

Unedited Transcript of the Labor and Economic Development Committee
Meeting - July 21, 2026

1 "Harward, Sonya" (4084726528)
00:09:09.689 --> 00:09:29.369
Just make it like.

2 "Harward, Sonya" (4084726528)
00:10:03.119 --> 00:10:19.679
Hey.

3 "Harward, Sonya" (4084726528)
00:11:28.199 --> 00:11:44.279
No, I'm not going to start.

4 "Harward, Sonya" (4084726528)
00:11:44.279 --> 00:12:01.649
That's good.

5 "Harward, Sonya" (4084726528)
00:12:18.269 --> 00:12:34.619
Yeah I think so, and then.

6 "Harward, Sonya" (4084726528)
00:12:34.619 --> 00:12:53.189
Yes.

7 "Harward, Sonya" (4084726528)
00:14:58.489 --> 00:15:24.948
Okay, as long as I got a quorum, I don't care. Metro TV, we'll get going
in 37 s.

8 "donna purvis" (363068160)
00:15:24.948 --> 00:16:01.532
I'm here. Let me get my glasses. Hold on.

9 "Harward, Sonya" (4084726528)
00:16:01.532 --> 00:16:21.619
Ladies and gentlemen. Good afternoon. It is three oh three Apple Time.
This is the regular meeting of the labor and economic development
Committee for Tuesday, 21 July. I am chair of Councilman Ben Reno Webber.
This meeting is being held pursuant to KRS 61.826 and council rule five
A.

10 "Harward, Sonya" (4084726528)
00:16:21.619 --> 00:16:39.599
I am joined today by councilwoman Crystal Bast. Councilman Ken Herndon,
Councilman JP Lenninger. Councilman Kale batch Shawn, councilman Hudson
at Councilman Kramer and online by the bespectacled Councilwoman Donna
Purpose.

11 "Harward, Sonya" (4084726528)
00:16:39.599 --> 00:16:57.449

Because of some scheduling needs, we are going to do this in a slightly different order. So if we can start with item number three, Madam Clerk, will you read the title of the item?

12 "Harward, Sonya" (4084726528)

00:16:57.449 --> 00:17:15.299

Can I read the, did you say that we're being conducted virtually? I did. I did. There we go. A resolution approving the granting of local incentives to RC Bigalo Inc, and any subsequent assignees or others.

13 "Harward, Sonya" (4084726528)

00:17:15.299 --> 00:17:30.719

Our approved affiliates there are pursuant to carry as chapter 01:54, sub chapter 32 right in full. Do I have a motion on a second? Councilman Hudson did it, he just didn't have his.

14 "Harward, Sonya" (4084726528)

00:17:30.719 --> 00:17:47.129

Hey Councilman Hudson moved councilman Batchan. And do we have anyone here to speak to this item? Yes, hello. Introduce yourself for the record. Yes, Hayden Candlell Senior Director of Market Development for one Moval. So we're here in support. Oh.

15 "Harward, Sonya" (4084726528)

00:17:47.129 --> 00:18:07.129

Hello? Hello? Okay. Okay, so we're here today in support of the Kentucky Business Investment Incentive for RC Begallow Inc, also known as big Allow T They operate a T manufacturing and packaging facility where it produces and distributes its national.

16 "Harward, Sonya" (4084726528)

00:18:07.129 --> 00:18:27.129

Only recognized line of specialty tease. The company is located at 2401 constant comment place in district eleven. In August 2021, the company received preliminary approval for these incentives through Cutfo, which included a total investment of 53 million, and the creation of 31 new jobs to add to their exist.

17 "Harward, Sonya" (4084726528)

00:18:27.129 --> 00:18:47.129

Listing a hundred and 26 with an average hour hourly wage of 2165. They've completed their expansion and are requesting final approval for the KBI incentive, which is 1 % of the wage assessment from Louisal Metro. The company complies with all program requirements established and monitored by the Kentucky cabinet for economic development.

18 "Harward, Sonya" (4084726528)

00:18:47.129 --> 00:19:07.159

Thank you. Thank you. Is there anyone who would like to speak on this item? Thank you mr. chair. As was mentioned, Biglot T is in district eleven. It has Biglo has actually been in the industrial Park for a number of years. I think a lot of folks didn't realize.

19 "Harward, Sonya" (4084726528)

00:19:07.159 --> 00:19:27.159

We've all seen it on the shelves. Most of us have probably had it in one form or another. If you haven't tried their PhD it's really, really good. But they are expanding, they're adding a line and they looked around at places that they could go and they decided that they really liked what was going on here in Louisville, they decided they wanted to expand in the spot where they were, and so they reached out to.

20 "Harward, Sonya" (4084726528)

00:19:27.159 --> 00:19:41.039

Ask for some incentives, and we're really proud to have them here. They are a great corporate citizen, and we'd love to see any support we can get to keep them here. So I'm asking for your support. Thank you.

21 "Harward, Sonya" (4084726528)

00:19:41.039 --> 00:19:59.039

Let the record reflect that we have been joined by Councilman Josie Raymond, who's mascrating as Councilman Stewart Benson by name tag. Anyone else care to speak on this? Oh, and I would let the record reflect, we have also been joined by Councilman Benson actually virtually.

22 "Harward, Sonya" (4084726528)

00:19:59.039 --> 00:20:15.509

Councilman Lenninger. Thank you mr. Chair. How many employees work at the manufacturing facility? Currently they're at about 01:26 and this will include 31 new jobs.

23 "Harward, Sonya" (4084726528)

00:20:15.509 --> 00:20:35.509

2165. Thank you. Anyone else here to speak to this? I will just note that having just left the one global committee meeting focused on metrics that matter, this is exactly the sort of thing that we should be measuring growth of local.

24 "Harward, Sonya" (4084726528)

00:20:35.509 --> 00:21:00.569

Companies in addition to our ability to attract like having good corporate citizens here that are continuing to expand is something that we need to prioritize and what gets measured gets invested in. All right, if there's NO further discussion, this is an item requiring a voice vote, all those in favor, please signify by saying hi. Excellent. Thank you colleagues. Thank you.

25 "Harward, Sonya" (4084726528)

00:21:00.569 --> 00:21:17.489

Because this was approved, this will be on the consent calendar. We're gonna go ahead and continue before we get to our special discussion, which I'm very excited about. Let's go ahead and do item number two, the landmark building development.

26 "Harward, Sonya" (4084726528)

00:21:17.489 --> 00:21:37.489

In order to establishing a development area pursuant two, 1 s, let me just get this. Two provisions of care as 65.7 oh four one through 65.7 oh eight three to be known as the landmark building development area designating the metro development authority and Inc as an agency's adopting the development plan.

27 "Harward, Sonya" (4084726528)

00:21:37.489 --> 00:21:57.489

And approving entering into a local participation agreement, authorizing the payment of the released amount pursuant to the terms and conditions of the local participation agreement requiring the submission of regular reports to global Jefferson County Metro government and authorizing the execution and delivery of any other documents and taking of any other actions necessary to accomplish the purposes authorized by this ordinance.

28 "Harward, Sonya" (4084726528)

00:21:57.489 --> 00:22:18.169

Can I get a motion? Motion and a second. Alright, and will you introduce yourself for the record? Good afternoon committee members. My name is Katie Litman. I'm the Deputy Director of Metro's Cabinet for Economic Development. I'm here today to discuss creating a tiff district for the landmark building conversion prog.

29 "Harward, Sonya" (4084726528)

00:22:18.169 --> 00:22:38.169

Project. This project is made up of two historic buildings at 303 ten West liberty Street. They were originally constructed in 1853 and 1907. Originally built as a post office, in the 1st US custom house customs house west of the alignie mountains. And then later the story, the warehouse.

30 "Harward, Sonya" (4084726528)

00:22:38.169 --> 00:22:58.169

Facility that was built to accompany that. So great history in these buildings. They've also been home to the courier journal over time and the luvil Chamber of commerce. These buildings have sat mostly vacants since the early 2000s fully vacant since 2017, so it's a key block right by the convention center that's been sitting dark.

31 "Harward, Sonya" (4084726528)

00:22:58.169 --> 00:23:18.169

And we now have a group that is interested in redeveloping these properties. Landmark landlord LLC, which is in reference in the ordinance is tied to a Louisal based development group called the Timbala Group. They've done other hotels in the area. They are planning to invest \$74 million.

32 "Harward, Sonya" (4084726528)

00:23:18.169 --> 00:23:38.169

To renovate the property into a 150 room bouti hotel. The flag will be a candopy by Hilton and it will be managed by the Schulty Hospitality Group. There will also be restaurant bar cafe and meeting space on the site, so creating some nice potential for that, that ground level retail.

33 "Harward, Sonya" (4084726528)

00:23:38.169 --> 00:23:58.169

Activity. But given the age of the buildings, there is significant remediation work that needs to be done to the interior, including lead paint and asbest remediation to preserve the historic elements of the building while doing substantial upgrades that are needed to create, you know, a modern day hospitality space.

34 "Harward, Sonya" (4084726528)

00:23:58.169 --> 00:24:18.169

And so given these costs, the project has requested tax increment financing to fill the gap in their capital stack. This proposal is for a local only tiff, so local property taxes only. So that's the, the metro tax and the urban services district tax. It does not include the school district taxes of.

35 "Harward, Sonya" (4084726528)

00:24:18.169 --> 00:24:38.169

Course that is prohibited under state statute. It's a reimbursement based tiff. So, that's the way all of our tiffs are structured. I'm rebating a portion of the growth in property taxes over time that are generated by the project each year. So they, they pay their property taxes each year and then they get a reimbursement based on the new.

36 "Harward, Sonya" (4084726528)

00:24:38.169 --> 00:24:58.169

New revenue that's been generated, and Metro keeps a 20 % portion of those new increment, new revenues as well as our base revenues that the project is currently generating. So this means that the incentive is performance based. If the project doesn't generate the revenues that they expect, then they're only rebated a portion of what they do generate, not what's proper.

37 "Harward, Sonya" (4084726528)

00:24:58.169 --> 00:25:19.429

And so the amount of the requested TIF is \$3758524. This is over 20 years. Their 2025 property tax bill assessed value for these two buildings is only \$5752710. So this generates.

38 "Harward, Sonya" (4084726528)

00:25:19.429 --> 00:25:39.429

Only \$25000 approximately in local tax, property taxes each year for metro. But after completion, the projected property tax is generated over 20 years is over \$5 million \$308975. So this will result in louisal Metro earning over one point.

39 "Harward, Sonya" (4084726528)

00:25:39.429 --> 00:25:59.429

\$5 million compared to the just 610000 that we would otherwise receive if this property continues to sit dormant, and without conversion. So we're really excited about this project. It's a, it's an important set of buildings in downtown, a great history, really excited to put it back to life especially near the convention center where there is.

40 "Harward, Sonya" (4084726528)

00:25:59.429 --> 00:26:26.149

And thank you all for letting me speak today. Thank you mr. chairman. Yes, this is the dictionary definition of a missing tooth that we talk about a lot. It's a stunningly beautiful building, one of my very personal favorite buildings is architecturally in downtown. And I'm I'm really happy to see this happen. I don't believe in Tiffs everywhere all the time, but.

41 "Harward, Sonya" (4084726528)

00:26:26.149 --> 00:26:50.269

I think I I support this one as as you said it has to perform and I it's it's, the, the surrounding area is brought down by it sitting there this long empty and I really look forward to that being filled in and all the things that are happening right right next door with the JW Marriott, the Omni, the Marriott, the other Marriott.

42 "Harward, Sonya" (4084726528)

00:26:50.269 --> 00:27:01.829

But everything's around there and I think this one missing piece is what needs to be finally filling in that area and make the area whole, so I would ask you to support it. Thank you.

43 "Harward, Sonya" (4084726528)

00:27:01.829 --> 00:27:19.655

Okay. Is there anyone else care care to speak on this? Alright, seeing none, this is an item regarding a an ordinance requiring a roll call vote. Adam chair, will you open the voting? Council member Pervas.

44 "donna purvis" (363068160)

00:27:19.655 --> 00:27:23.713

Yes.

45 "Harward, Sonya" (4084726528)

00:27:23.713 --> 00:27:53.419

Alright, this wasn't we'll move to old business. All right. Thank you deputy director. Madam Clerk, let's quickly do item, I should never say that. Adam Clerk, let us do item number four on the agenda. Your resolution authorized in the mayor to accept \$25000 from the City's Institute in LCI as part of.

46 "Harward, Sonya" (4084726528)

00:27:53.419 --> 00:28:00.029

For the building economic resilience and communities program to be administered by the Office of Social Services Red and full.

47 "Harward, Sonya" (4084726528)

00:28:00.029 --> 00:28:20.029

We have a motion and a second. Anyone here to speak to this? Good afternoon, Josh. I'm Co Director Office of Social Services with Louisville Metro. And we are here because we have received a \$25000 grant from the National League of Cities. This is.

48 "Harward, Sonya" (4084726528)

00:28:20.029 --> 00:28:43.039

Is, a pilot that is going to be located in one of our neighborhood place locations, South central neighborhood place, where we are going to use this funding to help blend our financial empowerment work with our housing stabilization and case management work. And we are going to basically do two things with this funding. One.

49 "Harward, Sonya" (4084726528)

00:28:43.039 --> 00:29:03.039

Expand our financial empowerment work and make financial counseling a core piece of the service array for folks who are there for case management and housing support. But at the same time we are going to use the funding to support a data analysis project where we're gonna look back four years at our financial empowerment data and data from our.

50 "Harward, Sonya" (4084726528)

00:29:03.039 --> 00:29:19.859

Our housing stabilization work to look at the intersection of variables that make both more effective, and then our goal is to be able to take that data and use it to make our services more effective in the future.

51 "Harward, Sonya" (4084726528)

00:29:19.859 --> 00:29:39.859

Anyone who would care to speak to this? Okay, seeing none. This is an item that requires a voice vote. All those in favor, please signify by saying I, any imposed. Alright, by acclamation, this will move to the consent calendar. Thank you very much.

52 "Harward, Sonya" (4084726528)

00:29:39.859 --> 00:30:00.799

Thank you sir. It is one of my great pleasures in this committee that we are often able to highlight the groups and organizations who are contributing to our economic development, often in ways that are unseen or that are building the parts of our workforce or economic development that we don't.

53 "Harward, Sonya" (4084726528)

00:30:00.799 --> 00:30:30.329

Often get to hear about, but that our clutch to our success as a city. And so I'm very excited for to welcome the 1st item on the agenda. Madam Clerk do you have to read the title of this one? Okay. Nami, you guys would approached the microphone? Okay. Can that come over here? Is it permanent over there?

54 "Harward, Sonya" (4084726528)

00:30:30.329 --> 00:30:45.869

Okay, ok. I You can stand, if you want to stand and just someone needs to run the slides.

55 "Harward, Sonya" (4084726528)

00:30:45.869 --> 00:31:05.869

I use my hands too much and kind of start moving around. But I am Nancy Brooks. I'm the executive director of Nami Loyville and we are the local

affiliate of the National Alliance on Mental illness. We've been in this community for decades, but we are doing some really powerful things right now that I.

56 "Harward, Sonya" (4084726528)

00:31:05.869 --> 00:31:27.509

I think will change the trajectory of the work that we do. I want to start by reminding everyone that mental health touches everyone. There is NO one in our community who doesn't know someone who suffers from some form of mental health condition. Often it can be seen in substance abuse.

57 "Harward, Sonya" (4084726528)

00:31:27.509 --> 00:31:45.749

It maybe seen in things like eating disorders or anxiety. It can be that someone is depressed. It's not often viewed that way because what we see are the very visible signs of some of the seriously mentally folks in our community.

58 "Harward, Sonya" (4084726528)

00:31:45.749 --> 00:32:01.379

Who we might notice in the homeless population. That's not everyone that's affected by mental health. It is your neighbor, it's your child. It's, it's possibly yourself.

59 "Harward, Sonya" (4084726528)

00:32:01.379 --> 00:32:16.589

And so we need to start thinking in our community more about how mental health is in all of our neighborhoods, and that's one of the reasons we wanted to speak with some of the city council members.

60 "Harward, Sonya" (4084726528)

00:32:16.589 --> 00:32:35.339

So, one of the things that can get confusing about our organization is our affiliation with the National alliance. The beauty of that is that the National Alliance creates with the top experts in our, in our nation, the programs that we bring to Loydville.

61 "Harward, Sonya" (4084726528)

00:32:35.339 --> 00:32:55.339

However, we really are an independent nonprofit. We're our own five oh 1C3, we listen to the community and we provide services we know our community needs. All of our programs are peer led, which means that everyone who comes to our organization to take a support group or an education class.

62 "Harward, Sonya" (4084726528)

00:32:55.339 --> 00:33:15.419

Class or workplace training will be led by someone who really knows what it's like to be in that seat, not clinically talking down to them. And all of our services are provided at NO cost to those who would like to take a class or or sit in on a support group.

63 "Harward, Sonya" (4084726528)

00:33:15.419 --> 00:33:30.839

Why does this make a difference to the community? Because a lot of what we see when it comes to mental health is after the crisis. There are incredible amounts of professionals and and supportive.

64 "Harward, Sonya" (4084726528)

00:33:30.839 --> 00:33:50.839

Services like hospitals, where they treat the diagnosis, where they offer therapy, where they might have a crisis response. We are different. Being peer led, our goal is to help everyone from that young individual who's just coming of age.

65 "Harward, Sonya" (4084726528)

00:33:50.839 --> 00:34:11.149

To the senior citizen who's sitting in a residence, have the best quality of life possible. And the only way that we can do that is by providing connection and to work preventatively. So one of the biggest things we're trying to do now is bring more visibility to the work that we do.

66 "Harward, Sonya" (4084726528)

00:34:11.149 --> 00:34:16.649

So we can get in front of those crisis moments.

67 "Harward, Sonya" (4084726528)

00:34:16.649 --> 00:34:36.649

This is one of my favorite projects and one of the ways that we're doing this and one of the ways I think most of you guys can find our services useful in your, in your neighborhoods. Obnami wellness wheels. It's a project that the city did invest in initially, and Cozer for kids is one of our partners in this.

68 "Harward, Sonya" (4084726528)

00:34:36.649 --> 00:34:57.379

We are reaching youth at schools. We are reaching families at community events. We are going everywhere someone lives, works, and plays in order to get stigma reducing, engaging activities that will help people build resilience and.

69 "Harward, Sonya" (4084726528)

00:34:57.379 --> 00:35:14.999

Build coping skills. Again, this project can go into your neighborhood. If you have a community event and you want us there, if you have a community partner who's doing a health fair and it has some outdoor space, let us know. We will bring the wellness wheels.

70 "Harward, Sonya" (4084726528)

00:35:14.999 --> 00:35:30.599

It it's had fabulous reviews. So again, we're working very closely with JCPS on this as well. How does this strengthen the community? Well, a healthy workforce.

71 "Harward, Sonya" (4084726528)

00:35:30.599 --> 00:35:49.829

Requires healthy people. Healthy people have to maintain their health every day. I'll use an example. We had an export member or past board

member who's an incredibly successful individual. He's in his early eighties. His wife had a hip injury.

72 "Harward, Sonya" (4084726528)

00:35:49.829 --> 00:36:10.969

He's now thinking sad thoughts about how life will be if he loses his wife. It doesn't matter where we are, does the amount of success we've had, what neighborhood or zip code we live in, life happens. So we are there to make sure that those individuals are successful.

73 "Harward, Sonya" (4084726528)

00:36:10.969 --> 00:36:29.219

In in being resilient and in using their skills that they learn. We start at the ground level, youth. When we go into schools, we are talking with youth about how to self identify, how to make sure that if they feel something might be.

74 "Harward, Sonya" (4084726528)

00:36:29.219 --> 00:36:49.219

Not so right. They're asking the counselor or their parent for some help. We're also sending messages that substance use is related to mental health. If you are a young person and you start thinking, man, it's, this feels good when I get hired.

75 "Harward, Sonya" (4084726528)

00:36:49.219 --> 00:37:06.809

When I drink. You're probably doing what we call self medicating. As adults, that might look like I'm driving down the highway and I've had a bad day at work and something some lovely driver in the city has ticked me off a bit.

76 "Harward, Sonya" (4084726528)

00:37:06.809 --> 00:37:26.809

When you go home, if you open the bottle of wine and just start chugging, you're using it as a coping skill. If instead, you prepare the meal and then say that sharden name might taste good with this and have one glass, you're using adult coping skills. We have to start.

77 "Harward, Sonya" (4084726528)

00:37:26.809 --> 00:37:52.729

Not seen that in ourself, we have to know when something feels not so right. How do we do that? We work with families and we work with every other community partner, including housing, stability partners who need us to come in and provide training. Our stigma free workplace training is something that we had talked.

78 "Harward, Sonya" (4084726528)

00:37:52.729 --> 00:38:15.649

Ben and I had talked about a long time ago, in the highlands, there's lots of small businesses who don't have HR, who don't have necessarily any outlet or connection with someone who can help them if there is a situation with their one of their employees. That is a way we could work with our community partners. We can also work with large corporate.

79 "Harward, Sonya" (4084726528)

00:38:15.649 --> 00:38:43.460

Where we go in and train them in a stigma free platform that we have. It's got a slew of really awesome presentations, but probably the most important part is building that culture of care that develops within the the business where they understand that you might need to take a day off for your mental health or where they might be cognizant of what words they use with.

80 "Harward, Sonya" (4084726528)

00:38:43.460 --> 00:38:51.390

In the workplace so that we develop healthy cultures in our workplaces.

81 "Harward, Sonya" (4084726528)

00:38:51.390 --> 00:39:11.390

This goes back to education. Again, we are doing a ton there. I feel like I might have covered most of this before, but I want to reemphasize the early intervention and support and that together we can work for a brighter future because only by catching folks before that crisis moment.

82 "Harward, Sonya" (4084726528)

00:39:11.390 --> 00:39:39.980

But before that time when they're further impacted by either being arrested or ending up in a psychiatric hospital, are we able to really make a difference? And we do this again through family engagement. We are the only agency that supports the family. We have been working with one of dr. leaderman's committees to improve response from emergency personnel.

83 "Harward, Sonya" (4084726528)

00:39:39.980 --> 00:40:03.660

And a lot of that goes down to what happens to the family when their loved one gets picked up. It maybe that you have a mental health inquest warner, now they're calling them two oh two A's, and they they want help. But when they're picked up and taken to the hospital, they become an adult all of a sudden. That adult might not be able to be.

84 "Harward, Sonya" (4084726528)

00:40:03.660 --> 00:40:20.190

Due to hipaa laws have anything provided to the family? So where's, where's my child becomes a question that Nomi Louisville can support the family and, our education courses are amazing for them as well and probably the most important part.

85 "Harward, Sonya" (4084726528)

00:40:20.190 --> 00:40:37.740

As they get connected with others and hope resides again. We talked a bit about this not mental health, not discriminating. It's gonna find you in any zip code that you're in and any district that you cover.

86 "Harward, Sonya" (4084726528)

00:40:37.740 --> 00:40:53.640

But there's more segregation to that as well that we're, we're aware of. So we we have provided programming that is specific to certain

populations to make sure everyone feels inclusive and gets the resources that they need and can talk openly.

87 "Harward, Sonya" (4084726528)

00:40:53.640 --> 00:41:13.640

About things that may only affect certain folks of certain backgrounds. This is our impact statement and I think it's pretty sound. We reach over 10000 people a year. We have presented over a hundred presentations to workplaces and.

88 "Harward, Sonya" (4084726528)

00:41:13.640 --> 00:41:36.540

Schools in the past year. We have 45 workplace partners that we're working with in our stigma free workplace. Over 3000 people attended our support groups in education classes. We actually have a thousand attendees of support groups every month, but as you can imagine, some of those people come every month, so we don't get to count them three times.

89 "Harward, Sonya" (4084726528)

00:41:36.540 --> 00:41:54.300

The thousand students who have been educated and empowered because of our work. And this is Mary's turn. I have with me Mary Dawson, she is our board vice chair, and she has a story she'd like to share with you guys.

90 "Harward, Sonya" (4084726528)

00:41:54.300 --> 00:42:19.790

Everyone hear me? 1st of all, I want to thank you all for allowing me to be here today to speak. I'm gonna read a little bit, which I typically don't do, but I know I have limited time and I can go on and on about the most beautiful son that one could have. And that is my.

91 "Harward, Sonya" (4084726528)

00:42:19.790 --> 00:42:37.980

And Alex. When people ask me why I am so passionate about mental health, the answer is simple. My son Alex. Alex was a gifted. He was identified as gifted and talented both intellectually and artistically.

92 "Harward, Sonya" (4084726528)

00:42:37.980 --> 00:42:55.860

He was an extraordinary visual artist, in fact, the art that you see on the screen of his cousins, he drew that when he was twelve years old and the tiger that this picture doesn't do justice to he drew when he was 14.

93 "Harward, Sonya" (4084726528)

00:42:55.860 --> 00:43:15.860

Amazingly talented and you did not get that from me. He was deeply empathetic, almost to a fault it was amazing how much of an empath Alex was incredibly sensitive and one of the kindest.

94 "Harward, Sonya" (4084726528)

00:43:15.860 --> 00:43:33.300

People you would ever meet, but Alex suffered. He lived with anxiety, depression, and ADHD. More than anything though, he suffered from low self esteem. He believed that his illness.

95 "Harward, Sonya" (4084726528)

00:43:33.300 --> 00:43:53.300

Was his fault, and he carried shame. That shame became so powerful that it convinced him he was alone, even though he wasn't. He had friends who loved him, he had a family who loved him. He had people who had.

96 "Harward, Sonya" (4084726528)

00:43:53.300 --> 00:44:15.510

Would have done anything to help him. But mental illness has a way of convincing people that they are a burden, that NO one will understand and that they should keep their pain to themselves. He was so loved and so loving, and wanted to include a photo here of Alex just two days before we lost him.

97 "Harward, Sonya" (4084726528)

00:44:15.510 --> 00:44:34.050

Alex loved his little nice salary. He was so compassionate and loving and she loved him and he was so proud in this picture because we sat down on the floor that morning and he built this little Tyke's ice cream truck, and the joy that he found.

98 "Harward, Sonya" (4084726528)

00:44:34.050 --> 00:44:50.520

And rolling back and forth that little truck for my knees to me speaks volumes that I could show to all of you how just loving he was.

99 "Harward, Sonya" (4084726528)

00:44:50.520 --> 00:45:06.300

But that shame became so powerful that it convinced him he was alone. Again, I think I may have already read this, so please forgive me. He had friends who loved him, he had family who loved him. He had people who have done anything to help him, but mental illness again.

100 "Harward, Sonya" (4084726528)

00:45:06.300 --> 00:45:21.930

As a way of convincing people that they are a burden, that NO one will understand, and that they should keep the pain to themselves. Sadly as a parent, I found often, particularly within the school system, that this is true.

101 "Harward, Sonya" (4084726528)

00:45:21.930 --> 00:45:41.250

Even if counselors or teachers or others within the school system realize it or not, when a child is disorganized, when a child isn't performing up to par, Alex was in a gifted and talented school, there were expectations, and when his grades fell.

102 "Harward, Sonya" (4084726528)

00:45:41.250 --> 00:45:59.160

I got a letter that they were going to kick him out that did not sit well and it took a fight. But they instead of realizing that Alex was gifted and talented and that he was contributing.

103 "Harward, Sonya" (4084726528)

00:45:59.160 --> 00:46:14.940

To the school and to the future that he could become as an individual, they kind of put that stigma on him and, and they were going to let him go. Luckily we got him on an IEP and he and he stayed.

104 "Harward, Sonya" (4084726528)

00:46:14.940 --> 00:46:32.820

We were fortunate in many ways. We had excellent insurance, we found an outstanding psychiatrist and therapist. Alex received wonderful clinical care, and we asked this day, so very, very grateful for the professionals who cared for him.

105 "Harward, Sonya" (4084726528)

00:46:32.820 --> 00:46:52.820

But there was something he never received. No one ever told us about Nami. No one told us there was a community of people who understood because they had lived it themselves. No one had told us there were families who could have helped us carry the fear, the uncertainty and the isolation.

106 "Harward, Sonya" (4084726528)

00:46:52.820 --> 00:47:09.300

Most importantly, NO one told Alex there were appears who truly understood what he was experiencing. People who knew that depression is depression isn't something you simply shake off. That if you just get out of bed and go exercise, it's gonna be a miracle cure.

107 "Harward, Sonya" (4084726528)

00:47:09.300 --> 00:47:29.300

Because what that does is they bring the shame on more unintentionally. People who knew that depression, people who know that depression isn't something again that you just shake off, people who understood the anxiety that kept him from driving.

108 "Harward, Sonya" (4084726528)

00:47:29.300 --> 00:47:54.620

People who could honestly tell him this is not your fault. He would have had someone who could listen without judgment because they had been there themselves. Someone who could as much as they loved him simply couldn't. Alex didn't want to burden the people he loved, so instead he suffered in silence. He went to his appointments, he answers doctor's questions, he took his medications, he did everything that was.

109 "Harward, Sonya" (4084726528)

00:47:54.620 --> 00:48:18.720

Asked of him. But every time he came home, he seemed a little more defeated slipping further into same shame and isolation. There are so many will never know all those answers. But I also know I will never stop asking them. And that is exactly what I do not want for another parent and I do not want for another child.

110 "Harward, Sonya" (4084726528)

00:48:18.720 --> 00:48:35.310

I don't want another child to believe they have to suffer alone. I don't want another family to discover too late that there was community waiting to help them all along. Clinical care is essential. Ladies and gentlemen. It saves lives.

111 "Harward, Sonya" (4084726528)

00:48:35.310 --> 00:48:55.310

I am forever grateful for the clinical care that Alex received. The clinical care is only part of the healing. What Alex needed and what I needed was understanding, connection, hope. A community that could say we've been where you are and you don't have to walk this road alone. That is what Nami provides.

112 "Harward, Sonya" (4084726528)

00:48:55.310 --> 00:49:13.320

Nami does not replace psychiatrist therapists or hospitals, it complements them. It fills the space between appointments, the evenings when fears, creeps in, the moments when families don't know where to turn, and the lonelineliness that mental illness so often creates. That is why I tell Alex's story.

113 "Harward, Sonya" (4084726528)

00:49:13.320 --> 00:49:32.730

Because I believe that if I can help just one young person realize that they are not alone or one parent find hope before despair, then Alex's life continues to make a difference. And that is why I will never stop advocating for Nami louble. I thank you so much.

114 "Harward, Sonya" (4084726528)

00:49:32.730 --> 00:49:51.240

Thank you, Mary. Thank you. Alex, thank you mr. chair. And I I just want to say 1st, you know, I'm terribly sorry for your loss and thank you for sharing your son's story and.

115 "Harward, Sonya" (4084726528)

00:49:51.240 --> 00:50:11.240

His beautiful drawings and he's beautiful. Thank you so much. I appreciate that. What can the city do to best help support Nami? Well, at this point, I'd really like more visibility, more awareness, bringing us out to your communities, connecting us with partners, business partners or you know.

116 "Harward, Sonya" (4084726528)

00:50:11.240 --> 00:50:29.610

Community leaders will really help to deliver that message. Again, our plan is to grow exponentially over the next five years, and my hope is that that will NO longer be an issue, but this is that, that time the wheel is rolling and we need your support there.

117 "Harward, Sonya" (4084726528)

00:50:29.610 --> 00:50:49.610

I like, you know, many feel we never want to hear the story that Mary had to share. And I hear it far too often, and it's because people don't

know. I think of both the families of the recent losses on mental health calls by LMPD didn't know we were there either. They could.

118 "Harward, Sonya" (4084726528)

00:50:49.610 --> 00:51:14.130

Couldn't come out and bring theirself in their loved one to our programs. And so episodes that were out of their control occurred. They, these are serious opportunities for people, but they, they just don't know that we're there and we're not as connected as we should be in some of parts of town. So again, that's really my biggest ask because.

119 "Harward, Sonya" (4084726528)

00:51:14.130 --> 00:51:34.130

Ultimately, the resilience, the early intervention, and the development of community is what is going to change. This trajectory of our current mental health crisis. That is where Nami sits. We are, we need to be visible and we need to be there before the crisis happens.

120 "Harward, Sonya" (4084726528)

00:51:34.130 --> 00:51:57.350

And if I can kind of add to that, when you ask what this committee can do is exactly what you're doing today and that is giving us a seat at the table. Giving us an opportunity to come in and really tell you how we bridge the gap, because you're not gonna make a difference in mental health just from a clinical standpoint and you're not gonna reduce stigma.

121 "Harward, Sonya" (4084726528)

00:51:57.350 --> 00:52:25.260

If we don't give an opportunity for the humanity to come in for those who are dealing with mental illness, how can we partner with this committee when we go into the workplace? You know, how can we collaborate when we're going in and providing presentations? Maybe not just on stigma reduction, but maybe it is going in and making it a safe place and teaching, you know, leaders that.

122 "Harward, Sonya" (4084726528)

00:52:25.260 --> 00:52:45.260

You're only gonna come and ask for help in as much as you're safe for asking for that help. And as an organization, we're looking to build that awareness and we are looking to build the partnerships with each of you and with each of the city agencies so that we have a well rounded.

123 "Harward, Sonya" (4084726528)

00:52:45.260 --> 00:53:05.660

Way to address mental illness at a time and suicide and youth at a time when we're at a crisis and I'm sorry again that I'm going on and on, I tend to do that. Anyone else? I love the record reflect that I have been, we have been joined by dr..

124 "Harward, Sonya" (4084726528)

00:53:05.660 --> 00:53:12.472

Mccranee, and you are recognized Council mccranee.

125 "Paula McCraney" (292661760)

00:53:12.472 --> 00:53:33.249

Thank you, mr. Chairman. I want to ask the question. I think you mentioned something about having a seat at the table. If we were wanting to have a neighborhood meeting, would you be open to an invitation to come and talk with our constituents about this issue?

126 "Harward, Sonya" (4084726528)

00:53:33.249 --> 00:53:53.340

Absolutely, and as Nancy was out hundred percent of the time. Absolutely, we would bring our wellness wheels, we have materials on site. The beautiful thing about wellness wheels again and one of the beautiful things about our program is that we are not just supporting the individual. We're supporting the family. When we go into a school.

127 "Harward, Sonya" (4084726528)

00:53:53.340 --> 00:54:18.969

Counselors need support as well, so not only do we have information for the counselors, but we have information for moms and dads, we have information for the children. So we would not only come in and and talk to your constituents, but we would come in prepared in any way that you need us to to provide support and education material. And we of course would love to work with you in advance to target that discussion around some of the things that you're experiencing in your neighborhood.

128 "Paula McCraney" (292661760)

00:54:18.969 --> 00:54:57.089

I would like that. Thank you so much because we recently had an issue where a fellow locked himself into his home and he was experiencing a mental breakdown and and I'm so fortunate to have the London police department and the st. Matthews police department that were both in the scene, on the scene to assist him and they talked him through it. It took 6 h. And so I just think I need to have a meeting just in case there are others in the community, in the district that I served that could could just use some information that especially on how to help their loved ones.

129 "Harward, Sonya" (4084726528)

00:54:57.089 --> 00:55:17.330

Well, and then you mentioned law enforcement having to come in and be involved. Nami has, we were the originators of the crisis intervention training decades ago at LMPD. We work with LMPD, we work with the detention center, and so we would love to work with any of these community.

130 "Harward, Sonya" (4084726528)

00:55:17.330 --> 00:55:52.453

Law enforcements, you know, st. Matthews comes to mind when you said that J Town I know has one shoply I believe. So again, if your neighborhood has, a law department or a police department that is not connected with LMPD and you feel that your officers could use some training, please let us know. It is all about safely managing that situation and will bring in either a family member or an individual with lived experience and law

enforcement connection to help solidify that story, to tell them what went right, what went wrong.

131 "Paula McCraney" (292661760)

00:55:52.453 --> 00:55:58.650

Thank you so, so much. Yeah.

132 "Harward, Sonya" (4084726528)

00:55:58.650 --> 00:56:07.740

Ma'am, I am a proud product of therapy many years of it.

133 "Harward, Sonya" (4084726528)

00:56:07.740 --> 00:56:27.740

I at one point during my work was the diagnosis clinically depressed. I never turned that corner luckily, for whatever stroke of luck or happenstance. I'm so sorry that that happened to you and to him. But I think it's incredibly important that you're.

134 "Harward, Sonya" (4084726528)

00:56:27.740 --> 00:56:29.430

Here to talk about this.

135 "Harward, Sonya" (4084726528)

00:56:29.430 --> 00:56:49.430

To let people know out there watching that especially younger people, especially younger men who are often afraid to ask for help. It's not a sign of weakness and they need to know that and I'm so grateful that you two are here especially you ma'am and are sharing that with everybody I'm certain he will be proud of you.

136 "Harward, Sonya" (4084726528)

00:56:49.430 --> 00:56:58.590

For doing so. Oh gosh, thank you. He was so private, so sometimes I wonder he was very private. But yes, and I I think again, you know.

137 "Harward, Sonya" (4084726528)

00:56:58.590 --> 00:57:18.590

Congratulations for being in therapy. I've been in therapy for many years. We were in family therapy. Alex was in therapy. You know, again, one of the unique things, I don't know if anything I said resonated to you. If you agree, that maybe part of what was missing from your clinical support was again that.

138 "Harward, Sonya" (4084726528)

00:57:18.590 --> 00:57:31.230

Feeling that I actually have someone to talk to that I know isn't gonna look at me in my mind I'm thinking and and look down or not understand and that they truly do understand.

139 "Harward, Sonya" (4084726528)

00:57:31.230 --> 00:57:50.610

And I really want to reiterate when we're talking about young men or young children, one of the things that also makes Nami very unique and one of the things that we've worked really hard on as an organization

over the last few years is that many of our programs when we go into school are peer led by youth.

140 "Harward, Sonya" (4084726528)

00:57:50.610 --> 00:58:07.650

Obviously, it it escalates up to, to adults, but when you're sitting in a room full of your own peers and you're approaching mental illness on their level in a relatable way, whether it's talking about a musician, whether it's talking about.

141 "Harward, Sonya" (4084726528)

00:58:07.650 --> 00:58:26.010

All of a sudden you're opening up a door that a counselor may have been trying to open for months so just trying to, you know, really educate us all today and thank you for again, yeah. Alright.

142 "Harward, Sonya" (4084726528)

00:58:26.010 --> 00:58:46.010

Thank you all so much for being here. I really appreciate your your time and your passion and we're grateful. Very much, yeah. Thank you guys. All right. Without objection, we are adjourned.