



TOWN OF LEDYARD

Community Relations Committee

Meeting Minutes

741 Colonel Ledyard Highway
Ledyard, Connecticut 06339

Chairman
Kevin J. Dombrowski

Regular Meeting

Wednesday, December 21, 2022

6:30 PM

Town Hall Annex - Hybrid Format

Council Chambers, Town Hall Annex Building

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

[https://us06web.zoom.us/j/82264217899?](https://us06web.zoom.us/j/82264217899?pwd=MIQzbzM3RVNSV2lnOWhQL0NGb3VOUT09)

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Or by Audio Only: Telephone: +1 646 558 8656; +Meeting ID: 822 6421 7899; Passcode: 621112

I. CALL TO ORDER

the Meeting was called to order by Councilor Paul at 6:30 p.m. at the Council Chambers - Town Hall Annex Building.

Councilor Paul welcomed all to the Hybrid Meeting. He 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

Present: Bill Saums
Gary Paul

Excused: John Marshall

Also in attendance was Administrative Assistant Roxanne Maher.

III. RESIDENTS & PROPERTY OWNERS COMMENTS

None.

IV. PRESENTATIONS / INFORMATIONAL ITEMS

None.

V. APPROVAL OF MINUTES

MOTION to approve the Community Relations Committee Meeting Minutes of November 16, 2022.

Moved by Councilor Saums, seconded by Councilor Paul

VOTE: 2 - 0 Approved and so declared

RESULT: APPROVED AND SO DECLARED

MOVER: Bill Saums

SECONDER: Gary Paul

AYE: 2 Saums and Paul

EXCUSED: 1 Marshall

VI. OLD BUSINESS

1. Continued discussion regarding Black History Month and update on the 2023 Black History Activity/Contest.

Councilor Paul provided an update regarding the progress on the planning and organizing of the Black History Month Program. He stated that Councilor Rodriguez sent an e-mail to Board of Education Chairman Anthony Favry regarding the upcoming the Program.

The Committee discussed the Black History Month Program as follows:

- Essay and Poster Contest
 - Essay Contest for the Middle School and High School students.
 - Poster Contest for the Elementary School students.
- Pan-African Flag Raising Ceromony to show unity
 - Ceromony to take place on Wednesday, February 1, 2022 at 4:00 p.m.
 - Councilor Paul would talk with Mayor Allyn, III about the Ceromony.
 - Councilor Saums would contact Mashantucket Pequot Tribal Councilmember Crystal Whipple for the MPTN interest in participating in the Ceromony
 - Councilor Rodriguez would be meeting with the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People (NAACP) President Jean Jordan and Secretary Juliet Parker after the holidays to discuss the program and their interest to participate in the Program/Ceromony.

RESULT: CONTINUE

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.

RESULT: CONTINUE

- 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.
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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.

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.

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

RESULT: CONTINUE

4. Continued discussion regarding the possibility to schedule joint meetings with the Mashantucket Pequot Tribal Nation to discuss items of mutual interest.

Councilor Saums stated he would contact Mashantucket Pequot Tribal (MPTN) Council Member Crystal Whipple to try to coordinate an Informal Gathering between the Mashantucket Pequot Tribal Council and the Town Council.

RESULT: CONTINUE

5. Continued review of status regarding the progress of improvements at the Park on East Drive.

Councilor Paul stated he did not have an update regarding the improvements at the Park, noting that the activity has been fairly quiet with the shorter days and colder temperatures. He noted that Mr. Jamieson has been communicating with Police Chief John Rich and Mayor Allyn, III to resolve an issue.

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 Paul stated during the July 20, 2022 Gathering the Committee told the residents that they would host another Informal Gathering to follow-up on the actions that were taken to make safety improvements at the Park. He stated although he has stopped by the Park on his own that he would like the Committee to host another Informal Gathering with the residents in the Spring, 2023. He stated that he has been communicating with Parks & Recreation Director Scott Johnson, Jr. on the progress of the improvements, noting that the lights were now working and looked great and that the wood chips for the playscape areas were delivered.

RESULT: CONTINUE

6. Any other Old Business proper to come before the Committee
None.

VII. NEW BUSINESS

- 1 Any other New Business proper to come before the Committee.
None.

IV ADJOURNMENT

Councilor Saums, moved the meeting be adjourned, seconded by Councilor Paul.
VOTE: 2 - 0 Approved and so declared. The meeting was adjourned at 7:18 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Gary Paul
Committee Chairman

Community Relations Committee

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