



Stratford C.A.R.E Committee

Minutes November 4, 2015

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Stratford Community Services
468 Birdseye St.
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In attendance:

Donald Goodson, John Fahan, Yan Searcy, Denis Granado, Olga Pena, Elene Crosby, Ann Stockman, William Boyd, Tania Livingston, Tammy Langston, Lucretia Duwel, Ty Simms, Lucretia Duwel, Tania Livingston, Stephanie Philips, Karen Edwards. Police Chief Patrick Ridenhour.

Meeting called to order at 7:13 PM

Approval of Agenda:

Motion to approve: Ann Stockman. Second – Stephanie Philips.

Approval of Minutes:

Motion to approve with amendments: Stephanie Philips. Second – Ann Stockman.

Donald Goodson requested the minutes be amended to clarify that the individual who donated \$3,000 had already received thank you responses from him on behalf of CARE. In addition, Lucretia Duwel requested the minutes be amended to state the broadcasting of essay contest videos on YouTube would require “parental permission” not “privacy permission.”

Treasurer’s Report:

Olga Pena stated we now have \$3,342.33 in the account. Motion to approve report by Lucretia Duwel. Second – Elene Crosby.

Old Business:

Police/Community Relation:

Chief Ridenhour stated the PAL Program is going well. He said the September Motor Cycle Ride Event also went well. The event was underwritten by the John Haymond Law Firm. There are currently about 103 active duty police officers in the Town of Stratford. The FBI suggests that

Stratford should have more officers based on their statistics but Chief Ridenhour feels he knows the town well and additional officers are not entirely necessary.

There was an awards ceremony on 10/22/15 in which several police officers were recognized for their service.

The Chief said due to scheduling conflicts he had to reschedule his meeting with the Institute for Municipal and Regional Policy to review the second set of traffic stop data analysis and findings. He hopes to have an update in the coming weeks.

John Fahan redistributed the Chief's suggested revisions to our near future Op-Ed piece. The Chairman said he would review and make a final decision to release a final draft for publication.

Education Committee:

Ann Stockman handed out a participant guide for the book entitled Waiting for Superman by Karl Weber. The book is about what we can do to save and improve America's Schools.

Ann also handed out an article by Professor Richard E. Nisbett who says that simply telling minority students that their intelligence is under their own control improves their effort on school work and performance. Two separate studies revealed that such encouragement erased up to half the difference between minority and white achievement levels.

A piece written by Bill Strickland speaks to the special role of the school in community life. He states, "The equation is clear: Failed schools equal failed communities; successful schools equal thriving communities!"

Tania Livingston reiterated her concerns that from her experience the school system appears to treat African American parents differently. Yan Searcy questioned the ratio of minority teachers to students and suggested that perhaps a lack of minority teachers and administration reflects a built in cultural bias in the system.

John Fahan asked Donald Goodson to review with us the history and challenges of minority teacher recruitment in the Town of Stratford. Due to some constraints he would have to do that at a later meeting.

Tania Livingston stated that the Superintendent of Schools is charged with submitting an annual report each October on Strategies to recruit minority teachers and administrators.

On 11/10/15 7pm there will be a PTA meeting at Stratford Academy Johnson House. It is believed that Clarence Zachary the Chief Operating Officer of Stratford Public Schools may attend this meeting. The agenda may include the Pathway Plan and School Busing.

Yan Searcy made a motion that the CARE Committee supports Tania Livingston in her efforts with the concerns she has enumerated thus far. Tammy Langston seconded the motion. All members present were in favor of the motion.

A brief discussion took place concerning Catapult Learning. It is an organization that partners with schools to support student academic needs and achievement.

Chairman Goodson stated he would like the CARE committee and its Education Sub-Committee to develop a long term strategic plan to discuss and address the heretofore concerns.

Leadership Committee:

Stephanie Philips stated that there are newly elected members on the Town Council and BOE of both political parties that are open to meeting with CARE. She believes we should seize this opportunity and strengthen our partnering ties with them.

The South End Community Center/Ty Simms:

Ty Sims provided CARE with a comprehensive overview of the SEEC's programs and activities.

The center is currently distributing new and slightly used coats, new hats, and gloves. Most of the coats are children's coats.

There were 3,457 meals served in the month of October which is actually on the low side. The food pantry requires participants to show ID or proof of Stratford residency.

There is a K-6 after school enrichment program that offers on-site tutoring and homework assistance.

The A.B.C.D. Head Start Program is taking applications for children ages 3 to 5.

The center works in collaboration with the IRS for the past 12 years to prepare taxes under its Volunteer Income Tax Assistance Program (V.I.T.A). Ty said she is certified to do taxes for undocumented workers.

The 11th Annual Toy Drive is from November 9 to December 3, 2015.

On Tuesday November 10th at the Birdseye Municipal Complex 6-7:30pm there will a stakeholder meeting. All are invited who are committed to implementing the SECC's 3 year Strategic Plan & Mission Statement & Values. The feedback thus far has been that the SEEC should do a more effective job of marketing all the good things that it does. The final document will be presented to the Mayor and Town Council for approval.

Public Safety/Community Recognition Event:

The Police Chief will solicit ideas from the Fire Chief and EMS Director for a Public Safety Recognition Event for next fall.

Adjournment:

9:02 pm. Motion by William Boyd. Second by Ann Stockman.

Respectfully submitted,

John Fahan

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