



**Power of Together 2  
Meeting Minutes  
November 8, 2022**

Barb opened the meeting by introducing three new members. Their addition brings our membership total to 131. She also reminded members about Givinga as a way to pay donations, as well as the Cactus Jack Foundation as a vehicle for supporting individuals or organizations who do not have 501(c)3 status.

We then heard from Christopher Freeman, President of CUSH (**Clean Up Sounds and Harbors**). CUSH is an all-Volunteer organization that was described by Karen Oakley at our last meeting in August. The bulk of the support provided by PoT2 will go toward paying the annual cost of running analytical assays of water samples, performed by the University of Rhode Island (15 different sites @\$750/site). CUSH is broadening its focus to include assessment of the effects of local sources of pollution on the quality of life for humans residing near Long Island Sound.

The first presentation was by Tricia Cunningham on behalf of **Always Home** (<https://www.alwayshome.org/>). Their mission is to prevent family homelessness by providing multiple services, including rental assistance, childcare, transportation, identification of affordable housing, and job training. Located in Mystic, most clients live in New London, Norwich, Groton, and Stonington. 286 families were supported in 2021.

We next heard from Shannon DePerry in support of the **Jason Hyatt Center**. This organization came into being following the closure of a shelter in Noank. They are supported by Sound Community Services (<https://soundcommunityservices.org/>) and have the capacity to house 3 men and 2 women ranging in age from 18-24 years old for up to 18 months. While they do have access to mental health and social services support, there is currently no actual budget for food and other essentials.

The final presentation was by Susan Kietzman, a volunteer for **Thames Valley Council for Community Action** (TVCCA, <https://www.tvcca.org/>). TVCCA is a private, nonprofit organization that receives funding from both federal and state sources. Among the services they provide are housing, food (e.g. Meals on Wheels), and clothing. They recently initiated a new program aimed at providing transportation for their clients, many of whom are disabled or elderly. Financial support is needed to cover related costs, including insurance for volunteer drivers and some modest reimbursement for these drivers.

Following a tally of the votes cast by members in attendance and those participating via Zoom, it was announced that the **Jason Hyatt Center of Sound Community Services** would receive our support.