



Power of Together 2

Meeting Minutes (revised)

Meeting of November 12, 2024

Debby O'Brien opened the meeting with a quick reminder that the organizations that PoT2 funds, as well as other organizations, are often in need of volunteer help. The leadership team is working on providing information about volunteering to the membership.

Chris Morren announced that the Town of Stonington is starting a project, called Stonington Community Cares, to assist needy elders and the disabled. In this program, those in need are paired with volunteers, who can perform non-professional tasks, like dishwashing, driving, and lawn mowing. Volunteers and recipients in the program will need background checks. Those interested in volunteering or receiving care can register at: www.urcommunitycares.org, or by calling (860) 535-5015.

Member Betsy Stevenson and the Rev. Carolyn Patierno, Board President of Immigration Advocacy and Support Center, expressed gratitude for our financial gift. The organization provides low cost, reliable legal representation to immigrants. Currently, they are working on 180 cases to benefit those seeking asylum and their families. The money was spent on attorney and paralegal fees.

Barb Silver welcomed two new members, Doug Rice and Kimberly Smith. Power of Together 2 was formed eight years ago in April 2016 and currently has 120 members.

Pitches:

Terry Samokar – Inter-religious Eco-Justice Network

IREJN is an inter-faith organization that works with various religion communities throughout the state in an effort to make a difference about climate change. She said that religious leaders feel a moral responsibility to protect the planet and to push against false theology. Funds from PoT2 would be used to help houses of worship with energy efficiency by installing solar panels and other energy-saving devices and measures.

Shannon DePerry – Giving Closet

The Giving Closet in North Stonington started in 2019 and donates free clothing, shoes, accessories, and Christmas gifts to those in need. They have two classrooms at the high school filled with donations people can choose from. They provide masks for the immune-

compromised and toothbrushes and toothpaste to the high school. Shannon read a number of testimonials from Giving Closet customers.

John Groton – New London Community Meals Center

The Community Meals Center started in 1985. The Center is open seven days a week and provides 5,000-7,000 nutritious meals a month in an environment of care and dignity, including the everyday donation of 200 meals to the homeless shelter and 10 meals to the methadone center. More than 31,000 people in New London are food insecure. The Center owns the building it operates from – and the building is in constant need of maintenance. Also, electricity and insurance costs have increased. The funding would go to general operating expenses.

The membership voted and the New London Community Meals Center received the most votes and is the November 2024 recipient of our donations.