



TOWN OF LEDYARD

Community Relations Committee

Meeting Minutes

741 Colonel Ledyard Highway
Ledyard, Connecticut 06339

Chairman
Kevin J. Dombrowski

Regular Meeting

Wednesday, May 17, 2023

6:30 PM

Town Hall Annex - Hybrid Format

In -Person: Council Chambers, Town Hall Annex Building

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

**[https://us06web.zoom.us/j/87543093555?](https://us06web.zoom.us/j/87543093555?pwd=NVI4TVQ4SIFUbIVVS3BFM1FWZEIkUT09)
[pwd=NVI4TVQ4SIFUbIVVS3BFM1FWZEIkUT09](https://us06web.zoom.us/j/87543093555?pwd=NVI4TVQ4SIFUbIVVS3BFM1FWZEIkUT09)**

Or by Audio Only: Telephone: +1 646 558 8656; +Meeting ID: 875 4309 3555; Passcode: 984840

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: Gary Paul
John Marshall

Excused: Bill Saums

In addition, Administrative Assistant Roxanne Maher was in attendance.

III. RESIDENTS & PROPERTY OWNERS COMMENTS

None.

IV. PRESENTATIONS / INFORMATIONAL ITEMS

None.

V. APPROVAL OF MINUTES

MOTION to approve the Community Relations Regular Meeting Minutes of April 19, 2023

Moved by Councilor Paul, seconded by Councilor Marshall

VOTE: 2 - 0 Approved and so declared

RESULT: APPROVED AND SO DECLARED

MOVER: Gary Paul

SECONDER: John Marshall

AYE: 2 Paul and Marshall

EXCUSED: 1 Saums

VI. OLD BUSINESS

1. Discuss the 2024 Black History Activity/Contest.

No Action

RESULT: NO ACTION

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.

Councilor Paul presented the attached schedule

Councilor Paul noted he spoke with Farmers' Market Committee Chairman Lauriann Hary about the dates the Community Relations Committee would like to reserve space at the Farmers Market this summer. He stated Ms. Hary indicated that the Committee could host a Booth during the Market Dates listed in the schedule above. He stated that he has submitted the Application Form to the Farmers Market Committee to formalize the process.

Councilor Paul went on to note that he has spoken to all of the participants that the Community Relations Committee would like to feature at each of the Markets to bring awareness to the programs and services that were available to residents. He stated everyone was enthusiastic about participating in the events, noting that the Community Relations Committee worked to schedule their topics to be in-keeping with the Farmers' Market weekly themes.

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

Councilor Paul went on to note that many of these groups participated at the Community Relations Committee's Farmers' Market Booths last summer. However, he stated SERAC would be a new addition to their Mental Health Awareness Booth this summer. He provided some background noting that SERAC was a non-profit organization located in Norwich that served 41 communities in Eastern Connecticut, noting that they provide programs and services to reduce the impact of substance

abuse, problem gambling, and mental health challenges, noting that May was Mental Health Awareness Month. He stated he spoke with SERAC Representative Mark Irons (Suicide Prevention Lead) and he noted that Mr. Irons stated that SERAC would like to participate in July 19, 2023 event, noting that SERAC would like to have a presence in Ledyard. Councilor Paul suggested that the Community Relations Committee may want to invite SERAC to a Town Council meeting, as they did last year with the Brian Dagle Foundation, so that SERAC could inform the community about the programs they provide. Councilor Paul stated because of the number of organizations they would be featuring at their July 19, 2023 Farmers' Market Booth that he requested space for three tents.

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

Councilor Paul stated the Farmers' Market August 30, 2023 Theme was "***Back to School***" and that the Committee felt that the Library services would be in-keeping with that Theme. He stated 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. H stated when the Farmers Market closed that the Library would provide a short Presentation that same evening.

- ***September 19, 2023- Hometown Heroes -***

Councilor Paul stated in preparation for the September 19, 2023 "***Hometown Heroes***" he met with both Ledyard Center Fire Chief Jon Mann and Gales Ferry Fire Chief Tony Saccone. He stated he received a tour of both Fire Stations, and he noted that both Fire Chief's were looking forward to participating in the Community Relations Committee September 19, 2023 Farmers' Market Booth, noting that it would be good opportunity for them to talk with residents about becoming a volunteer firefighter. He also noted that the both Fire Departments would be holding their Annual Open House in October for *Fire Safety-Prevention Month*.

- ***Land Use Processes*** - Councilor Paul addressed the importance for residents to understand the Land Use processes relative to the approval of applications, and the complexities involved as they relate to Regulatory, State Statutes, and the Plan of Conservation & Development (POCD), etc. However, he stated that the Land Use Informational Presentation would be deferred until Ms. Hodge could work it into her schedule. He noted the new Zoning Enforcement Officer Mr. Alex Samalot joined Ledyard on May 1, 2023 and that he was currently enrolled in the Connecticut Association of Zoning Enforcement (CAZEO) Certification Program. He stated because Mr. Samalot was not already CAZEO Certified that there would be a significant amount of training involved and that Ms. Hodge would be working with him.

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 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.

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 Paul stated that Councilor Saums has been communicating with Mashantucket Pequot Tribal (MPTN) Council Member Crystal to schedule an Informal Gathering with the MPTN Council. He stated at their April 19, 2023 meeting the Community Relations Committee agreed that because they all had busy schedules the Informal Gathering could be something as simple as morning coffee. He suggested the Committee defer this discussion to their June 21, 2023 meeting to receive an update from Councilor Saums regarding the status of scheduling the Informal Gathering.

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

Councilor Paul stated in communicating with Police Chief John Rich that there has not been any new developments/complaints at the Park. However, he stated with the warmer weather that they would expect more activity at the Park.

Councilor Marshall stated with the improvements such as the lights, removing the brush to open up the entrance area, and more frequent police patrols that perhaps the Park has lost its appeal and that the problems have moved on.

Councilor Paul stated that he agreed with Councilor Marshall’s comments, noting with the exposure of the Park on East Drive that they were getting more people to use their underutilized Parks. He stated with more people using the Park that it was a good way to police the parks, noting that neighbors look out for their neighbors.

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 Paul moved the meeting be adjourned, seconded by Councilor Marshall.

VOTE: 2 - 0 Approved and so declared. The meeting was adjourned at 6:47 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Gary Paul

C o m m i t t e e C h a i r m a n

Community Relations Committee

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