



## Legislation Text

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**File #:** 22-108, **Version:** 1

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### AGENDA REQUEST GENERAL DISCUSSION ITEM

**Subject:**

Continued discussion to present information to bring awareness to October being “*Depression and Mental Health Month*”.

**Background:**

In preparation for the winter months the Community Relations Committee planned to host a Booth at the Farmers’ Market in late August or early September to provide information regarding the following programs that were available:

- 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.

**Meeting Action Detail:**

**Community Relations Committee Meeting 10/19/2022**

**File #:** [22108](#) Version: 1

**Type:** General Discussion

**Title:** Continued discussion to present information to bring awareness to October being “*Depression and Mental Health Month*”.

**Action:** Continued

**Minute Note:**

Councilor Rodriguez stated Ms. Ann Dagal from the *Brian Dagal Foundation - Brian's Healing Hearts* - Family Suicide Prevention Group, located at 461 Main Street in Niantic, was available to attend the Town Council's October 26, 2022 meeting. Councilor Rodriguez noted Ms. Dagal was looking forward to giving a presentation to the Town Council and that Ms. Dagal hoped the town would develop a relationship with the *Brian Dagal Foundation - Brian's Healing Hearts* - Family Suicide Prevention Group. She stated Ms. Dagal was pleased to hear that the Town Council would be wearing **Green** to show their support for Depression and Mental Health.

Councilor Paul thanked Councilor Rodriguez for contacting Ms. Dagal and for inviting her to Town Council's October 26, 2022 meeting to give a presentation regarding the work that the Brian Dagal Foundation does. He stated that there was a lot involved in operating a town from the financial and fiscal management, having good schools, maintaining roads, fire and public safety, providing infrastructure and services, etc. However, he stated one of the most important things was to have a Healthy Community. He stated there was a mental health crisis going on and that the best thing town leaders could do was to talk about it and keep it on the forefront, and show their support for folks struggling with these illnesses.

Action: Continued

### **Community Relations Committee Meeting 9/21/2022**

File #: [22108](#) Version: 1

Type: General Discussion

Title: Continued discussion to present information to bring awareness to October being "*Depression and Mental Health Month*".

Action: Continued

#### **Minute Note:**

Councilor Paul stated October was "*Depression and Mental Health Month*" and "*Breast Cancer Awareness Month*". He noted as he mentioned earlier (Old Business Item 4 above) that the Community Relations Committee brought a lot of resources to residents during the August 31, 2022 Farmers Market at which the Committee hosted a "*Are You Ready for Winter?*" table. He noted the many local and regional organizations who attended the event to talk with residents about the many services that were available to assist people who may be suffering from depression or other mental health issues. He continued by noting the following data:

- 46,000 people died by suicide in 2020 - This was one death every 11 minutes.
- 12.2 million people seriously think about suicide.
- 3.2 million people made a plan to commit suicide.
- 1.2 million people have attempted suicide.

Councilor Rodriguez stated Ms. Ann Dagal from the *Brian Dagal Foundation - Brian's Healing Hearts* - Family Suicide Prevention Group, located at 461 Main Street in Niantic, was pleased to have the opportunity to talk with Ledyard residents at the August 31, 2022 Farmers Market. She stated Mayor Allyn, III, has heard Ms. Dagal speak at a Southeastern Connecticut Council of Governments (SCCOG) meeting. She stated Ms. Dagal would like to develop a relationship with Ledyard through their Youth & Social Services Department/Programs and she suggested inviting Ms. Dagal to a Town Council meeting in October to give a short presentation regarding Suicide Prevention and Mental Health noting this would be a good opportunity for the town to begin developing a relationship with the Brian Dagal Foundation.

Councilor Paul noted the color for *Depression Awareness* was *green* and the color for *Breast Cancer Awareness* was *pink*. He suggested Councilors wear something *green* at one meeting in October and wear something *pink* for the second meeting in October to bring awareness and to show their support for folks struggling with these illnesses.

Councilor Paul noted that there was a lot involved in operating a town from the financial and fiscal management, maintaining roads, fire and public safety, providing infrastructure and services, etc. However, he stated one of the most important things was to have a Healthy Community. He stated there was a mental health crisis going on and that the best thing they could do was to talk about it and keep it on the forefront. He stated the new Mental Health Hotline number was 988, noting that people could call or text to the Hotline number.

### **Community Relations Committee Meeting 8/17/2022**

File #: [22108 <https://ledyardct.legistar.com/LegislationDetail.aspx?ID=5751428&GUID=3ECB2D62-91E8-405E-83D5-684724015267>](https://ledyardct.legistar.com/LegislationDetail.aspx?ID=5751428&GUID=3ECB2D62-91E8-405E-83D5-684724015267) Version: 1

Type: General Discussion

Title: Continued discussion to present information to bring awareness to October being "Depression and Mental Health Month".

Minute Note:

Councilor Paul stated in preparation for the Community Relations Committee's Booth at the August 31, 2022 Farmers' Market, focusing on Mental Health Awareness and the many other services that are available to those who qualify, that he met with the Mayor's Executive Assistant/Social Services Coordinator Kristin Chapman, Youth Services Coordinator Kate Sikorsky-Maynard, and Ledyard Visiting Nurse Director/Municipal Agent Karen Goetchuis. He stated he was amazed with the many local and regional services and programs that were available. He also noted that Councilor Rodriguez contacted *Brian Dugel Foundation - Brian's Healing Hearts* - Family Suicide Prevention Group located at 461 Main Street in Niantic. He stated information regarding these Organizations and how to obtain services would be available at the August 31, 2022 Farmers' Market. He stated that he has also gathered literature that would be available for folks to pick-up at the Community Relations Committee Booth.

Councilor Paul went on to state during the winter months when it gets darker earlier there tends to be more isolation with the shorter daylight hours and colder weather. He stated whether it was kids or adults that were suffering from mental health (depression, anxiety, suicide, etc.) that the person, or their parent/caretaker, may not know where they could get help.

Councilor Paul continued by noting that depression could also be exasperated because individuals may also find that they were having financial difficulty keeping up with expenses to provide for their family due to inflation, etc. Therefore, he addressed the importance for residents to know that there were programs to help such as:

- ✓ Mental Health Resources
- ✓ Brian's Healing Heart Suicide Prevention
- ✓ Youth & Family Counseling Services -
- ✓ Ledyard Visiting Nurses - Home Health Care

- ✓ Home Heating Fuel Assistance
- ✓ Utilities - Electric & Water Assistance
- ✓ Meal Delivery for Home Bound Individuals
- ✓ Renters Rebate Program
- ✓ No Interest Home Improvement Loans
- ✓ Linda C. Davis Food Pantry
- ✓ United Way of Southeastern Connecticut located in Gales Ferry
- ✓ Special Needs Family Registry
- ✓ Blue Envelope & Green Envelope Program for drivers with special needs

Councilor Paul stated some people just do not know about the assistance programs that were available; or some people may be too proud to ask for help. Therefore, he stated that they need to make sure they were all doing their part to get information out to the residents and to make people aware of the confidential application process. He stated Ledyard does a great job in working to help their residents in-need.

Chief Rich stated that the Police Department would be at the August 31, 2021 Farmers Market to offer support the Community Relations Committee booth and to publicize the Programs that they offer to help support mental health issues and those in the community that have special needs, such as the Special Needs Family Registry and the Blue Envelope and Green Envelope Program for drivers with special needs. He continued to state that he has been working with the Groton Town Police Department, Waterford Police Department and Southern Connecticut State University Center for Excellence in Autism Spectrum Disorders to provide a *Mock Traffic Stop Program* that would be directed toward individuals with Autism. He stated the *Mock Traffic Stop Presentation* would be held on October 1, 2022 at Fitch High School to help those in the autism spectrum see what a traffic stop looked like and for police officers to learn what communication may look like with someone on the spectrum, and learn strategies to effectively communicate. He stated the Presentation would also raise awareness of how the various stimuli that were involved with the police vehicle and the situation of a traffic stop could play into the interactions between driver and the police officer He stated since the Police Department announced the October 1, 2022 *Mock Traffic Stop Presentation* on their Social Media Site that several families with individuals on the Autism Spectrum were interested in attending and they have contacted the Police Department to discuss the program.

Action: Continued