



**Stratford C.A.R.E Committee**

**Minutes March 2, 2016**

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**“The mission of Stratford C.A.R.E. is to make the Stratford, CT community strong, united, and vibrant by ensuring racial equity and promoting cultural competence.”**

**In attendance:** Yan Searcy, Donald Goodson, Olga Pena, John Fahan, Frank Parady, Sybil Friedman, Ann Stockman, William M. Boyd, Tania Livingston, Clarence Zachary, Karen Edwards, Tammy Langston, Sylvia Martin, Stephanie Philips, Ken Simon, Patrick Ridenhour.

Meeting called to order at 7:10 PM

**Welcome and Introductions:** Each member in attendance introduced themselves and stated their favorite dessert and their astrological sign.

**Approval of Agenda:** William Boyd. Second – Tammy Langston.

**Approval of Minutes:** Tammy Langston – Second – Tania Livingston.

**Treasurer’s Report:** Olga Pena stated the amount remains the same at \$3,342.32. Olga made a motion to appropriate \$200.00 to the Town of Stratford Recreation Department to go towards CARE’s sponsoring the African-American Collection Exhibit. The motion was motion was seconded by Ann Stockman. All present were in favor.

Following the vote, a discussion took place about time sensitive votes that may require email responses from committee members to build consensus to act with efficient dispatch for items that cannot wait until the next regularly scheduled meeting. Chief Ridenhour will draft language to amend the by-laws to state that such votes would have to reflect a standard quorum, the results of participants, and an appropriation threshold of approximately no more than \$250. Such votes would reflect the actual voting intention of each individual member for the next regularly

scheduled meeting. The final language on amended by-laws will be voted on in the next or future meeting.

### **Old Business – Committee Reports:**

- **Police/Community Relations – Chief Ridenhour:** Chief Ridenhour stated the new report for traffic stop analysis from the Institute for Municipal and Regional Policy will be out in April. Most of the stops in question are in the Barnum Ave corridor. The Chief does not anticipate a problem with this report. Information about the two-week summer camp went out to the schools. The arts program, PAL Boxing, and the Rifle League are all doing well. No major crimes to report. There will be a Lieutenant's Exam given soon. Out of the six applicants 3 are African-American, 2 are Hispanic, and 1 is Caucasian. The Citizens Police Academy may end up being 8 weeks down from 12 weeks because of budget costs. There will be a community discussion on Connecticut's Opioid Addiction Crisis on Thursday, March 3, 2016 at the R.D. Scinto Auditorium at 1 Corporate Drive, Shelton.
- **Education Committee:** Chairman Yan Searcy welcomed Chief Operating Officer Clarence Zachary of the Stratford BOE to our meeting. The Chairman thanked Donald Goodson, Tammy Langston, Tania Livingston, Olga Pena, Elene Crosby, and Karen Edwards for attending and giving presentations about CARE at the last BOE meeting. The education committee and Mr. Zachary thought things went well at the BOE meeting.

A discussion followed between Mr. Zachary and CARE members about the Pathway Plan for racial balancing and the achievement gap. Mr. Zachary stated the Town BOE is in compliance with State of CT mandates for racial balancing. He also stated there are a few variables which affect racial balancing. For instance, he can predict with near certainty the racial balance of the incoming school year but that balance will change during the year as students move in and out of the district. Tammy Langston disagreed with Mr. Zachary's statistics. Olga Pena stated the Pathway Plan of the middle schools into the high schools has changed. The CARE committee has an ideal target for racial balancing and will continue a mutual dialogue with Mr. Zachary about what it specifically would like to see above and beyond state compliance for the school district regarding this concern.

Tania Livingston stated that 89% of African-American students in Stratford are not passing math. Mr. Zachary acknowledged there is a definite problem with math scores, however, those numbers do not tell the whole story. He stated many students come to Stratford from outside the district during the course of the year and skew the overall

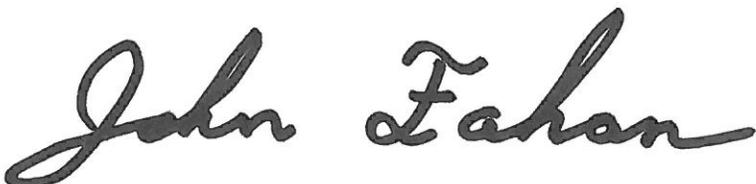
average of math proficiency downward. He stated that if you look at the trend of students who have been in Stratford schools from Kindergarten their math proficiency tends to be more positive. This upward trend is especially true when you look at 3<sup>rd</sup> grade math scores in which teachers have a Math coach assigned to them. Unfunded mandates are also a challenge in getting scores to where they need to be. Dr. Robinson is committed to getting all students to perform well by evaluating where they are by conducting the Star Test of Assessment.

- **Special Project Committee Report (African-American Collection Exhibit) Stephanie Philips:** Stephanie Philips reported that the exhibit would be available for viewing downstairs in the Birdseye Municipal Complex Monday through Friday 5 to 8pm and Saturday from 9am to 1pm the week of 3/1/16. CARE is a sponsor of this event.
- **Public Relations/Communications – John Fahan and Ken Simon:** John Fahan said the letter to the editor will be published the following day on March 3<sup>rd</sup>. Ken Simon said Facebook has changed quite a bit in the last few years in its capabilities. He asked the CARE committee to consider spending up to \$20 a few times a year to boost advertisements and or announcements about CARE that can reach several thousand individuals within a specific mile radius. Mr. Simon also asked CARE members to consider content policy for the CARE Facebook page.
- **Community Recognition Dinner – Yan Searcy, Karen Edwards, and John Fahan:** Karen Edwards commented that we should start making decisions on a nomination selection process and a venue for September. Chief Ridenhour suggested we consider the Riverview Bistro for the Dinner.

**New Business/Funding Priorities – Yan Searcy:** Mr. Searcy asked the committee to consider overall funding priorities that should tie into our mission statement. It was suggested by Olga Pena that the executive board of officers first decide such priorities. In relation to this, Chief Ridenhour requested of John Fahan to state CARE's mission statement in most correspondence especially the agenda and minutes.

**Adjournment:** By Yan Searcy at 8:32pm.

Respectfully submitted,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "John Fahan". The signature is written in dark ink and is positioned at the bottom of the page, below the typed name.

John Fahan