



## Power of Together SECT 2 Meeting Minutes, 2/7/23

Karen Stone called the meeting to order at 7:03. She shared the following information regarding our organization: we now have 129 members; this is our 28<sup>th</sup> meeting; and since our inception, we have donated \$285,210 to 27 worthy causes in southeastern CT.

Karen also summarized our new policy regarding the quarterly payments of \$100:

*In order to ensure timely delivery of the POT2 donation to the chosen organization, as of February 2023, a payment policy will be in place that requires all members to deliver their payment within 3 weeks of the meeting date. A maximum of two reminders will be sent. After this time, the payment will be considered missed. After 2 missed payments, the member will be asked to resign their membership from the Power of Together, unless extenuating circumstances exist.*

Gino DeMaio, CEO of Sound Community Services, our November 2022 recipient, was joined by 7 fellow staff members. They expressed their deep gratitude to the membership, and said the funds from PoT will be used to provide stipends to clients to cover first and last month deposits, ensuring that they can rent a place to live.

The hat was passed and 3 people submitted their names.

1. The first presentation from a member was by Laura Manfre on behalf of **Hope in Focus**. Her organization seeks to help people suffering from Leiber's Congenital Amaurosis (LCA), a progressive rare disease characterized by the degeneration of cone cells in the retina. Hope in Focus seeks to raise funds to support research, raise patient awareness, and provide education and outreach. Hope in Focus will be sponsoring a major conference in June, and they are seeking funds to help cover travel expenses for participants who may not otherwise be able to attend.
2. Next we heard from Kristin Harkness of **Spark Makerspace**, an organization in New London that makes available to its members numerous resources, equipment, and instruction. These include a woodworking, stained glass, industrial sewing, electronics, 3D printer, and digital creation. The city of New London has agreed to provide \$13,000 toward construction of a handicapped accessible entrance, and Spark needs to raise an additional matching amount of \$13K.
3. Finally, Eunice Sutphen spoke in support of the **Eastern CT Community Gardens Association (ECCGA)**, an organization founded 11 years ago. They are engaged in a wide variety of activities, all aimed at empowering community gardens. The Groton Family Farm, Garden Pawcatuck, Grasso Tech, Fresh New London, and the Ledyard Garden Group are just a few of their many collaborative partners.

The organization receiving the most votes was ECCGA. The meeting adjourned at 7:45 pm.