



TOWN OF LEDYARD CONNECTICUT

741 Colonel Ledyard Highway
Ledyard, Connecticut 06339

Community Relations Committee

~ AGENDA ~

Chairman S. Naomi
Rodriguez

Regular Meeting

Wednesday, January 17, 2024

6:30 PM

Town Hall Annex - Hybrid Format

In -Person: Council Chambers, Town Hall Annex Building

Remote Participation Information is noted below:

Join Zoom Meeting from your Computer, Smart Phone or Tablet:

<https://us06web.zoom.us/j/84756205160?pwd=qqGTBzaY9K27ZFJrlZcxOnyvYWtJOf.1>

Or by Audio Only: Telephone: +1 646 558 8656; +Meeting ID: 847 5620 5160; Passcode: 489976

- I. CALL TO ORDER
- II. ROLL CALL
- III. RESIDENTS & PROPERTY OWNERS COMMENTS
- IV. PRESENTATIONS / INFORMATIONAL ITEMS
- V. APPROVAL OF MINUTES

MOTION to approve the following:

- Organizational Meeting Minutes of December 20, 2023
- Regular Meeting Minutes of December 20, 2023

Attachments: [CR-MIN-2023-12-20-ORGANIZATIONAL.pdf](#)
[COMM REL-MIN-2023-12-20.pdf](#)

VI. OLD BUSINESS

- 1. Discuss the 2024 Black History Activity/Contest.
- 2. Continued discussion and possible action draft a schedule for Public Information Forums to present to residents the types of services the town offers; how to access services and the authority residents should direct concerns regarding services.

Attachments: [Farmers Market Booths- Guest Schedule-2022-05-10.docx](#)

- 3. Continued discussion and possible action to identify various town venues to host “Informal Conversations in the Park” to engage residents in discussions regarding their concerns and their ideas for potential solutions.

4. Any other Old Business proper to come before the Committee

VII. NEW BUSINESS

1. Discussion regarding ideas to increase communication/transparency with residents.
2. Any other New Business proper to come before the Committee.

VIII. ADJOURNMENT

DISCLAIMER: Although we try to be timely and accurate these are not official records of the Town.



TOWN OF LEDYARD

741 Colonel Ledyard
Highway
Ledyard, CT 06339-1511

File #: 24-0023

Agenda Date: 1/17/2024

Agenda #:

MINUTES

Minutes:

MOTION to approve the following:

- Organizational Meeting Minutes of December 20, 2023
- Regular Meeting Minutes of December 20, 2023



TOWN OF LEDYARD
CONNECTICUT
TOWN COUNCIL
HYBRID FORMAT

741 Colonel Ledyard Highway
Ledyard, CT 06339

860 464-3203
Administrative Assistant
Roxanne Maher

Chairman S. Naomi Rodriguez

MINUTES
COMMUNITY RELATIONS COMMITTEE
ORGANIZATIONAL MEETING

Wednesday, December 20, 2023

6:15 PM

Annex Meeting Room, Annex Building

DRAFT

- I. **CALL TO ORDER** – The Community Relations Committee Organizational Meeting was called to order by Committee Chairman Brunelle at 6:15 p.m.

Councilor Brunelle welcomed all to the Hybrid Meeting. She stated for the Town Council Community Relations Committee and members of the Public who were participating via video conference that the remote meeting information was available on the Agenda that was posted on the Town’s Website – Granicus-Insite Meeting Portal.

- II. **ROLL CALL** –

Attendee Name	Title	Status	Arrived	Location	Departed
April Brunelle	Committee Chairman	Present	6:15 pm	In-Person	6:18 pm
Gary Paul	Town Councilor	Present	6:15 pm	In-Person	6:18 pm
Gary St. Vil	Town Councilor	Present	6:15 pm	Remote	6:18 pm
Kristen Chapman	Executive Assistant to Mayor	Present	6:15 pm	In-Person	6:18 pm

- III. **BUSINESS OF MEETING**

1. **MOTION** to set the Community Relations Committee’s Regular Meeting schedule for the 2024 Calendar Year to be the third Wednesday of the month at 6:30 p.m. in the Town Hall Annex Building as noted below:

Community Relations Committee (3rd Wednesday, Annex Building 6:30 p.m).

January 17	February 21	March 20	April 17
May 15	June 19	July 17	August 21
September 18	October 16	November 20	December 18
January 15, 2025			

Moved by Councilor Paul, seconded by Councilor St. Vil
Discussion: None.

VOTE: 3 – 0 Approved and so declared

RESULT: 3 – 0 APPROVED [UNANIMOUS]
MOVER: Gary Paul, Town Councilor
SECONDER: Gary St. Vil, Town Councilor
AYES: April Brunelle, Gary Paul, Gary St. Vil

2. The Community Relations Committee briefly reviewed outstanding action items contained in the memo dated October 26, 2023.

Councilor Paul explained that to provide for a seamless transition and for continuity the Town Council and its Subcommittees have traditionally identified and forwarded to the incoming Committee business items they believed warranted additional attention/action.

Councilor Paul went on to state that because the previous Community Relations Committee agreed that the following items were important outstanding/ongoing matters, they were hopeful that this new Committee would also like to continue with the work that has been done on them:

1. 2024 Black History Activity/Contest.
2. Community Outreach Informational Forums at the Ledyard Farmers Market regarding the services the town offers; how to access services, and the authority residents should direct concerns regarding services.
3. Host “*Informal Conversations in the Park*” to engage residents in discussions regarding their concerns and their ideas for potential solutions.

Councilor Paul stated that the Committee would discuss these items in more detail at their Regular Meeting that was scheduled for 6:30 p.m. this evening.

RESULT: COMPLETED

- IV. COMMENTS OF COMMITTEE MEMBERS – None.

RESULT: COMPLETED

- V. ADJOURNMENT

Councilor Paul moved the meeting be adjourned, seconded by Councilor St. Vil.
VOTE: 3 - 0 Approved and so declared, the meeting was adjourned at 6:18 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

April Brunelle
Committee Chairman
Community Relations Committee



TOWN OF LEDYARD
CONNECTICUT
TOWN COUNCIL

741 Colonel Ledyard Highway
Ledyard, CT 06339
<http://www.ledyardct.org>
Administrative Assistant
Roxanne M. Maher
860 464-3203

Chairman S. Naomi Rodriguez

HYBRID FORMAT
MINUTES
COMMUNITY RELATIONS COMMITTEE
REGULAR MEETING

Wednesday, December 20, 2023

6:30 PM

Town Hall Annex-Video Conference

DRAFT

- I. CALL TO ORDER – The Meeting was called to order by Councilor Brunelle at 6:30 p.m. at the Annex Meeting Room - Town Hall Annex Building.

Councilor Brunelle welcomed all to the Hybrid Meeting. She stated for the Town Council Community Relations Committee and members of the Public who were participating via video conference that the remote meeting information was available on the Agenda that was posted on the Town’s Website – Granicus-Insite Meeting Portal.

II. ROLL CALL-

Attendee Name	Title	Status	Arrived	Location	Departed
April Brunelle	Committee Chairman	Present	6:30 pm	In-Person	6:53 pm
Gary Paul	Town Councilor	Present	6:30 pm	In-Person	6:53 pm
Gary St. Vil	Town Councilor	Present	6:30 pm	Remote	6:53 pm
Kristen Chapman	Executive Assistant to Mayor	Present	6:30 pm	In-Person	6:53 pm

III. CITIZENS' COMMENTS – None

IV. INFORMATIONAL ITEMS

1. Ms. Ginina Diaz email dated 11/30/2023 re: Black History Month Suggestions -Article - Braiding Workshop.

Councilor Paul noted that he read Ms. Diaz’s email.

Councilor St. Vil stated the proposed Braiding Workshop would be a good component to a Black History Celebration Event. However, he stated in and of itself that he thought that the braiding workshop would need to be supplemented with some other items. He stated the braiding of hair was a technique and tool that may be used widely, not only in

the black community. He noted as an example that he would be visiting Aruba later this month and that there would be a lot of folks who were not of African descent that would have their hair braided.

Councilor St. Vil went on to state if their goal was to have a Black History Month where they were promulgating Black History that there were some additional elements that should go along with the braiding workshop; noting that they would have to think about what those other elements would be.

Councilor Brunelle noted in the past the Community Relations Committee supported a Black History Month Poster Contest. She also noted Ms. Diaz's October 13, 2023 email in which she expressed concerns that no High School Students participated in the 2023 Black History Month Contest.

Councilor Paul stated that he could provide additional information on what has been done in the past to recognize Black History Month when they get to Item #1 on tonight's agenda.

IV. REVIEW AND APPROVAL OF MINUTES

MOTION to approve the Regular Meeting Minutes of October 18, 2023
Moved by Councilor Paul, seconded by Councilor St. Vil.

VOTE: 3 - 0 Approved and so declared

VI. BUSINESS OF THE MEETING

1. Black History Month 2024 Activity/Contest.

Councilor Paul provided some background noting that the Community Relations Committee started supporting a Black History Month Activity/Contest two years ago with the Twenty-sixth Town Council. He noted that although Councilor Rodriguez was not a member of the Community Relations Committee that she took on the Project and worked with the Principals of each of the schools in town and also offered the Program to kids that were home schooled in Ledyard through on-line postings. He stated the idea was to unite the community and celebrate Black History Month.

Councilor Paul stated the first year the Black History Month Activity was held it involved an Essay Contest for the High School and Middle School Students and a Poster Contest for the Elementary School Students, that was broken out as follows:

- Poster Contest for Kindergarten – Grade 2; and for Grade 3 – Grade 5.
- Essay Contest for Middle School and High School students.

Councilor Paul stated the Contests were voluntary and he stated the following members of the community served as Judges: Mashantucket Pequot Tribal Council Member and

Education Committee Chairwoman Crystal Whipple, Police Sergeant McKinney, Councilor Rodriguez and himself. He stated Mayor Fred Allyn, III, awarded the Elementary School Poster Contest winners their prizes at each of their schools with their peers; and that the Black History Month Posters were displayed in Town Hall. He stated prizes were awarded to Essay Contest Winners at a Town Council Meeting and that the Middle School and High School Students along with their families attended the meeting to receive their prizes and to be recognized by the community for their good work.

Councilor Paul went on to explain in 2023 that there was some miscommunication with getting the Essay Contest out to the High School Students; and therefore, they did not have any High School Students participate in the Essay Contest.

Councilor Paul stated the Community Relations Committee believed that Black History Month was an important Program that should be continued within the community. He stated over the last two years the Community Relations Committee learned that their role should be to support, promote, and encourage other community organizations to facilitate the event, noting that a Town Committee should not be taking on that role. He stated the Community Relations Committee thought that the Schools should take on the Program noting that learning about Black History was a good fit through the education system, and that the Library should be involved as well, but that other community organizations could also take on the initiative. He went on to explain that during the past two years the Committee also found that it was important to recognize the students at a Town Council meeting, noting that the kids loved attending the Town Council meeting, and that he was impressed with their posters, essays, and to learn through the student's eyes about how they viewed black history. He stated that he enjoyed seeing how proud the students and their families were of their accomplishments.

Councilor Paul stated that Ms. Diaz has provided some good ideas for the Black History Month Program. He suggested for this coming year that the Community Relations Committee find other groups who would be willing to take on the Black History Program and facilitate some of the ideas and suggestions provided by residents.

Councilor Paul stated that Councilor Rodriguez took-on the entire Program, noting that she funded things, and that she and put a lot of time, resources, and energy into making the Black History Month Activity happen for Ledyard. He stated the work that she did was amazing. He stated where the Community Relations Committee goes from here was open for discussion. He stated the more exposure the Black History Month Program had that it would encourage and promote more ideas that could be done in the community. He stated that the previous Community Relations Committee also discussed focusing on a different theme each year such as local black history for the essays and posters, etc. He stated when Chairman Rodriguez returns that she could provide more information, noting that she had taken the lead on the Black History Month Activities.

Councilor Brunelle suggested the Community Relations Committee again contact the Schools, the Library, and possibly Art Museums such as the Florence Griswold Museum in Old Lyme. She stated that she would contact the Florence Griswold Museum, and she asked Councilor Paul to contact the Library; and for Councilor St. Vil to contact the Schools.

Councilor St. Vil thanked Councilor Paul for providing the background regarding the Community Relations Committee’s work to date regarding the Black History Month Activities. He stated it provided a lot of clarity of what the Community Relations Committee’s role is or has been in the past. He stated this work has provided for an opportunity, however, he noted that nationally Black History Month was celebrated in February, commenting that they did not have a lot of time to prepare for a 2024 Event. However, he stated that perhaps they could partner with an organization to help facilitate the program. He concluded his remarks by responding to Councilor Brunelle’s request noting that he would contact the Schools to discuss their interest/role in the Black History Month Program.

Councilor Brunelle noted that Community Relations Committee would continue to discuss the Black History Month Program at their January 17, 2024 meeting.

RESULT: CONTINUED

Next Meeting: 01/17/2024 6:30 p.m.

2. Schedule for Public Informational Forums to present to residents the types of services the town offers; how to access services, and the authority residents should direct concerns regarding services.

Councilor Paul provided some background noting when the Community Relations Committee was reinstated in 2020 their role was to act as a conduit to provide information and to help direct residents to the Department that could best address their concerns/needs. He stated the Community Relations Committee held several Informational Forums at which various Departments gave PowerPoint presentations regarding the services they provided to residents; and to answer residents questions. However, he stated they found that the Informational Forums, which were held in a Hybrid Format, noting that the videos were available on the town’s meeting portal, were not well attended by residents. Therefore, he stated the Twenty-sixth Town Council Community Relations Committee (2022) decided to bring the information out to the residents, using the Farmers Market as the venue to host Outreach Events featuring a variety of services that included the following:

2023- Outreach Events

- ***July 19, 2023 Mental Health Awareness***

Councilor Paul stated this was the second year the Community Relations Committee helped to facilitate an Outreach Event to bring awareness of the many Organizations and Programs that were available to residents pertaining to Mental Health. He stated many of the Organizations who participated in 2022 came back again this year (2023), with the new addition of SERAC, who was a non-profit organization located in Norwich that served 41 communities in Eastern Connecticut. He stated SERAC provides programs and services to reduce the impact of substance abuse, problem gambling, and mental health challenges.

- **August 30, 2023 - Library Services**

Councilor Paul stated the Farmers’ Market August 30, 2023 Theme was “*Back to School*”. He stated that Ledyard Libraries joined the Community Relations Committee under the Town of Ledyard Tent to sign folks up with Library Cards, to provide information regarding the many resources and diverse programs the Library provides for all age groups; and to hand out clues for folks to participate a Special Scavenger Hunt at the Bill Library that evening. He stated Library Director Jennifer Smith and her Team have been doing an incredible job at the Libraries with engaging the community.

- **September 20, 2023 First Responders Hometown Heros**

Councilor Paul stated in keeping with the Farmers’ Market September 13, 2023 the *Hometown Hero* theme that the Community Relations Committee planned an outreach event to recognize the heroic actions of their First Responders; and to provide information to residents who were interested in a career in firefighting or law enforcement; noting that there were opportunities to serve as a volunteer in the field of First Responders. However, he stated the event was rescheduled to September 20, 2023 due to rain. He stated although the Community Relations Committee was not able to attend the September 20, 2023 Farmers Market, because of the Town Council meeting, that the town’s First Responders (Firefighters and Police Department) attended the Market to provide information to residents which would have been provided at the September 13, 2023 Market.

Councilor Paul went on to note that volunteers were what made their town run, and he stated that the Community Relations Committee put together a handout that listed the town’s twenty-three Committee/Commission/Boards and their vacancies that could be found on the town’s website at: <http://ledyardct.org>. He also stated the QR Code below would also take residents directly to the to the List of Committee/Commission/ Boards and the vacancies that were available, where they could apply on-line.



2022- Outreach Events

- **June 29, 2022 First Responders – Hometown Heros**

- ✓ Police Body Worn Cameras & In-Car Camera Equipment – Demonstrations were provided.
- ✓ Blue & Green Envelope Program – Councilor Paul stated this Program was for individuals functioning with Autism (Blue Envelope) or were Hearing Impaired (Green Envelope). He provided some background explaining that “*The Blue & Green Envelope*” was created by the State Legislature and went into effect on January 1, 2020. He stated the *Envelopes* were available at all Police Stations, Department of Motor Vehicle locations, driving schools, and through Autism Advocacy Groups. He stated the purpose of *The Blue & Green Envelope* was:

- To hold the driver's license, registration, and insurance card so they can hand it to the Police Officer during a traffic stop,
- The outside of the *Blue & Green Envelopes* included tips and instructions for both the Police Officer and Driver on how to successfully communicate with each other during a traffic stop.

• **August 31, 2022 – Winter Preparations**

- ✓ Information to prepare for Winter – Social Services Coordinator, Senior Citizens Municipal Agent, Tax Assessor, Public Works
 - Home Heating Assistance/Propane
 - Renters Assistance/Renters Rebate Program
 - TVCCA Meals for shut-ins (Meals on Wheels)
 - Food Pantry
 - Public Works Snow Plowing/Mailbox Height
 - No Interest Loans for home improvements (replace furnaces/new roof/new septic system)
 - Elderly/Disabled Veterans Tax Relief (Ordinance #200-004; #200-005; #200-006)

Councilor Paul stated the former Community Relations Committee chose three subjects/service areas to feature at the Farmers' Markets and tried to include a variety of subject matters. He noted that the Outreach Events noted above were the subjects the previous Committee chose last year (2023) and the year before (2022). He also explained that the Community Relations Committee would try to coordinate their Outreach Event with the Farmers' Market Weekly Themes.

Councilor Brunelle stated she would like to see the Community Relations Committee continue the Outreach Events, noting that they were great. She stated that she would like to see the Animal Control Officer be included in the Hometown Heros noting that they helped lost dogs be reunited with their families and they respond to other animal issues in town. She stated that the Animal Control Office was also looking for volunteers and that they also held animal adoption events throughout the year.

Councilor Brunelle stated that once the Farmers' Market Committee sets their weekly 2024 Theme Schedule the Community Relations Committee could work to determine the subjects/services they would like to feature and coordinate their outreach events with the Farmers' Market schedule.

RESULT: CONTINUED

Next Meeting: 01/16/2023 6:30 p.m.

3. Identify various town venues to host “*Informal Conversations in the Park*” to engage residents in discussions regarding their concerns and their ideas for potential solutions.

Councilor Paul provided some background noting in hearing residents’ concerns about graffiti, lack of lighting, and other illicit behavior that was occurring at the Park on East Drive (Chrisy Hill) that the Community Relations Committee held an Informal Conversation Gathering at the Park on July 20, 2022 with the residents in the area, noting that the Committee sent a letter inviting the neighbors to the Gathering. He stated Parks & Recreation Director Scott Johnson, Jr. and many Town Councilors also attended the event. He stated because it was an Informal Gathering that no minutes were taken and that during their conversation with the residents that they discovered that there was a lot of miscommunication, explaining that the residents did not know who to contact, where the authority lied, or what was already in the works.

Councilor Paul went on to explain with the concerted efforts of the Parks & Recreation Department, Public Works Department, and the Police Department that the Park on East Drive was now beautiful. He stated that brush was removed, it was now well lite, the parking lot was done, a new playscape and woodchips were installed, and residents were enjoying the Park. He stated the Police Chief indicated that they have not had any issues at the Park on East Drive over the past year. He stated this was a great example of what the Community Relations Committee was all about, noting that they all came together for a positive outcome for the town.

Councilor Paul went on to comment that during regular meetings that residents know they have three minutes to talk on the record. However, he stated they found by having an Informal Gathering that folks spoke more freely, and because they had some back-and-forth conversation that they were better able to get to the bottom of things.

Councilor Paul explained that the idea/intent to host Informal Conversations in the Park was to identify issues that residents were interested in talking about and to obtain feedback to bring back to the Community Relations Committee/Town Council and/or other Town Committees/Commissions to address.

Councilor Paul went on to explain that the previous Committee was hoping to host an Informal Gathering at the new Lantern Hill Waterfront Park (Long Pond), which was the property Mr. and Mrs. Graham donated to the town (leased for \$10 per year). He stated the objective would be to showcase the Lantern Hill Waterfront Park and to provide some history regarding Long Pond and to engage residents. However, he stated that the former Community Relations Committee ran out of time before their term ended to coordinate the event with the Parks & Recreation Commission.

Councilor Brunelle stated that she thought the Lantern Hill Waterfront Park Informal Gathering, as Councilor Paul described, was a good idea that they could perhaps do this Summer, 2024. Councilor Paul stated that he would be happy to contact Mrs. Betsy Graham to participate in the event and to provide some historical background regarding Long Pond.

Councilor Brunelle continued by noting that the Tri-Town Trail was also looking to involve residents, stating that this was another Informal Gathering that could be done in the Spring/Summer 2024.

Councilor Paul stated the Community Relations Committee’s goal for the Informal Gathering/Conversations in the Park was to try to get feedback from residents regarding the issues that they could bring back to the Committee and/or the Town Council. He noted that Councilor St. Vil previously mentioned the kids in the community and he suggested they could connect with the kids to obtain some feedback from them as well.

Councilor St. Vil stated that he thought having a mechanism to stay in touch with residents to hear about the topics that were of concern to them was a great idea; and was key to their collective success. He stated although he did not have any ideas at this time, that he would put some thought into this for their next meeting.

Councilor Brunelle stated that “*Informal Conversations*” was something that the Committee could continue to work on at their January 16, 2024 meeting.

RESULT: CONTINUED	Next Meeting: 01/16/2024 6:30 p.m.
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- 4. Any other New Business proper to come before the Committee. – None.

VIII. ADJOURNMENT

Councilor Brunelle moved the meeting be adjourned, seconded by Councilor Paul.
3 – 0 Approved and so declared. The meeting was adjourned at 6:53 p.m.

VOTE:

Respectfully submitted,

April Brunelle
Committee Chairman
Community Relations Committee



TOWN OF LEDYARD

741 Colonel Ledyard
Highway
Ledyard, CT 06339-1511

File #: 22-103

Agenda Date: 1/17/2024

Agenda #: 1.

AGENDA REQUEST
GENERAL DISCUSSION ITEM

Subject:

Discuss the 2024 Black History Activity/Contest.

Background:

(type text here)

Meeting Action Detail:

Community Relations Cmt Meeting 05/17/2023

File #: [22418](#) Version: 3

Type: General Discussion

Title: Black History Month 2024 Activity/Contest

Action: No Action

Minute Note:

No Action



TOWN OF LEDYARD

741 Colonel Ledyard
Highway
Ledyard, CT 06339-1511

File #: 22-105

Agenda Date: 1/17/2024

Agenda #: 2.

AGENDA REQUEST GENERAL DISCUSSION ITEM

Subject:

Continued discussion and possible action draft a schedule for Public Information Forums to present to residents the types of services the town offers; how to access services and the authority residents should direct concerns regarding services.

Background:

(type text here)

Department Comment/Recommendation:

Meeting Action Detail:

Community Relations Committee Meeting 04/19/2023

File #: [22105](#) Version: 1

Type: General Discussion

Title: Continued discussion and possible action draft a schedule for Public Information Forums to present to residents the types of services the town offers; how to access services and the authority residents should direct concerns regarding services.

Action: Continued

Meeting Note:

Councilor Paul stated the Community Relations Committee had previously agreed that they would like to host a Booth at three Farmers' Market's this summer as follows:

- ***June 21, 2023 or July 19, 2023 - Mental Health Awareness***
- ✓ Brian Dagle Healing Hearts Foundation
- ✓ Home heating fuel through Thames Valley Council for Community Action (TVCCA) and other assistance programs.

- ✓ Utilities - Electric/Water Assistance.
- ✓ Homeowners Assistance program that provided no interest loans to help people replace their furnace, roof or septic system, etc.
- ✓ Home meal delivery available for those who cannot get out to grocery shop through Thames Valley Council for Community Action (TVCCA)
- ✓ The Linda C. Davis Food Pantry located in Ledyard Center.
- ✓ United Way located in Gales Ferry was a great resource.
- ✓ Connecticut's Paid Family Medical Leave Program
- ✓ Police Department "*Green and/or Blue Envelope*" for drivers with Autism or Hearing Impaired.

Councilor Rodriguez stated that she reached out to President Anne Dagle to see if she would be available for either of the two dates the Committee would like to feature Mental Health Awareness. She stated that she has not heard back from Ms. Dagle yet and would reach out to her again and report back to the Committee.

- ***August 30, 2023 - Library Services***

Councilor Paul stated Library Director Jennifer Smith attend the Community Relations Committee's March 15, 2023 meeting and that she was on-board with the Committee's ideas to feature the Library Services as follows:

- ✓ Community Relations Committee to host a Booth at the August 30, 2023 Farmers Market's noting that the Market Theme that week was "***Back to School***" and that the Committee felt that the Library services would be in-keeping with the Market Theme. At their Booth the Community Relations Committee would provide literature regarding the services the Library offered and refer residents to stop by the Library Open House.
- ✓ Open House - The Library would hold an Open House at the same time the Community Relations Committee was hosting a booth at the Farmers Market. When the Farmers' Market ended at 7:00 p.m. there would be an Informal Gathering at the Bill Library during which time Library Director Jennifer Smith would give a short presentation and then provide a tour of the Library to bring awareness to the many programs, services and resources the Library had to offer.

Councilor Paul stated the Community Relations Committee was hoping to broadcast live Library Presentation and Tour using Zoom. He stated although the Informational Presentations have not been well attended in the past, that residents could view the zoom video recording at any time, noting it would be posted on the town's website, as they did with the Public Works Department Presentation.

- ***September 19, 2023 First Responders - Volunteers "Home Town Heroes"***

Councilor Paul stated the Farmers Market Theme for September 19, 2023 was "***Home Town Heroes***". Therefore, he suggested that the Community Relations Committee use that week to promote the many organizations and committees that are operated with volunteers from the community. He stated that perhaps they could provide information on how people could get involved and volunteer to serve on the Ledyard or Gales Ferry Fire Department, or on a town committee/commission or board or become a Police Officer, etc.

Councilor Saums suggested the Community Relations Committee invite the following to attend their Booth that day:

- ✓ Representative from the Police Department
- ✓ Representative from the Ledyard Center Fire Company
- ✓ Representative from the Gales Ferry Fire Company
- ✓ Chairman from each of the town's committees/commissions/boards.

Councilor Saums stated that this would provide residents the opportunity to talk to someone from the Organization they were interested in to find out what that organization did, the time commitment, and how they could get involved.

- **Land Use Processes** - Councilor Paul commented on the Committee's interest to provide information to the community regarding the Land Use Process. He noted at their February 15, 2023 meeting the Community Relations Committee discussed with Land Use Director Juliet Hodge scheduling an Informational Forum to present to residents the Land Use processes relative to the approval of applications, in an effort to help residents understand the complexities involved as they relate to Regulatory, State Statutes, and the Plan of Conservation & Development (POCD), etc. He stated because the Land Use Department has been short staffed that the Land Use Informational Presentation would be deferred until Ms. Hodge could work it into her schedule.

Councilor Paul concluded by stating that he would like to have a confirmation from the Brian Dagle Foundation regarding the date they could participate before he reached out to others such as Chief Rich and Farmers' Market Committee Chairman Lauriann Hary to reserve space for a Booth on the dates the Community Relations Committee has targeted as noted above.

Community Relations Committee Meeting 03/15/2023

File #: [22105](#) Version: 1

Type: General Discussion

Title: Continued discussion and possible action draft a schedule for Public Information Forums to present to residents the types of services the town offers; how to access services and the authority residents should direct concerns regarding services.

Action: Continued

Meeting Note:

Councilor Paul noted that the Committee has been discussing the following topics for Informational Forums:

- **Land Use Processes** - Councilor Paul noted at the LUPPW Committee's March 6, 2023 that the Committee agreed to move this initiative to the Community Relations Committee.

Councilor Paul went on to note at their February 15, 2023 meeting the Community Relations Committee discussed with Land Use Director Juliet Hodge scheduling an Informational Forum to present to residents the Land Use processes relative to the approval of applications, in an effort to help residents understand the complexities involved as they relate to Regulatory, State Statutes, and the Plan of Conservation & Development (POCD), etc.

Councilor Paul suggested the Committee defer this discussion until Ms. Hodge was able to work the Informational Forum into her schedule.

- **Library Services** - Councilor Paul thanked Library Director Jennifer Smith for attending tonight's meeting. He provided some background explaining that after he met with her and learned about the many services the Library provided to the community that he wanted to help the Library get this information out to residents.

Councilor Paul stated the Community Relations Committee discussed hosting a booth to feature the Library Services at the August 30, 2023 Farmers' Market, noting that the Market Theme that week was "*Back to School*" and that the Committee felt that the library services would be in-keeping with the Market Theme. He also noted that because it was a fifth Wednesday of the month that the Town Council/Sub Committees would not have any meetings that night.

Councilor Paul went on to note that during the Committee's February 15, 2023 meeting that Councilor Saums suggested the Library hold an Open House at the same time the Community Relations Committee was hosting a booth at the Farmers Market. He stated the Community Relations Committee could provide some literature regarding the Library at their booth and then refer residents to stop by the Library Open House. He went on to note that once the Farmers' Market ended at 7:00 p.m. that perhaps they could go to the Library for an Informal Gathering to tour the Library and to bring awareness to the many programs, services and resources the Library had to offer. He stated that they would also like to broadcast the Informal Presentation using Zoom. He stated although the Informational Presentations have not been well attended, that residents could view the zoom video recording at any time, noting it would be posted on the town's website.

Library Director Jennifer Smith stated that the Library would be happy to participate in the event as Councilor Paul described, noting that she appreciated their efforts to bring awareness to the many programs and services the Library provided. She stated that the Children's Librarian has hosted a table at the Farmers' Market in the past, noting that they had tried to use their cell phones as a hot spot to issue Library Cards, however, they had issues connecting to their system due to internet. Councilor Rodriguez noted that because there was a dead spot in the area of the Town Green that the town allocated American Recovery Plan Act (ARPA) Funding to provide internet for the Food Pantry and the upper and lower Town Green. Therefore, she stated that should have good internet connection this year.

Ms. Smith stated in past years the Children's Librarian has hosted a table at the Farmers Market at the beginning of the season and again at the end of the season to bring awareness to the children programs that families could participate in during the summer vacation such as the summer reading program, story-time, 1,000 books before Kindergarten which was a free program that ran all year, and to also provide information regarding the resources and programs that were available once the kids were back in school. She also noted that the Library had a number of on-going adult programs. Councilor Paul stated that he was sorry that he was not able to attend the Star Wars Trivia Night, noting that the Library also offered many other Trivia nights. It was noted that the Events Magazine Publication, that was mailed to everyone in town, listed the many programs the Library offered such as the Seed Library and Cooking Club. Ms. Smith stated that the Library also had an electronic monthly newsletter that was e-mailed to all library card holders.

Councilor Paul asked whether the Library would have literature available regarding the Bill Library and the Gales Ferry Library for residents to pick-up. Ms. Smith stated that the Library would provide literature for folks to pick-up. However, she stated rather than telling residents about the resources the Library offered that hosting a table at the Farmers Market was also a good opportunity for the Library to ask residents about the types of programs or services they were interested in and then they could tell them about resources they offered pertaining to their interest.

Councilor Marshall questioned whether the Library sponsored day trips. Ms. Smith stated that the Library has gone off-site to places such as the Historic Up-Down Sawmill where they would provide a program and a tour of the Sawmill.

Councilor Paul thanked Ms. Smith attending tonight's meeting, noting that the Committee looked forward to working with her in preparation for this summer's Farmers' Market and the Informational Presentation later this summer.

Library Director Ms. Smith left the meeting at 7:01 p.m.

The Community Relations Committee continued to discuss their upcoming schedule for Public Information Forums and agreed that they would like to target three Farmers' Markets this summer to feature the following programs:

- ***June 21, 2023 or July 19, 2023 - Mental Health Awareness***
- ✓ Brian Dagle Healing Hearts Foundation
- ✓ Home heating fuel through Thames Valley Council for Community Action (TVCCA) and other assistance programs.
- ✓ Utilities - Electric/Water Assistance.
- ✓ Homeowners Assistance program that provided no interest loans to help people replace their furnace, roof or septic system, etc.
- ✓ Home meal delivery available for those who cannot get out to grocery shop through Thames Valley Council for Community Action (TVCCA)
- ✓ The Linda C. Davis Food Pantry located in Ledyard Center.
- ✓ United Way located in Gales Ferry was a great resource.
- ✓ Connecticut's Paid Family Medical Leave Program
- ✓ Police Department "*Green and/or Blue Envelope*" for drivers with Autism or Hearing Impaired.

Councilor Paul asked Councilor Rodriguez to contact the Brian Dagle Healing Hearts Foundation to invite them to participate at the Community Relations Committee's Farmers' Market Booth and to check on their availability.

- ***August 30, 2023 - Library Services "Back to School"***(as discussed earlier this evening- see above).
- ***September 19, 2023 First Responders "Home Town Heroes"***

Councilor Paul stated perhaps they could have a kid's activity and set up a table for them to draw a picture of their hero. He stated that a kid's hometown hero could be a Police Officer, Teacher, Firefighter, or Nurse, etc. Councilor Rodriguez offered to talk to Farmers' Market Committee Chairman Lauriann Hary about Councilor Paul's idea.

Councilor Paul stated that the Committee would continue to discuss coordinating their Schedule for Public Information Forums at their April 19, 2023 meeting.

Action: Continued

Community Relations Committee Meeting 02/15/2023

File #: [22105](#) Version: 1

Type: General Discussion

Title: Continued discussion and possible action draft a schedule for Public Information Forums to present to residents the types of services the town offers; how to access services and the authority residents should direct concerns regarding services.

Action: Continued

Meeting Note:

The Committee discussed the following topics for Informational Forums:

- **Land Use Processes** - The Community Relations Committee discussed with Land Use Director Juliet Hodge the scheduling an Informational Forum in April or May, 2023 to present to residents the Land Use processes relative to the approval of applications, in an effort to help residents understand the complexities involved as they relate to Regulatory, State Statutes, and the Plan of Conservation & Development (POCD), etc.

Councilor Paul noted that the Community Relations Committee has been discussing the format of the Informational Forum and that they would like to include a segment addressing *Frequently Asked Question* (FAQ) that would answer general/common land use questions such as: “*what the process was to build a deck, put in a swimming pool, put on an addition*”, etc. He went on to note that the Community Relations Committee would also like to include some FAQ about the approval process for commercial development as well. He stated as they did with the Public Works Informational Presentation, that they would like to post the Land Use Presentation video and FAQ Sheet on the town’s website, the meeting portal, and that it could also be linked to social media pages. Councilor Marshall noted by recording the Informational Forums that the Committee would be creating a video library that residents could view when they had questions.

The Committee and Land Use Director Juliet Hodge noted residents often ask questions such as why the town cannot attract a Trader Joes or Starbucks; or why they let the Dollar General Store open in Gales Ferry, noting the importance for residents to understand the land use process. They also discussed the limited availability of commercial property, low traffic count for marketing, proximity/location bordering the Thames River, etc.

The Group also discussed with Land Use Director Juliet Hodge the importance to publicize the Informational Forum and to ask people to submit questions in advance so that they can be addressed during the Informational Forum.

Councilor Paul suggested in preparation for the Land Use Informational Forum that they use the Community Forum to ask residents what land use questions they had.

The Committee agreed that they would like to provide the Land Use Informational Presentation in April or May, 2023.

The Committee thanked Land Use Director Juliet Hodge for attending tonight’s meeting.

Ms. Hodge left the meeting at 6:58 p.m.

- **Fraud Presentation-** The Committee noted at their January 18, 2023 meeting they had discussed inviting Sergeant McKinney to give a Presentation regarding Fraud Prevention and Awareness at their March 16, 2023 meeting.

Councilor Saums noted that the Committee also discussed holding the Fraud Prevention and Awareness at the Senior Citizens Center. However, he stated because the presentation was already given at the Senior Citizens Center, and because the location was hard to get to, the Committee planned to look for another location.

Councilor McGrattan stated Our Lady of Lourdes Ladies Guild would be sponsoring a Fraud Prevention and Awareness Presentation on Monday, February 20, 2023 at 6:30 p.m. in the Church Hall. The Guest Speaker would be Ledyard Police Sergeant Michael McKinney.

The Committee agreed to reschedule the March 16, 2023 Fraud Awareness Presentation to sometime later in the year.

- **Library Services** - Councilor Paul stated at during their January 18, 2023 meeting that the Community Relations Committee discussed doing something with the Library. He stated that they talked about hosting a booth at the Farmers' Market that would feature the Library and the many community services that they provide. He went on to note that Councilor Saums suggested the Library hold an Open House at the same time the Community Relations Committee was hosting a booth at the Farmers Market. He stated the Community Relations Committee could provide some literature regarding the Library at their booth and then refer residents to stop by the Library Open House.

Councilor McGrattan, Library Commission Liaison, suggested the Committee Relations Committee host an Informational Forum at the Library, noting by bringing residents into the Library that they could see all the different services and programs the Library had to offer.

Councilor Rodriguez questioned whether the Library had the equipment, such as the Owl HQ system to live stream their meetings/presentations. Administrative Assistant Roxanne Maher noted that she had provided the information to purchase the Owl and related equipment to the Library but did not know if they had purchased the equipment. Councilor McGrattan stated the Library Commission meetings were currently being held in-person. Ms. Maher stated that perhaps there was some grant opportunities to help the Library purchase the Owl HQ system, noting that the Library offered a number of educational programs, which may qualify for some type of educational grants. She went on to state that the MIS Department has been hesitant to move the Owl HQ system between different facilities.

The Committee discussed featuring the Library at one of the Farmers' Market's this summer and to coordinate this with the Library by having an Open House for that same evening. Councilor Paul stated the Farmers' Market ended at 7:00 p.m. and that perhaps they could go to the Library after the Farmers Market to host an Informal Gathering to bring awareness to the many things the Library had to offer. Councilor McGrattan noted that the Gales Ferry Library had a new Children's Section; and therefore, she suggested that the Community

Relations Committee also plan to hold an Informal Gathering at the Gales Ferry Library at another time.

The Committee reviewed the Farmers' Market schedule and noted that featuring the Library earlier in the Summer Market Season may help families become aware of the many programs the Library offered, including Children Programs, that they may like to bring their families to during the summer school vacation.

The Community Relations Committee reviewed the Farmers' Market Summer Season Schedule as follows to try to coordinate the Programs that they plan to feature with the Farmers' Market weekly scheduled themes as follows:

<i>June 2023</i>	<i>July, 2023</i>	<i>August 2023</i>	<i>September 2023</i>
✓ 7 th - "MEAT" You at the Market	✓ 5 th Red, White and Berry	✓ 2 nd Bubbles & Blooms	✓ 6 th Simply Sweet
✓ 14 th All American Artisans	✓ 12 th Backyard BBQ	✓ 9 th Farm Fresh	✓ 13 th Hometown Heroes
✓ 21 st Summer Solstice	✓ 19 th Christmas in July	✓ 16 th Beach Blanket Bingo	✓ 20 th "SEA" You Next Year
✓ 28 th CREAM of the Crop	✓ 26 th "Bee" Your Best	✓ 23 rd Bark' N Brew	
		✓ 30 th Back to School	

Councilor Saums stated the Farmers Market was open from 4:00 p.m. - 7:00 p.m. and he stated that although a lot of people arrive at the Market early that some people pick-up dinner and go home, but that there was also a group of people who pick-up dinner and look for places to sit down and eat at the Farmers' Market. Therefore, he stated that was the group of people who would most likely walk up to the Library after they eat. He suggested the Library host an Open House until 7:00 p.m. and then provide a Presentation starting at 7:00 p.m. after the Farmers' Market was closed. He stated during the Community Relations Committee's Booth that they could direct residents to the Library's Open House and tell them about the scheduled 7:00 p.m. Presentation.

Councilor Paul stated he would contact Library Director Jennifer Smith to talk about these ideas and that he would report back at the Community Relations Committee's March 15, 2023 meeting.

Councilor Paul continued by noting at their January 18, 2023 meeting that the Community Relations Committee discussed developing a calendar with the events that they would like to feature during the upcoming months. He stated by having a schedule in place that it would allow them to plan and coordinate with other departments/organizations/entities.

The Committee discussed possibly cancelling some of their meetings to host a Booth at the Farmers Market this summer.

Councilor Paul stated that he would like to see the Community Relations Committee host booths that featured the following services and that he would begin to contact the Organizations to coordinate the events:

- Library Services
- Mental Health Awareness
- First Responders

Action: Continued

Community Relations Committee Meeting 01/18/2023

File #: [22105](#) Version: 1

Type: General Discussion

Title: Continued discussion and possible action draft a schedule for Public Information Forums to present to residents the types of services the town offers; how to access services and the authority residents should direct concerns regarding services.

Action: Continued

Meeting Note:

The Committee discussed the following topics for Informational Forums:

- Land Use Processes - Councilor Paul noted that the Land Use Department was currently short-staffed; and due to vacation schedules he has not had the opportunity to meet with Land Use Director Juliet Hodge to talk about the details of holding an Informational Forum to present to residents the Land Use processes relative to the approval of applications, to help residents understand the complexities involved relative to Regulatory, the Plan of Conservation & Development (POCD), etc.

Councilor Paul went onto state that the Community Relations Committee had also discussed including a *Frequently Asked Question* (FAQ) Sheet as part of the Presentation that would answer general land use questions, noting the FAQ Sheet could be posted on the town's website, the meeting portal, and be linked to social media pages.

The Committee agreed that they would like to provide the Land Use Informational Presentation in April or May, 2023.

- Fraud Presentation- Sergeant McKinney gave a 30-minute presentation regarding Fraud at Saint David's Church in Gales Ferry. It was very informative, and the Committee discussed inviting Sergeant McKinney to give the Fraud Presentation at the Community Relations Committee's March 16, 2023 meeting. The Committee discussed the importance to get this type of information out to residents and especially to their Senior Citizens community.

Councilor Saums stated he just texted Sergeant McKinney about inviting him to give the Fraud Presentation at the Senior Citizens Center on March 16, 2023. He noted that Sergeant McKinney responded stating that the first Fraud Presentation he gave was at the Senior Citizens Center about a year ago. The Committee agreed to keep the Fraud Presentation on their schedule and to consider holding the event at a different location.

- Library Services - Councilor Paul stated rather than invite the Library to a Community Relations Committee meeting that the Committee work to do something with the Library. He suggested hosting a booth at the Farmers' Market that would feature the Library and the many community services that they provide. Councilor Saums suggested the Library host an Open House while the Community Relations Committee was hosting a booth at the Farmers Market. He stated they could provide some literature regarding the Library at their booth and then refer them to stop by the Library Open House.

Councilor Paul suggested at their February 15, 2023 meeting that the Community Relations Committee develop a calendar with the events that they would like to feature during the upcoming months. He stated having a schedule in place would allow them to plan and coordinate with other departments/organizations/entities that they would like to feature.

Community Relations Committee Meeting 12/21/2022

File #: [22105](#) Version: 1

Type: General Discussion

Title: Continued discussion and possible action draft a schedule for Public Information Forums to present to residents the types of services the town offers; how to access services and the authority residents should direct concerns regarding services.

Action: Continued

Meeting Note:

- Informational Presentation regarding the Land Use processes relative to the approval of applications, to help residents understand the complexities involved relative to Regulatory, the Plan of Conservation & Development (POCD), etc.

Councilor Paul stated based on some of the new developments in Gales Ferry such as the Dollar General Store and the Cashman Marine Dredging at the former Dow Chemical property, that residents have been questioning the Land Use process and approvals. He noted at their November 16, 2022 meeting the Community Relations Committee discussed working with the Land Use Departments to put together a presentation to help residents understand the Land Use processes relative to the approval of applications, etc. He noted the Informational Presentation that Public Works/Town Engineer Steve Masalin provided at the Committee's November 16, 2022 was awesome; and that it was unfortunate that it was not well attended. However, he stated the video was available on the town's website. He stated when residents raise questions regarding snowplowing or mailboxes and other Public Works matters that they could be directed to the video presentation on-line. He went on to state that the Committee could do something similar to assist the Land Use

Departments get information to residents pertaining to the structure and operations of the Town's Land Use process.

The Community Relations Committee discussed the complexities of Land Use stating that it involved Regulatory, State Statutes, the Plan of Conservation & Development (POCD), etc., noting that Land Use matters were not discretionary; an Application either met the Regulations or it did not meet the Regulations.

Councilor Saums suggested that the Land Use Informational Presentation be focused on the structure, process, and operation and that they not get into addressing address specific developments such as Dollar General Store and the Cashman Marine Dredging at the former Dow Chemical property. He stated the Presentation should help residents understand the process to put an addition on their home, build a deck, put in a new driveway, subdivisions, as well the process for how commercial businesses, in general, were approved.

Councilor Paul stated the video of the Land Use Informational Presentation along with a *Frequently Asked Question* (FAQ) Sheet to answer general land use questions could be posted on the town's website, the meeting portal, and it could also be linked to social media pages. He noted that the Land Use Department was currently short-staffed; and therefore, he suggested waiting until the after the holidays to begin working with Land Use Director Juliet Hodge on this initiative. The Committee agreed that they would like to provide the Land Use Informational Presentation before May, 2023.

Action: Continued

Community Relations Committee Meeting 11/16/2022

File #: [22105](#) Version: 1

Type: General Discussion

Title: Continued discussion and possible action draft a schedule for Public Information Forums to present to residents the types of services the town offers; how to access services and the authority residents should direct concerns regarding services.

Action: Continued

Meeting Note:

Councilor Paul stated he learned a lot from Public Works Director/Town Engineer Steve Masalin's presentation this evening. He stated that he yearned for more residents to attend the Community Relations Committee's meetings and their Informational Forums because they provide a lot of great information regarding the services to the community.

Chairman Dombrowski noted at their November 7, 2022 meeting the Land Use/Planning/Public Works Committee discussed working with the Land Use Departments to put together a presentation to help residents understand the Land Use processes relative to the approval of applications, etc. He noted the complexities of Land Use stating that it involved Regulatory, the Plan of Conservation & Development (POCD), etc., He stated Land Use matters were not discretionary, explaining that an Application either met the Regulations or it did not meet the Regulations.

Councilor Paul stated in-light of some of new developments in Gales Ferry such as the Dollar General Store and the Cashman Marine Dredging at the former Dow Chemical property, that residents have been questioning the Land Use

process and approvals. He noted the LUPPW Committee discussed ways to provide information to residents pertaining to the structure and operations of the Town's Land Use process which included posting a *Frequently Asked Question* (FAQ) Sheet and/or uploading short videos on the town's website which would answer land use questions and that could be linked to social media pages. He suggested the Community Relations Committee invite Land Use Director Juliet Hodge to give a presentation regarding the Land Use Departments in February or March, 2023.

Councilor Saums thanked the residents who attended tonight's meeting in-person at the Council Chambers to see the Public Works Department Presentation, noting that there were no residents in attendance on-line. He stated it was very informative and that he wished more residents could have seen the presentation.

Action: Continued

Community Relations Committee Meeting 10/19/2022

File #: [22105](#) Version: 1

Type: General Discussion

Title: Continued discussion and possible action draft a schedule for Public Information Forums to present to residents the types of services the town offers; how to access services and the authority residents should direct concerns regarding services.

Action: Continued

Meeting Note:

Councilor Paul stated he spoke with Public Works Director/Town Engineer Steve Masalin and that he was available to attend the Community Relations Committee November 16, 2022 meeting to provide a presentation/information regarding the services the Public Works Department provides to the town. He noted the importance to get information out to residents pertaining to Winter Operations relative parking bans during snow events and other snow removal policies before the snow started to fall. He stated Ledyard's Public Works Department does a lot of in town and that this would be a good opportunity for residents to ask questions.

Councilor Saums stated he would prepare a flyer to send to MIS Director Regina Brulotte to create a link on the town's website that Councilors could share on their facebook pages.

Community Relations Committee Meeting 9/21/2022

File #: [22105](#) Version: 1

Type: General Discussion

Title: Continued discussion and possible action draft a schedule for Public Information Forums to present to

residents the types of services the town offers; how to access services and the authority residents should direct concerns regarding services.

Action: Continued

Minute Note:

Councilor Paul stated he spoke with Public Works Director/Town Engineer Steve Masalin about scheduling a time to present information regarding the services the Public Works Department provides to the town. He noted the importance to get information out to residents pertaining to Winter Operations relative parking bans during snow events and other snow removal policies.

The Committee agreed to invite Public Works Director/Town Engineer Mr. Masalin to the Community Relations Committee November 16, 2022 meeting, noting that it was important to get this information out to residents before the snow started to fall.

Councilor Paul thanked Councilor Saums, Councilor Rodriguez other Councilors for their help in planning and staffing the Community Relations Committee table at the August 31, 2022 Farmers Market. He stated the “*Are You Ready for Winter*” event presented information regarding the many local and regional resources to help those struggling to manage mental health issues as well as assistance programs for those in-need. He stated in addition to the organizations that support mental health they also provided information regarding assistance programs which included home heating fuel, renters rebate, food pantry and many others.

Action: Continued

Community Relations Committee Meeting: 8/17/2022

File #: [22105](#) Version: 1

Type: General Discussion

Title: Continued discussion and possible action draft a schedule for Public Information Forums to present to residents the types of services the town offers; how to access services and the authority residents should direct concerns regarding services.

Action: Continued

Minute Note:

Councilor Paul stated the Community Relations Committee was currently scheduled to host a Booth at the August 31, 2022 Farmers’ Market to provide information regarding Mental Health services along with a number of other services that are available to the public. He stated the Community Relations Committee would discuss preparations for the August 31, 2022 Booth in more detail later this evening (Old Business Item #6).

Councilor Paul went on to note that he spoke with Public Works Director Steve Masalin about scheduling a time to present information regarding the services the Public Works Department provides to the town. He noted the importance to get information out to residents pertaining to things such parking regulations during snow events as well as mailboxes.

Action: Continued

Community Relations Committee
 Host Booths at
 Ledyard Farmers Market

<i>Date of Market</i>	<i>Featured Services/Programs</i>	<i>Invited Guest</i>	<i>Confirmed Participation</i>
2023			
July 19, 2023	Mental Health Awareness	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Brian Dagle Healing Hearts Foundation; • Home heating fuel through Thames Valley Council for Community Action (TVCCA) and other assistance programs; • Utilities – Electric/Water Assistance; • Homeowners Assistance program that provided no interest loans to help people replace their furnace, roof or septic system, etc. • Home meal delivery available for those who cannot get out to grocery shop through Thames Valley Council for Community Action (TVCCA); • Linda C. Davis Food Pantry located in Ledyard Center; • United Way located in Gales Ferry was a great resource; • Connecticut’s Paid Family Medical Leave Program; • Police Department “<i>Green and/or Blue Envelope</i>” for drivers with Autism or Hearing Impaired • SERAC 	
August 20, 2023	Back-to-School	Library Services – Open House Bill Library & Short Presentation	
September 19, 2023	First Responders - Home Town Heroes - Volunteers	<p>Provide information on how residents could volunteer & promote the many organizations and committees that are operated with volunteers from the community.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Representative from the Police Department; • Representative from the Ledyard Center Fire Company; • Representative from the Gales Ferry Fire Company; • Chairman from each of the town’s committees/commissions/boards. 	



File #: 22-106

Agenda Date: 12/20/2023

Agenda #: 3.

AGENDA REQUEST
GENERAL DISCUSSION ITEM

Subject:

Continued discussion and possible action to identify various town venues to host “*Informal Conversations in the Park*” to engage residents in discussions regarding their concerns and their ideas for potential solutions.

Background:

(type text here)

Department Comment/Recommendation:

Meeting Action Detail:

Community Relations Committee Meeting 04/19/2023

File #: [22106](#) Version: 1

Type: General Discussion

Title: Continued discussion and possible action to identify various town venues to host “*Informal Conversations in the Park*” to engage residents in discussions regarding their concerns and their ideas for potential solutions.

Action: Continued

Meeting Note:

Councilor Paul stated Park & Recreation has been discussing scheduling a tour to visit the many recreational parks in town in May, 2023. He stated that he would keep the Community Relations Committee informed as more information becomes available.

Councilor Paul noted that Councilor Saums was working with the Administrators of the Ledyard/Gales Ferry Forum on the idea of hosting a “*Whining Wednesday*” and a “*Thankful Thursday*”. Therefore, he suggested they defer this discussion to their next meeting, when Councilor Saums could provide an update.

Councilor Marshall suggested hosting an Informal Gathering/Conversation at the Town Green or at another Park some afternoon to talk with residents. He noted the event could be similar to the July 20, 2022 Informal

Gathering they had at the Park on East Drive. He stated the town had a lot of parks, and it would be good feature them, noting that the Parks were underutilized.

Action: Continued

Community Relations Committee Meeting 04/19/2023

File #: [22106](#) Version: 1

Type: General Discussion

Title: Continued discussion and possible action to identify various town venues to host “*Informal Conversations in the Park*” to engage residents in discussions regarding their concerns and their ideas for potential solutions.

Action: Continued

Meeting Note:

Councilor Paul stated that he spoke with Director of Senior Citizens and Park & Recreation Scott Johnson, Jr., about touring/visiting the many recreational parks in town in May, 2023. He stated they could advertise that the Parks & Recreation Commission along with the Community Relations Committee would be conducting a tour of the Towns Recreational Parks:

- Aljen Heights Park - Councilor Saums stated noted that some residents had questions regarding the Park at Aljen Heights. He stated that he did not know if the questions were regarding the condition of the equipment or the condition of the field. He also noted that a new playscape was put in near the Community Center in Gales Ferry.
- Erickson Park
- Highlands Lake
- Bush Pond - Lantern Hill Waterfront Park (Graham Property)

Councilor Saums suggested because they would not know when they would be at each of the Parks that they could post on Facebook or other social media sites when they were heading to the next park location, for residents that would like to join them.

Councilor Paul stated visiting the Recreational Parks would be a good opportunity for residents to see the great Parks the town has; and for residents to ask questions or to bring issues of concern to the Community Relations Committee’s attention. He stated when they had the July 20, 2022 Informal Gathering at the Park on East Drive he was amazed to learn that a lot of residents did not know that they could contact the Parks & Recreation Director to discuss the issues at the Park such as the lighting or condition of the equipment, which was the reason residents were contacting the Mayor’s Office, the Town Council, and the Police Department.

Councilor Paul stated having the opportunity to talk to residents in-person and for residents to talk with their

elected officials in-person was a win-win. He stated that it gave them the opportunity to let residents know if they had concerns about what was happening at the Park that they had a great Parks & Recreation Director, who had also attended the July 20, 2023 Informal Gathering to hear the residents' concerns, suggestions, and to answer their questions. He stated that was what he believed the Community Relations Committee was about, to bring the community together and to help them by directing them to the appropriate department and staff that could address their concerns.

Councilor Paul stated if they could obtain comments on other topics that he would be open to hosting an Informal Gathering at other locations such as the Historic Up-Down Sawmill.

Action: Continued

Community Relations Committee Meeting 03/15/2023

File #: [22106](#) Version: 1

Type: General Discussion

Title: Continued discussion and possible action to identify various town venues to host “*Informal Conversations in the Park*” to engage residents in discussions regarding their concerns and their ideas for potential solutions.

Action: Continued

Meeting Note:

Councilor Paul noted that Councilor Saums was working with the Administrators of the Ledyard/Gales Ferry Forum on the idea of hosting a “*Whining Wednesday*” and a “*Thankful Thursday*”. Therefore, he suggested they defer this discussion to their next meeting, when Councilor Saums could provide an update.

Action: Continued

Community Relations Committee Meeting 02/15/2023

File #: [22106](#) Version: 1

Type: General Discussion

Title: Continued discussion and possible action to identify various town venues to host “*Informal Conversations in the Park*” to engage residents in discussions regarding their concerns and their ideas for potential solutions.

Action: Continued

Meeting Note:

Councilor Paul stated by scheduling the programs and services the Committee would like to highlight at the Farmers' Summer Market that it would enable them to target other topics that residents may be interested in talking about. He stated possibly bringing back something like a "*Whining Wednesday*" on the Ledyard-Gales Ferry Forum would help the Committee to solicit the types of topics that residents were interested in talking or learning about.

Councilor Saums stated that contacted the three Administrators of the Ledyard/Gales Ferry Forum and he noted that they indicated that they would be willing to field something like a "*Whining Wednesday*" and that they also suggested hosting a "*Thankful Thursday*". He stated the Administrators also suggested the format be like a Poll that would be open from 5: 00 p.m. to 8:00 p.m. and that they would manually turn off the comment period at 8:00 p.m.

Councilor Marshall stated that he liked the Ledyard/Gales Ferry Forum Administrator's suggestions.

Councilor Paul reviewed examples of some open-ended type of questions presenting one question each week, that would keep the comments on topic such as:

1. Where would you like to see Electric Vehicle Charging Stations located in Ledyard?
2. Do you think roadside trash in Ledyard is excessive?
3. Would you be interested in participating in a town-wide Earth Day Clean-up?
4. Did you know that the "Bottle Bill" (Public Act No. 21-58 - An Act Concerning Solid Waste Management") implemented a five-cent surcharge on any beverage container containing a spirit or liquor of fifty milliliters. Each quarter the surcharge fee is dispersed to the town in which the beverages were sold. Last quarter the Ledyard received \$13,027.06, which was for a total of 260,541 nip bottles that were sold during that quarter. The funds could only be used for the following purposes: (1) environmental measures intended to reduce the generation of solid waste; and (2) reduce the impact of litter caused by such solid waste, including, but not limited to, the hiring of a recycling coordinator, (3) the installation of storm drain filters designed to block solid waste and beverage container debris or (4) the purchase of a mechanical street sweeper, vacuum or broom that removes litter, including, but not limited to, such beverage containers and other debris from streets, sidewalks and abutting lawn and turf.
5. What town services would you like to know more about?
6. Would you be interested in participating in informal discussions regarding town issues?
7. What town issues would you like to discuss?
8. If you are a new Ledyard Resident why did you choose to move to Ledyard?
9. What would you like to see change in our community?

10. Do you use any of the town's parks, and if so, which parks do you like best and why?
11. Do you Love Ledyard and Why?

Councilor Saums stated the hope was to engage and obtain input from residents on topics that they would like to discuss. He noted the safety concerns at the Park on East Drive were brought to their attention by a resident. He stated with the Community Relations Committee's involvement and thru a concerted effort of several Town Departments that they were able to address the concerns. He stated the Community Relations Committee did a mailing to the residents in the area of the Park on East Drive and they received a good turnout at the July 20, 2022 Informal Gathering, noting that it was a positive result and experience.

Councilor Saums suggested the Committee forward the list of questions to the Ledyard/Gales Ferry Forum Administrators and ask them to consider putting one or two questions into a Poll per week.

Councilor Paul addressed how the Poll Question should be presented, questioning whether it should be phased: "*The Town Council's Community Relations Committee would like to know.....(Poll Question)*". The Committee agreed that presenting the Poll Question as Councilor Paul suggested would provide transparency and validation to residents.

Councilor Saums stated that he would work with the Ledyard/Gales Ferry Forum Administrators to post these questions in the format of a Poll on *Whining Wednesday* and *Thankful Thursday*.

Councilor Paul stated this initiative was a great way to engage residents and for any of any of the town's leaders to get residents' temperature on specific issues/topics.

Action: Continued

Community Relations Committee Meeting 01/18/2023

File #: [22106](#) Version: 1

Type: General Discussion

Title: Continued discussion and possible action to identify various town venues to host "*Informal Conversations in the Park*" to engage residents in discussions regarding their concerns and their ideas for potential solutions.

Action: Continued

Meeting Note:

Councilor Paul noted at their December 21, 2022 meeting the Committee discussed launching something like a "*Whiney Wednesday*" on the Ledyard-Gales Ferry Forum to solicit topics that residents were interested in talking or learning about.

Councilor Saums stated that they would need to talk to the Forum's Administrators to see if they would be willing and able to field something that a *Whiney Wednesday*.

The Committee discussed crafting a general type of open-ended question to post on the Forum to engage residents and to learn about the topics regarding Ledyard that residents were interested in talking and learning about.

The Committee noted the Informal Gathering they held at the Park on East Drive on July 20, 2022 went well; and based on the residents feedback that some great improvements have been made to the Park (Christy Hill Park).

Action: Continued

Community Relations Committee Meeting 12/21/2022

File #: [22106](#) Version: 1

Type: General Discussion

Title: Continued discussion and possible action to identify various town venues to host "*Informal Conversations in the Park*" to engage residents in discussions regarding their concerns and their ideas for potential solutions.

Action: Continued

Meeting Note:

Councilor Paul suggested the Community Relations Committee develop a list of the types of programs they would like to inform residents about and then decide on a schedule of when they would like to present them. He stated having a schedule in place would allow them to coordinate with other departments/organizations/entities that they would like to feature.

The Committee discussed the success they had at the Farmers Market last summer and noted that the following topics for consideration the upcoming summer Market:

- The Brian Dagle Foundation for Suicide Prevention
- First Responders "Heroes" Police and Fire Departments
- ✓ Do a staged demonstrations such as the rescue of the man in the abandoned well
- Volunteer Table to talk to residents about how to get involved in their community and their local government.

Councilor Paul also noted that the Committee could host events at different town sites to expose residents the many great town-owned properties that were available to the public, and to engage with residents who may be already visiting the site such as:

- Up-Down Sawmill - The mill operated in the fall and would be a good opportunity to talk with residents after the Sawmill demonstration.

The Committee also discussed ways to obtain input from residents on issues of concern.

Councilor Saums noted the Ledyard/Gales Ferry Forum was a great opportunity to obtain feedback from residents. He noted at one time the Forum had a “*Whiney Wednesday*”.

The Committee agreed to launch something like a “*Whiney Wednesday*” on the Ledyard-Gales Ferry Forum in January, 2023.

Action: Continued

Community Relations Committee Meeting 11/16/2022

File #: [22106](#) Version: 1

Type: General Discussion

Title: Continued discussion and possible action to identify various town venues to host “*Informal Conversations in the Park*” to engage residents in discussions regarding their concerns and their ideas for potential solutions.

Action: Continued

Meeting Note:

Councilor Paul stated he learned a lot from Public Works Director/Town Engineer Steve Masalin’s presentation this evening. He stated that he yearned for more residents to attend the Community Relations Committee’s meetings and their Informational Forums because they provide a lot of great information regarding the services to the community.

Chairman Dombrowski noted at their November 7, 2022 meeting the Land Use/Planning/Public Works Committee discussed working with the Land Use Departments to put together a presentation to help residents understand the Land Use processes relative to the approval of applications, etc. He noted the complexities of Land Use stating that it involved Regulatory, the Plan of Conservation & Development (POCD), etc., He stated Land Use matters were not discretionary, explaining that an Application either met the Regulations or it did not meet the Regulations.

Councilor Paul stated in-light of some of new developments in Gales Ferry such as the Dollar General Store and the Cashman Marine Dredging at the former Dow Chemical property, that residents have been questioning the Land Use process and approvals. He noted the LUPPW Committee discussed ways to provide information to residents pertaining to the structure and operations of the Town’s Land Use process which included posting a *Frequently Asked Question (FAQ)* Sheet and/or uploading short videos on the town’s website which would answer land use questions and that could be linked to social media pages. He suggested the Community Relations Committee invite Land Use Director Juliet Hodge to give a presentation regarding the Land Use Departments in February or March, 2023.

Councilor Saums thanked the residents who attended tonight’s meeting in-person at the Council Chambers to see the Public Works Department Presentation, noting that there were no residents in attendance on-line. He stated it was very informative and that he wished more residents could have seen the presentation.

Action: Continued

Community Relations Committee Meeting 10/19/2022

File #: [22106](#) Version: 1

Type: General Discussion

Title: Continued discussion and possible action to identify various town venues to host “*Informal Conversations in the Park*” to engage residents in discussions regarding their concerns and their ideas for potential solutions.

Action: Continued

Meeting Note:

Councilor Paul stated he spoke with Public Works Director/Town Engineer Steve Masalin and that he was available to attend the Community Relations Committee November 16, 2022 meeting to provide a presentation/information regarding the services the Public Works Department provides to the town. He noted the importance to get information out to residents pertaining to Winter Operations relative parking bans during snow events and other snow removal policies before the snow started to fall. He stated Ledyard’s Public Works Department does a lot of in town and that this would be a good opportunity for residents to ask questions.

Councilor Saums stated he would prepare a flyer to send to MIS Director Regina Brulotte to create a link on the town’s website that Councilors could share on their facebook pages.

Action: Continued

Community Relations Committee Meeting 9/21/2022

File #: [22106](#) Version: 1

Type: General Discussion

Title: Continued discussion and possible action to identify various town venues to host “*Informal Conversations in the Park*” to engage residents in discussions regarding their concerns and their ideas for potential solutions.

Action: Continued

Councilor Paul stated as they were moving into the winter months that they would put conversations in the park off until the spring. Councilor Saums stated he agreed, noting with the shorter daylight hours and colder weather that it would be difficult to gather people outside.

Action: Continued

Community Relations Committee Meeting 9/21/2022

File #: [22106](#) Version: 1

Type: General Discussion

Title: Continued discussion and possible action to identify various town venues to host “*Informal Conversations in the Park*” to engage residents in discussions regarding their concerns and their ideas for potential solutions.

Action: Continued

Minute Note:

Councilor Saums stated the Community Forum Page was a great way to obtain ideas and feedback from residents. He stated a few years ago, when Ledyard Center School was sold, the Ledyard Fair was looking for ideas about what they should do. He stated the Ledyard Fair received over 500 comments from residents on the Community Forum, noting that there was a lot of interest in a Food Truck Fair. He stated the Parks & Recreation Commission held a Food Truck Fair at the Town Green on May 21, 2022.

Councilor Saums suggested the Community Relations Committee contact the Administrator of the Community Forum to post something to solicit topics or concerns that residents were interested in talking or learning about.

Councilor Saums stated the Community Forum Page was a great way to obtain ideas and feedback from residents. He stated a few years ago, when Ledyard Center School was sold, the Ledyard Fair was looking for ideas about what they should do. He stated the Ledyard Fair received over 500 comments from residents on the Community Forum, noting that there was a lot of interest in a Food Truck Fair. He stated the Parks & Recreation Commission held a Food Truck Fair at the Town Green on May 21, 2022.

Councilor Saums suggested the Community Relations Committee contact the Administrator of the Community Forum to post something to solicit topics or concerns that residents were interested in talking or learning about.

The Committee noted the Food Truck Fair was a great idea, noting that because so much was done in Ledyard Center that they would like to see an event such as a Food Truck Fair be held Gales Ferry. The Committee noted that the Sweet Hill Farm would be a great location for a Food Truck Fair. Councilor Paul noted that Economic Development Commission

Member Jessica Buhle did a great job in planning the *Regatta Day Festival* in June, 2022, noting that they used the Sweet Hill Farm and it was a great venue.

Action: Continued

Community Relations Committee Meeting 8/17/2022

File #: [22106](#) Version: 1

Type: General Discussion

Title: Continued discussion and possible action to identify various town venues to host “*Informal Conversations in the Park*” to engage residents in discussions regarding their concerns and their ideas for potential solutions.

Action: Continued

Meeting Note:

The Community Relations Committee discussed the following potential venues to engage residents about issues that are of concern to the Community.

- Nathan Lester House
- Up-Down Sawmill - The mill operated in the fall and would be a good opportunity to talk with residents after the Sawmill demonstration.

Councilor Saums commented on the good participation the Community Relations Committee received at the July 20, 2022 Informal Conversation with residents at the Park on East Drive. He stated that he believed the good turnout was because they had a topic for the discussion, noting that residents previously brought concerns regarding safety issues at the Park to the town’s attention. He also noted that letters were sent to the residents in the area of Park; and that the letters were followed-up with a mailing of flyers the week before the event.

Councilor Saums suggested in working to plan/schedule future Informal Conversations to engage residents that they identify the subject matter that would be the topic of conversation.

Action: Continued



TOWN OF LEDYARD

741 Colonel Ledyard
Highway
Ledyard, CT 06339-1511

File #: 22-091

Agenda Date: 1/17/2024

Agenda #: 4.

AGENDA REQUEST
GENERAL DISCUSSION ITEM

Subject:

Any other Old Business proper to come before the Committee

Background:

(type text here)

Department Comment/Recommendation:

(type text here)



TOWN OF LEDYARD

741 Colonel Ledyard
Highway
Ledyard, CT 06339-1511

File #: 24-0022

Agenda Date: 1/17/2024

Agenda #: 1.

AGENDA REQUEST
GENERAL DISCUSSION ITEM

Subject:

Discussion regarding ideas to increase communication/transparency with residents.

Background:

Department Comment/Recommendation:



TOWN OF LEDYARD

741 Colonel Ledyard
Highway
Ledyard, CT 06339-1511

File #: 22-092

Agenda Date: 1/17/2024

Agenda #: 5.

AGENDA REQUEST
GENERAL DISCUSSION ITEM

Subject:

Any other New Business proper to come before the Committee.

Background:

(type text here)

Department Comment/Recommendation:

(type text here)