

Power of Together 2 Meeting Minutes – November 12, 2019

What a great evening! Thank you to all! Members gathered around 6 pm, many bringing appetizers and desserts for our end-of-the-year meeting. It was great to have a few moments to spend some time together. Dave Schulz opened with a thanks to United Baptist Church and Susan Morton for hosting us again.

News

Membership Welcome to new members: Shelley Mancini, Pierre and Maryse Wicker, Pauline Jauck, Sheila Fuller and Jim Hunter. Membership is now 119 strong.

Contributions Total dollars raised since our first meeting in April 2016: \$130,850. After tonight's meeting, the total will be upwards of \$142,500. There are now 4 chapters of PoT (Niantic, Griswold, Waterford and Mystic). Total membership for all four 326. Total dollars raised: over \$430,000. We are definitely making a difference!

Charter Oaks Matching Grant Terry Samokar shared information about this program which is in effect until November 27. If you have an account or HSA at Charter Oaks your contribution may be eligible for a matching fund. All you need do is go online to: <https://charteroak.org/content/matching-gifts-charity-form> or use the form attached to the cover email. Note, you do not have to write the check from your Charter Oak account, you just have to have one. Donations have to have been made before 11/27/19. **Tonight's recipient would be eligible!**

Prior Recipient Report Kevin Sisson spoke on behalf of our August recipient, the YMCA Reach & Rise program, a therapeutic mentoring program where volunteers commit to one year, one day a week, to spend time with an at-risk child between the ages of 6 and 17. The program is currently servicing 78 children and has been very impactful for both the children as well as their mentors. Because their grants were cut, our contribution is keeping this important program going, for which they are extremely grateful.

Presentations

1. Mary Riley presented on behalf of Mystic Geriatric Institute whose goal is to enhance senior services in our region. The Institute has been instrumental in bringing Hartford HealthCare to our region and is working on all elements of aging, a growing population of our most vulnerable people. As the Institute has no paid staff, everything they have accomplished (including three well-attended Senior Strong Summits) has been done through volunteers. They are currently rolling out a new Caregiver Training Program to begin in February of 2020, and these funds would be crucial to implementing that important program.

2. Betty Smith spoke for Always Home, where she is executive director. Its mission is to prevent family homelessness through financial assistance, counseling, and employment training programs. She described how 40% of families in Connecticut are struggling to pay for their housing, and then told specifics about a family they are currently working with to help keep in their home. They have 40% more clients this year than last and have doubled their staff of social workers. As their budget is almost completely funded through individuals and grants, the need is great for additional funding.

3. Betty Ann Reiter presented for One Book, One Region, a library program started 19 years ago which has had some amazing results in numerous areas: provided the impetus to build a school for girls in Afghanistan, inspired a young autistic boy to read his first book, changed the mind of a school system which now allows graphic books to be included in their curriculum. Their goal is to select books which will generate discussion and break down barriers between people. Our contribution would support the purchasing of books as well as the yearly visit to our area by the author.

Following the presentations, the meeting broke for about 45 minutes, as members gathered for some great food, beverages and lively conversation, after which the selected organization was announced.

Selected Organization: Always Home

Please make out your checks, as soon as possible, to Always Home and send to: Karen Stone, 217 Noank Road, Mystic, CT 06355.

Or you can donate through the Giving link provided in the cover email.