedicated to supporting and developing educational programs which **prevent and** reduce substance use disorders and behavioral addictions in the community.
- B. To conduct an assessment of community-wide needs pertaining to mental **wellness** and addiction
- C. To assist in the development and coordination of such programs at the municipal level
- D. To identify existing efforts and services that are acting to **prevent and** reduce substance use disorders and behavioral addictions

## **Article VIII – FUNDING**

To the extent that the Borough of Metuchen provides an annual budget to the Committee for sponsoring programs and promoting mental **wellness**, according to the Mission of Metuchen CARES, the CARES Committee shall operate within the budget provided by the Borough. The CARES Committee shall report to the Mayor and Council the Committee's use of its funds.

## **Article IX- MEETINGS**

- A. Meetings will be scheduled on the second Thursday of the odd-numbered months at 7:15 pm at Borough Hall, unless otherwise noted. The calendar year begins January 1 and ends December 31. The annual schedule, time and meeting place will be published prior to the

first meeting of a calendar year. At least four meetings must be held in a calendar year. In the event the Chairperson determines that it is necessary for the operations of the Committee to conduct a meeting virtually through electronic means, notice of such meeting and the procedures for access to attend such meeting shall be published in the newspaper and on the Borough Website and provided to all of its members at least forty-eight (48) hours prior to said meeting.

- B. A Special meeting of the CARES Committee may be called by or at the request of the Chairperson or upon request by a majority of the CARES Committee. Notice of special meetings of the CARES Committee shall be given at least 48 hours prior the meeting via electronic means and/or print means and/or as provided by law.
- C. Quorum. A majority of the voting CARES Committee members shall constitute a quorum required for the transaction of business at any meeting of the Committee. Whenever a quorum is not present at a meeting at which a regular or special meeting of the Committee, those members present may reschedule the meeting to another date, or hold a meeting for the purpose of considering matters as are on the agenda. However, no formal or final action may be taken at such meeting, until ratified and confirmed at a subsequent meeting at which a quorum is present.
- D. Manner of Action. The act of the majority of the CARES Committee members present at a meeting at which a quorum is present shall be the act of the CARES Committee unless the act of a greater number is required by law or by these By-Laws. Each Trustee shall have one (1) vote, exercisable at duly constituted meetings of the Board of Trustees.
- E. Parliamentary Procedure. Parliamentary procedures in meetings of the CARES Committee shall be governed by Roberts' Rules of Order, except as Robert's Rules of Order differ from, procedures explicitly set forth in the By-Laws, in which case those procedures shall be followed.
- F. Order of Business at Regular CARES Committee Meetings. The order of business at all regular CARES Committee meetings shall be as follows:
  - 1. Roll Call of Officers and Members of CARES Committee;
  - 2. Approval of minutes of previous meeting of the CARES Committee;
  - 3. Additions to agenda; items for consideration by the Committee (if applicable);
  - 4. Chairperson report;
  - 5. Reports of Committees and officers including;
  - 6. Unfinished Business;
  - 7. New Business;
  - 8. Open to Members;
  - 9. Public Comment
  - 10. Adjournment.

## **Article X – VOTING PROCEDURES AND ADOPTION**

- A. Aside from the Mayor and the Chairperson, except in the event of a tie, all members are eligible to vote on Committee matters and issues.
- B. A member must be present “in-person” at the Committee meeting to be eligible to vote, unless the meeting is being conducted “virtually”.
- C. Members who are liaisons to other agencies, e.g., the schools, police, Borough Council are eligible to vote.
- D. An upcoming vote needs to be announced at a prior meeting and noted in the minutes of that meeting.
- E. A vote requires a quorum of at least half of the committee members appointed.
- F. Except for a vote to amend the bylaws, a vote requires a simple majority to pass.
- G. The Chairperson is not eligible to vote on Committee issues or matters, except in the case of a tie vote and in such a case the Chairperson vote shall break a tie vote.

## **ARTICLE XI – CONFLICT OF INTEREST**

A conflict of interest may exist if a Committee member can reasonably expect that their conduct will directly result in a financial benefit to themselves, their family members, their business associates, their employers, or to businesses that the member represents. In situations where a conflict of interest may exist, the Committee member must recuse themselves. The Metuchen CARES Committee must have its members sign an acknowledgement of the receipt and review of Chapter 2 of the Code of the Borough of Metuchen and a -conflict of interest statement annually to be made available for review by Borough.

Recusal means that the individual is not participating in deliberations or debates, making recommendations, giving advice, considering findings, voting or in any other way assuming responsibility for or participating in any aspect of the decision making regarding the matter, where there are potential conflicts of interest.

Consultants or providers who are directly or indirectly involved in providing prevention services to Metuchen CARES Committee are subject to the recusal requirement.

## **ARTICLE XII – AMENDMENTS**

These bylaws shall be reviewed at least every two years. All proposed amendments or proposed changes to the bylaws shall be presented to the Committee one month prior to the meeting of the formal vote. Unless required otherwise, **voting on the bylaws shall occur at the reorganization meeting.** All decisions on amendments or changes to the bylaws require a quorum to be present and a  $\frac{3}{4}$  majority of the vote of those present.

## **Metuchen CARES Standing Rules for Interacting with the Public**

- Metuchen CARES has one voice. No one person makes decisions for the Committee. When interacting with any member of the public, this should be made clear with a statement like “I am not speaking on behalf of Metuchen CARES” or “I will take this idea back to the Committee or sub-committee.”
- Unless designated otherwise by vote of the Committee, the Chairperson shall be the only representative of the Committee; the Chairperson shall sign all communications for the CARES Committee. When authorized, in the event that another member writes an email for Metuchen CARES, the Chair must be copied (cc’d) on such communications. All communications not written by the Chair should be signed by the individual member and identified with their position (e. g. Secretary, member). The name of the Chair (e. g. John Doe, Chair) should be added underneath.  
Example of signature: Mary Jones, member  
Metuchen CARES  
John Doe, Chair
- The Committee will not recommend any services, facilities or providers or create situations where it could be perceived that a particular service, therapy, product, etc. is being endorsed or recommended to the public.
- The Committee will not give out any samples of products or sell any products to the public. The only promotional materials given out by the Committee will be to promote Metuchen CARES.
- Any brochures or literature given out by Metuchen CARES will be identified as coming from the Committee or SAMHSA or a governmental agency, not from a private company or provider.