

Power of Together2

Minutes: January 10, 2017

The fourth meeting of Power of Together2 was held at the Mystic VFW in Stonington on Tuesday evening, January 10, 2017.

It was a wonderful, short and inspirational gathering with approximately 66 folks attending including members and guests. 51 member votes were cast for the three proposed organizations, from which the Pawcatuck Neighborhood Center was chosen.

With the addition of new commitment forms we are now at 93 members. There is a good possibility of more members in the next few days but, at a minimum, we will be presenting the PNC our donation of \$9,300.00.

The meeting began with Dave Schulz announcing that our membership had easily doubled less than a year from our inaugural meeting on April 12, 2016, when we launched Power of Together with 43 members. He then reviewed our contributions thus far: \$4,300 to MASH, \$5,800 to the Groton Public Library, and \$8,200 to The Giving Garden at the Denison Pequotsepos Nature Center.

Dave then discussed the hope of putting together a PoT2 website in the near future and asked the members to think of someone who might assist in doing that; mentioned that we would be distributing a list of charitable organizations in our area to the membership; and reviewed the logistics of how proposals were suggested and voted on.

Craig Floyd from The Giving Garden then reported to the group on the impact made with our donation of \$8,200. He gave an itemized report on exactly how those funds were used, enabling the purchase of a root vegetable washer, a drip irrigation system, fencing, seeds and a “hoop” house cover. He noted that the garden went from producing 2,080 pounds of vegetables in 2014 to 13,085 pounds in 2016. Just as impressive was his report on how the work at the garden was as beneficial to the many volunteers that worked there as the food was to the hundreds of food-insecure people in Southeastern Connecticut. It was a very inspirational presentation.

Following this, three presenters were selected randomly:

1. The Pawcatuck Neighborhood Center proposed by Lori Calobrisi. Lori gave a detailed report on the many valuable services provided by the PNC serving 2,000 regular clients as well as hundreds of senior citizens. The programs ranged from food distribution, an oil assistance plan and a job search program, Senior Meals on Wheels, a service providing weekly essentials to babies, to a student backpack program providing meals for students in need when school is not in session.
2. The Mystic Museum of Art proposed by Dawn Salerno. Dawn discussed Art for All scholarships which have provided funds for anywhere from 30 to 70 scholarships per year enabling both young and old to participate in beneficial art programs at the museum. She noted all the ways that art provides an amazing amount of value to a person's life, enriching it in countless ways.
3. The Stonington Community Center proposed by Ann Lobdell. Ann's proposal was to aid in the building of new tennis courts at the COMO. The courts were built in 1957 and are in need of a total repair. \$230K has been raised thus far with \$70K still needed. She related that the courts were extremely valuable to the local community and that the COMO has been an integral and important part of strengthening and building community in Stonington. The courts not only would serve many of our local youth and senior citizens but also serve as a source of extremely beneficial revenue for the COMO.

The group voted and the Pawcatuck Neighborhood Center received the most votes. A check will be presented to PNC by Lori Calobrisi in the upcoming weeks. We will announce the total presented and the date in a subsequent email to the membership.

Our meeting dates for the rest of 2017 are: April 11, July 11 and October 10.

Thank you to every member who has so generously donated!

The meeting adjourned at 7:50.

Respectfully submitted,

Gae Melford
Power of Together2