

TOWN OF DEEP RIVER, CONNECTICUT
Community Health Committee

Minutes – June 21, 2011 Meeting
Location: Deep River Town Hall



Meeting Minutes:

Attendance: Committee Members – N. Howard, K. Bender, D. Recchia, R. Marth. Absent: C. Walker, C. Olson, M. Carver

1] Call to Order

The meeting was called to order at 7:32 pm by Chairman Marth.

2] Approval of Minutes from March Meeting

Minutes from the May meeting were reviewed. Motion made by D. Recchia and seconded by N. Howard to accept them. No changes were discussed, no omissions. Motion to accept minutes approved: 4-0.

Old Business

3] Voucher / Referral Documents

Social services coordinator was sent these documents just after the May meeting. This item is considered finished, unless any changes are needed by the social services coordinator or by town employees.

4] F.I.S.H.

This item was tabled to next meeting.

5] Muster / Family Day / Holiday Activities

There will be two donation locations (on Elm Street in front of K. Bender's house and on Main Street, in front of the print shop) to solicit donations for the Deep River Community Fund. Times of operation: 8:30 am to 10:45 (or as practical). R. Marth has purchased collection jars and plastic sign holders for the tables. Name tags will be provided, and D. Recchia will provide pin-on name tag holders. We will have small magnetic "Good Neighbor" medals to give away free at each location, as experimental marketing item. There will be two teams, Kate, Chuck and Maura at Elm Street and Diane, Nancy & Russ at Main Street. (Results to be carefully weighed at future meeting.) The donations are to be counted by two people, same day, at the Town Hall offices.

For Family Day (*no changes in plans, merely reiterated*) in September, the CHC would have a table outside the Town Hall. D. Recchia and K. Bender volunteered to do blood pressure checks and one nurse from the VNLV will also be available.

The Family Day activities would include a way to explain the function of the CHC, introduce the VNLV and collect donations for the Deep River Community Fund, as well as non-perishable items for the Town's food pantry. R. Marth has made contact with the Deep River Newsletter crew, asking for space and for additional advertising in various ads.

The holiday basket program was also discussed. (Question still unanswered from last meeting as to whether there are two holiday basket programs or just one.) Diane has volunteered to take a lead role in this action. She has discussed the holiday program with Gina, and volunteered to meet with Rosie this coming week. The members agreed that the more hands, the more help, the better. No one will be left out if they wish to volunteer.

One well received idea is to have a list of foods and/or items that are needed for the food pantry (might include things like toothpaste or like items that would not normally be thought of). This list could be given to people who are shopping (like for the "Stuff-A-Cruiser" effort), might list what needed items are on sale, besides those that are needed.

There were many ideas discussed with regard to branding, marketing and items that could be used during such events (including a "tote bag" with the CHC/Deep River Community Fund logo). The Family Day and the Holiday Basket projects will ramp up through the summer.

We need to get in touch with a representative of the local church(es), banks and other civic organizations in order that we are not overlapping any services.

6] Officer Elections

No action was taken on this item. Russ Marth discussed the possibility that he may not be able to serve past the end of the year, especially as Chairman, due to a conflict with another role he may be taking within the town. He also mentioned his intention is to stay with the CHC as long as possible.

7] VNLV Questions / Discussions

The VNLV, it was noted, is changing its own structure in an effort to meet the needs of the town of Deep River. In order to accommodate the necessity of three members from DR to be on the VNLV Board, it will vote (on June 22nd) whether to change its own by-laws. Discussion ensued as to whom, within the CHC, might be able to take a role with the VNLV Board. At length, K. Bender offered to take a role as one of Deep River's designees to the VNLV, and to fill a current opening. All members agreed by consensus. R. Marth will send a note to the Board of Selectmen

recommending Kate to take the place of one of the CHC members who recently had resigned.

The Chairman asked those CHC members with medical expertise/training to begin to assess the VNLV programs in earnest, now that the Committee has a better handle on the social services aspect. Diane Recchia offered to call, write or meet with Priscilla Monroe at the VNLV office, to ascertain what contract they have with Deep River, what services are to be provided, and what items may be missing that would benefit or be needed by a large number of Deep River's citizens. This project will be ongoing, of course, and will be a focus of the CHC for many weeks to come.

8] Financial Review and Donation Mailing

Another generous donation was received and deposited during the previous 30-day period. This brings the total of all funds, from every account under CHC purview, to just over \$97,000. All expenses (payments to qualified recipients) were discussed and reviewed by the members present. Nothing in the financials seemed out of place or was questioned by anyone present.

A discussion ensued about general Profit & Loss... doing things that might seem like a good idea but result in a loss or little profit. It was noted that no money has yet been expended from any CHC fund for marketing, PR or any tangible item. (All printing, stock and professional services have been paid for out-of-pocket by CHC members.) All funds expended from the Memorial account have gone, without exception, to qualified recipients for the recommended items such as food, heating oil, medicine, etc, (or as otherwise directed by the probate judge).

While a moratorium on spending is fine and has worked to this point, it cannot go on forever. However, any actions that may be taken in future should be carefully reviewed to be sure that proper profit will result from any actions. (Money from the Deep River Community Fund can be used for marketing, branding or event that would potentially add resources to that fund. It is not clear that money from the Memorial Fund account could be used for promotional events or to pay for mailings, etc.)

10] The Need for a Large Event, Ideas and Planning

The financial picture of the Deep River Community Fund has improved greatly in the last couple months. The Memorial Fund remains strong despite high demand during the recent cold months. Despite these facts, there is a prevailing opinion that the CHC should energetically continue its efforts at proper funding, looking toward the future.

The Chairman discussed with the group the need for more donations (perhaps in the fall, through a donation campaign). While the donations from the Muster and Family Day are nice, they are not expected to yield

much. The Chairman asked those in attendance for ideas on “a big event” that might allow the CHC to put a more significant amount into the coffers.

Ideas came from several members: a wine-tasting event, a breakfast, a concert (featuring a locally popular act), a dance and several venues were discussed, ranging from the Carriage House to the Griswold Inn to the church Parish Center in Chester. The process of ticket sales and how successful that might be was discussed.

No action was taken, but members were asked to investigate details of their various ideas and return at the next meeting with more concrete plans, hopefully to choose a “winner.”

10] Other Items

There were no other items for discussion and no citizens were present.

11] Adjournment

D. Recchia made motion to adjourn, seconded by K. Bender. Passed 4-0.
Meeting adjourned at 8:36 pm.

Respectfully submitted,
Russell Marth, Chairman
(June 27, 2011)