



Community Change Driven by the Library Board and Library Director.

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Learning Outcomes

At the end of the session, participants will

1. Learn an example of the library board being a driver for change
2. Identify community partners willing to help and organize an initial meeting to discuss the issue.
3. Create a plan for change and locate the necessary funds to put the plan in action.

Quotes

To speak up, to improve, to make positive suggestions – this is loyalty. Loyalty is for patients and patient care. Loyalty is to the profession and its advancement. Loyalty does not stand silent in the presence of persons or policies, which diminish any of these... Leah Curtin ,ScD(h),MSN,RN,FAAN (nurse ethicist)

“Library staff have created a culture of normalization around traumatic events. Participants were unanimous in their feelings that they are expected to go through this kind of experience and that it is all part of the job.” 2022 Urban Library Trauma Study





Library + Community Initiatives

- Wellness Wednesdays- [Traverse Health Clinic Community Health Center](#) had a grant for outreach services
- Narcan (Newspaper Box Dispenser) - <https://tinyurl.com/tcnarcan>
- Community Mental Health Partnership - Social Worker 1 day/week
- “Community Conversations” programming on topics like mental health, addiction, etc. (Recordings on our YouTube channel - @tadlnotjustbooks)



PROGRAM RECORDING

Community Conversations: Addiction & Recovery - Mental Health Matters

Aug. 16, 2022



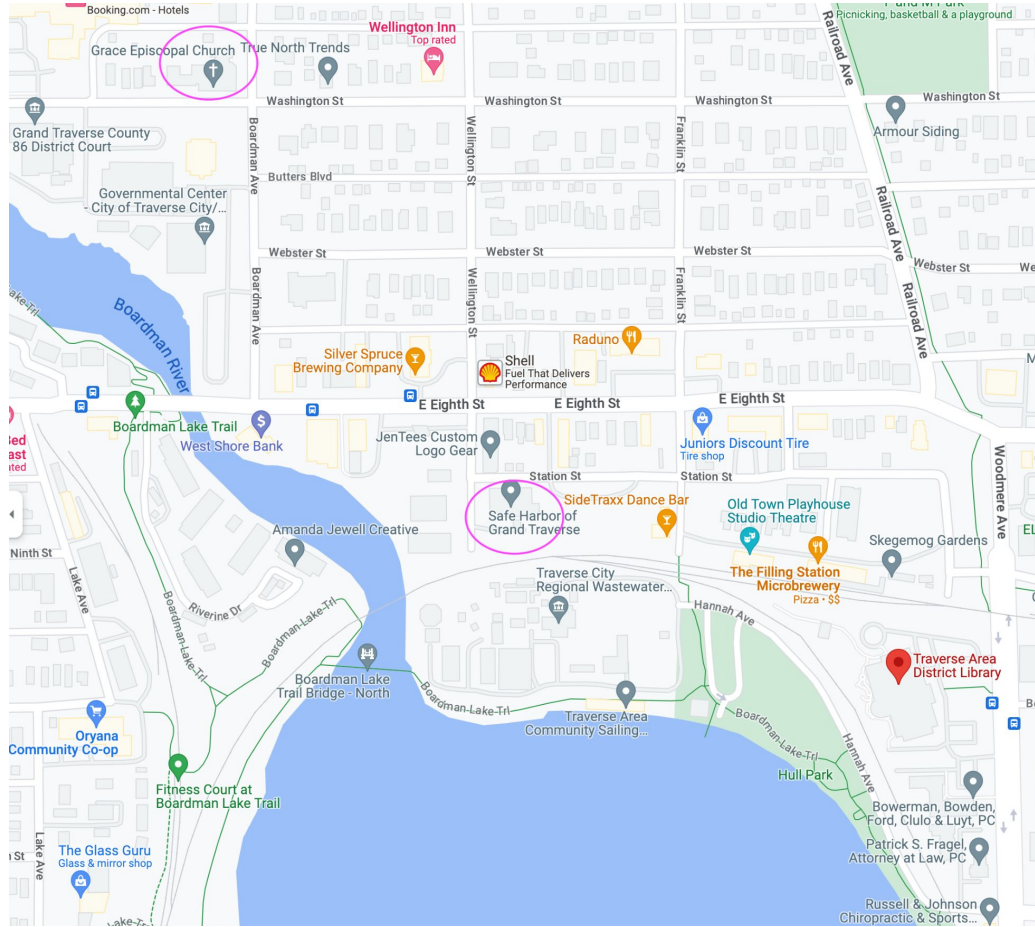
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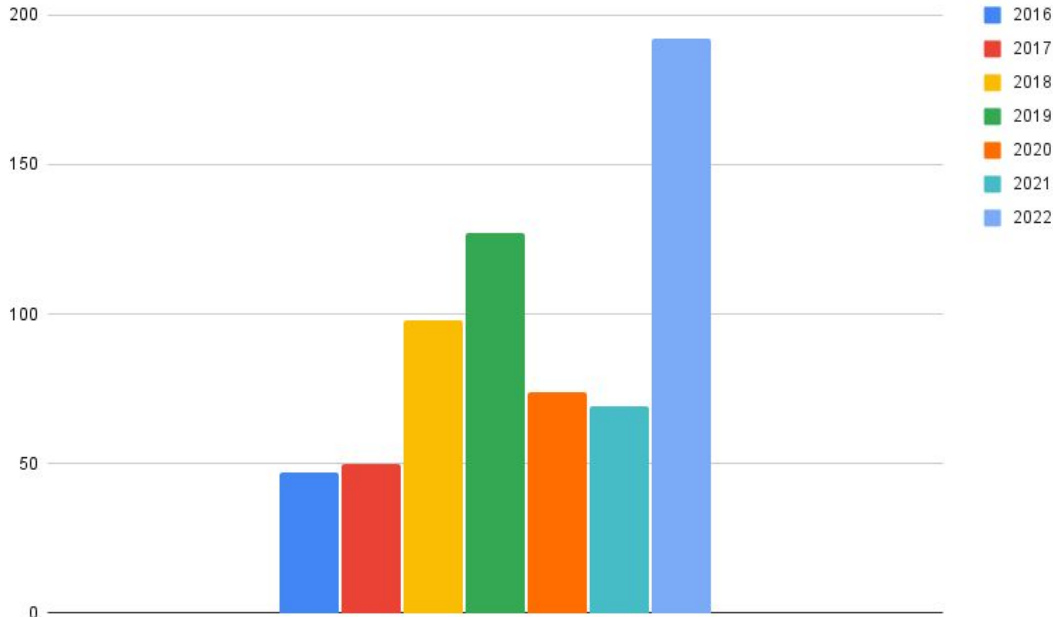
EVENT

Community Conversations: Addiction & Recovery - Recovery Celebrates Recovery!





Situation: Escalating Incidents



Incident types:

Violence
Indoor Public Urination and
Defecation
Drug Use/Overdose
Alcohol Use
Vomiting
Threats to Staff
Sexual Harassment
Verbal abuse
Bigoted comments
Public Intoxication
Sexual Encounters in Restrooms
Blood/Destruction of property

Situation: Staff Moral Distress

Definition from the nursing profession :

Moral distress occurs when you know the ethically correct action to take but you are constrained from taking it .Whether stemming from internal or external factors moral distress profoundly threatens our core values

Challenges posed by COVID -19 further complicate the ethical decisions nurses face , resulting in a greater intensity and frequency of moral distress .

American Association of Critical Care Nurses (AACN)

Solutions: Board Action

Budgetary: Approved the emergency measure to immediately hire security personnel

Policy: The Board followed Director led changes to the Behavior Policy

Call to a Action: Board Writes an Open Letter to the Community

Board was resolved that we did not create this problem and it takes a community to intervene and provide solutions.

Solutions: Board Action - Community Notification

The Traverse Area District Library (TADL) is funded by the taxpayers of its service district (which includes the City of Traverse City) to provide the entire community with safe access to library materials. As TADL's appointed Library Board it's our responsibility to provide fiscal oversight and policy to fulfill that mission. This **mission is being threatened by escalating numbers and aggression of violations of the TADL Behavior Policy.** Therefore, we would like to share the following, focusing exclusively on items related to our mission:

Letter Cont.

Overall

The documented rise in Behavior Policy violations stem from people with addictions and other disorders (a situation that often also contributes to homelessness), who have no place to go during the day. **TADL has become the de facto day shelter.**

- Due to increased frequency and increased abusive behavior and lack of safety, TADL Board **approved security guards for the first time** in December 2021. This unbudgeted expense is taking dollars away from our primary taxpayer-funded mission.
- It is also our **responsibility to provide stewardship for library property** - and we are seeing increasing incidents of damage to the building, furnishings, and grounds.

Letter Cont.

Concerns

- TADL staff are continually threatened and abused by patrons and feel unsafe in their jobs.
- Moral distress is felt by staff.
- Patrons have voiced concerns for safety and have resorted to not using the main library and not allowing their children to use the library due to behavior violations witnessed at the library.

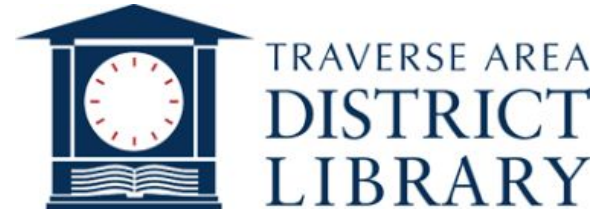
Letter Cont.

Requested Actions

- **Establish a joint task** force with Grand Traverse County, City of Traverse City, and non-profit agencies with the express purpose of developing a day shelter - individuals with addiction issues need safe shelter during the day and a means to access/be connected with treatment resources - that, in conjunction with more permanent housing for individuals ready for it - is the only way to create a long-term solution.
- Support and Encourage surrounding areas of the greater northwest Michigan region to **reopen their shelters and addiction treatment services.**
- Allocate resources from the Traverse City Police Department to establish a **community police officer** to reduce disturbances, behavior violation, and drug traffic at the library.

Results: Coalition Building - Synergy

This included non-profits, churches and government agencies. **Do not assume these groups have ever worked together.**



Need: Funding for the Day Shelter

- Need a dedicated team to find funds.
- Don't be afraid to Ask!



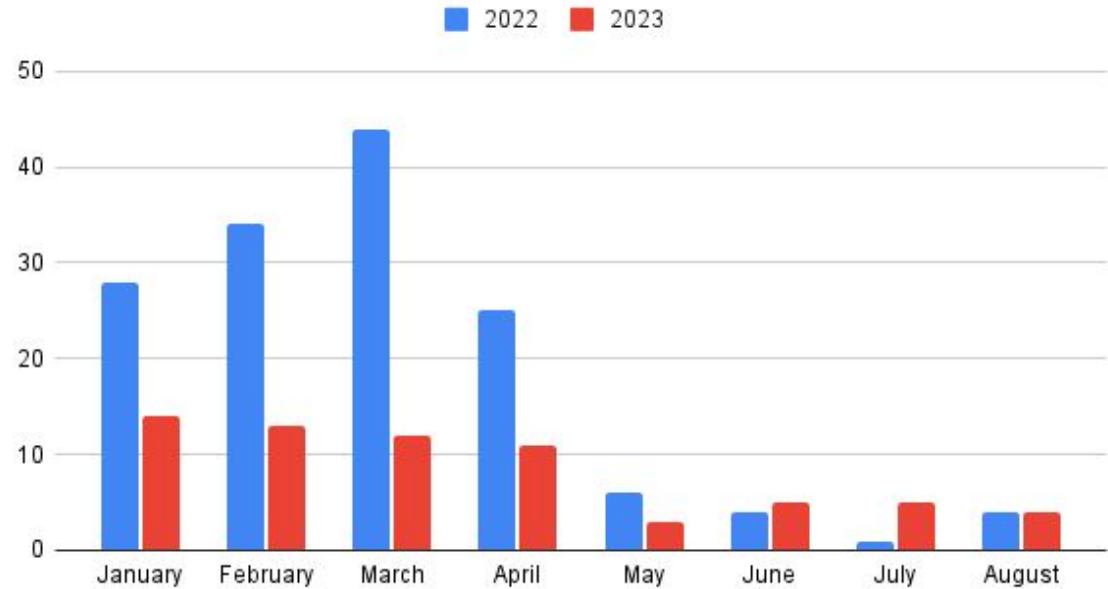
CITY OF
TRAVERSE CITY



Results: Reduced Incidents

From March 2022 to March 2023 there was a 72% decrease in incidents.

2022 and 2023



Results: Community Resources for Unhoused

- Community Policy Officer
- Police Department Social Worker
- Day time resources for unhoused
 - Food stamps
 - Counseling
 - Financial resource
 - Addition treatment
 - Community Mental Health Visits
 - Health Check-ups

Board As a Community Change Agent

- Literacy
- Banned Books
- School Libraries
- Food Insecurity
- What else?

Boards can not be silent in the face of human distress.

Thank You for Attending Our Program

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