

NAUGATUCK CULTURAL COUNCIL
REGULAR MEETING-Thursday, January 24, 2013
Naugatuck High School Resource Center
6:00-7:50 pm

Minutes:

Meeting was called to order at 6:05 p.m. by Sandra Heller, and the group pledged allegiance. Welcome and introductions were made. In attendance were Fire Commissioner Wayne Malicki, Fire Chief Ken Hanks, Deputy Fire Chief Ellen Murray, Pastor Lena Warren, Bernie Grant, Nate Monro, John Tindall-Gibson, Vanessa Vowe, Les Williams, Aaron Williams, Robin Gerber, Maya Williams, Michelle Zychowski, Chin Sounanthanam, Len Yannielli, Mary Johnson, Suzanne Flores, Felipe Flores, Melissa Leonard, Monroe Webster, and Sandra Heller.

Minutes: Unanimous approval of Motion to Approve Minutes of October 23, 2012— Motion by Mary Johnson/Second (2nd) by Chin Sounanthanam

Leadership Team Report-Sandra Heller/Vanessa Vowe—Sandra Heller asked if anyone wanted to fill the position of recording secretary. No one stepped forward. Mary Johnson volunteered to take minutes for this meeting, and others agreed to rotate responsibility for taking minutes. (NOTE: Mary's meeting notes were lost, so Sandra Heller used her notes for these minutes.) Meetings will now be quarterly for the purpose of sharing out committee work and bringing new members to hear about the whole council. Also, these meetings will be an opportunity to socialize, celebrate accomplishments, and have speakers and educational programs. The meeting will also be the place to discuss new committee developments. After discussion, it was agreed that Thursday is a better day for most people to meet, so the meetings will be on the third Thursday of the month in January, April, July and October. April will be the fourth Thursday due to the schools' April vacation. Sandra reported that there are several options for grant money that is available for projects which we can apply for at Naugatuck Savings Bank, Naugatuck Savings and Loan and the Connecticut Community Foundation. Deadlines for proposals are several times per year.

Committee Reports:

Cultural Activities and Awareness - Vanessa Vowe for Les Williams

After holding the Celebration of People in October, the committee members agreed to offer their help to the Environmental Initiatives Committee. As a result, meetings for the CA&A Committee were postponed until the New Year.

Environmental Initiatives-Felipe Flores

The committee has been exploring the possibility of labeling grates in town to let people know that everything poured down those drains goes into the river. That project does not seem feasible at this time. Another proposal is to start a community gardening project. Pastor Lena Warren will present information about community gardening later in the meeting. There is a possibility of working with the Senior Center on their garden.

Leadership Development- Sandra volunteered to set up an initial meeting for Youth Leadership Development. John, Chin, Robin and Nate expressed interest in this committee.

Community Concerns:

Mary Johnson reported on Cultural Heritage Night- March 13th, 6-8 p.m. at City Hill Middle School. She asked for volunteers to help her to plan. Chin and Robin volunteered to assist, and Vanessa volunteered to ask ESL students in the Literacy Volunteers program who live in Naugatuck.

Naugatuck Fire Department -Wayne Malicki reported that the Naugatuck Fire Department has a long-term plan to diversify the fire department staff to better meet the needs of the community. Due to recent contract changes, there will be about 12 retirements in the next year creating openings for new staff. The department is trying to be proactive and get the word out that they are looking for diversity, people who speak multiple languages and are of a minority group especially Hispanic. He indicated that the typical pool of candidates is Caucasian males. There is a required standard physical fitness test that is only offered once or twice per year that is coming up in March. The department will be posting openings around then as well.

Earth Day/Telling Our Stories: Len Yannielli reported on Earth Day- April 22nd/Mayor for the Day; he would like to nominate Tony Memoli as Earth Day Mayor of the Day. Also, Carlos Nunes has offered to do "Telling Our Stories" after the Town Hall ceremony. Ceremony is at 10:30 a.m., and "Telling Our Stories" will be at 11:30 a.m. at the Gunntown Passive Park and Nature Preserve.

Speaker Presentation:

Pastor Lena Warren: Creating A Community Garden

Next Steps-

- Melissa Leonard will contact Bob Mezzo about land at Prospect Street School site and/or any other abandoned spaces.
- Members will search website resources provided by speaker Pastor Lena Warren.
- Felipe Flores will set date and time for Environmental Initiatives Committee meeting to discuss next steps for community garden.
- Sandra Heller will set date and time for Leadership Development Committee meeting.

Unanimous approval of Motion to adjourn meeting at 8:47 p.m.—Motion by Melissa Leonard/Second (2nd) by Suzanne Flores.

Next REGULAR MEETING-April 25, 2013

Respectfully submitted,

Sandra Heller