



Stratford C.A.R.E Committee

Minutes August 3, 2016 at 7pm

Email: stratford.care.committee@gmail.com

Telephone: (203)-380-6777

ATIN: C.A.R.E

Mailing Address: Stratford Community Services
468 Birdseye St.
Stratford, CT 06615

In attendance: Yan Searcy, Donald Goodson, Olga Pena, John Fahan, William Boyd, Karen Edwards, Sylvia Martin, Stephanie Philips, Lucretia Duwel, Tania Livingston. Also in attendance were Town Council Members Alan Llewelyn, Tina Manus, and Wali Kadeem. Board of Education Chairman James Feehan and Police Chief Joseph McNeil also attended.

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Meeting called to order at 7:10 PM

Welcome and Introductions:

Chairman Searcy asked each member to introduce themselves and tell us if they prefer Steak, Shrimp or Vegetables. Members also spoke about their feeling concerning recent events in the United States.

A brief discussion took place surrounding recent events of derogatory comments made by a local public official. Wali Kadeem, James Feehan, and Stephanie Philips updated those who were not familiar with the incident and they also denounced the incident.

Approval of Minutes:

Motion to approve minutes – Stephanie Philips. Second – Olga Pena. All in favor.

Treasurer's Report:

Olga Pena stated the balance is \$3,014.45. Motion to approve Stephanie Philips. Second -Tammy Langston. All were in favor.

Old Business:

Police/Community Relations: The Chairman welcomed our new Police Chief Joseph McNeil. The Chief stated there will be a baseball camp at Longbrook Park. Resource Crossfit will also take place in front of the police station. The Officers Communication Interaction Team will be engaging and talking to youth in the community. The department will now have patrol officers committed to interacting with the same community for a 6-month period at a time. The hiring exam will be on August 20th. There will be a Citizens Police Academy with the dates TBD. The Academy will not be 10 weeks but will be streamlined to be shorter and more effective to meet everyone's busy schedules.

The Chief said he will help CARE in the coming months to establish a Stratford Police/Community Advisory Review Board. Karen Edwards, William Boyd, and John Fahan agreed to serve on the board.

Education Committee Report: Chairman Yan Searcy would like to implement "CARE Reads" Individuals from diverse backgrounds would read in the schools. The CARE Education Committee will submit a proposal to the BOE. BOE Chairman Jim Feehan said it does not have to be a formal proposal and we can email him. A motion was made by John Fahan to appoint Tania Livingston as CARE Liaison with Stratford Schools. Seconded by William Boyd. All were in favor. Tammy Langston and Olga Pena agreed to assist Tania in her new role.

BOE Chairman James Feehan spoke about the residency letters going out to parents to verify their children reside in town. He stated that it's unfair that some non-resident students are attending Stratford schools and not paying for it. Parents or guardians of students found in violation of the residency requirements may be subject to prosecution or have to pay the district tuition for usage of the schools. John Fahan questioned Mr. Feehan as to why there is a sense of urgency to do this now. Chairman Feehan stated he received several complaints about children attending Stratford schools out of district. Mr. Fahan stated that he has been approached by several residents who feel this is a draconian measure. Mr. Feehan assured Mr. Fahan it was not draconian. Mr. Fahan asked both Chairman Feehan and the Police Chief as to who would decide if such violations of the law are pursued as civil vs. criminal violations. Chairman Feehan was not certain and Chief McNeil said they are technically criminal violations. Mr. Fahan stated the BOE would have to manage their policy in a better manner as we do not want the image of parents arrested and fined in Stratford as a young African-American mother from Bridgeport was a couple of years ago under these circumstances which made national headlines.

Stephanie Philips questioned the number of potential violations we are talking about. Ms. Philips also felt the policy was worded in a negative fashion to the public. Mr. Feehan asked us what would the policy look like to CARE if we could write it. Chairman Yan Searcy emphatically stated that no parent should be arrested or fined for attempting to do what is right for their child. Those caught in violation will just have to leave the Stratford Schools. Mr. Feehan was very

understanding and thanked CARE for its point of view which he had not considered beforehand. He is open to changing the policy and will take our concerns back to the BOE.

Public Relations/Communications: Chairman Searcy stated he would like John Fahan and Ken Simon to develop a media contact tree especially in the event that CARE has to contact the media in a time sensitive manner.

Community Recognition Dinner: Karen Edwards placed a motion to select the Oronoque Country Club as the venue for the recognition dinner. Seconded by Olga Pena. All were in favor.

New Business:

***Community Forum:** Chairman Searcy would like to have a community forum quarterly.

***Junior Board:** A Junior Care Board was mentioned in the past and is still a goal of CARE to develop.

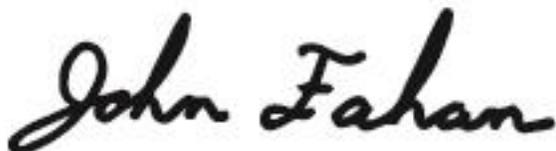
***NAACP Partnership:** The Chairman is currently speaking with George Mintz of the NAACP of Greater Bridgeport about partnering with CARE to expand a community conversation on race, perception, and continued dialogue with the police department.

Meeting Adjourned 8:43pm

Respectfully submitted,

John Fahan

C.A.R.E. Secretary

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "John Fahan". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

