



Power of Together 2

Meeting Minutes

August 9, 2022, 7 p.m.

The meeting was held at the YMCA in Mystic. It was also offered on Zoom.

Shana Easley, Program Manager of the **Thames River Family Program**, the recipient of funds from our May meeting, thanked the group for our generous gift. The money was used to purchase stoves, refrigerators, beds, and mattresses for some of the 24 apartments the program makes available temporarily to homeless 18-24 year olds. TRFP also helps these young parents develop goals and strengthen important life skills, arrange safe, quality child care, and maintain housing stability upon leaving TRFP.

Three Pitches

1. PowerofTogether2 Board Member Dave Schulz pitched the **Giving Garden** at the **Denison Pequotsepos Nature Center** for PoT member Susan Charette (who was working at the polls and couldn't attend the meeting). Charette pitched the Giving Garden at Coogan Farm, part of the Nature Center. As Craig Floyd, the manager of the Garden since its inception in 2014, is retiring, Susan indicated a gift in his honor would be a fitting tribute as well as major boost to their program. The Garden provides thousands of pounds of pesticide-free produce, as well as herbs, honey, and orchard fruit, to various organizations in New London County.
2. Susan Kietzman pitched the **Thames Valley Council for Community Action** Friendly Medical Rides program, a new TVCCA initiative that aims to provide rides to medical appointments for those 65 years or older and/or those who are disabled. TVCCA matches a client in need, who is homebound and does not drive, with a volunteer to pick them up, escort them to their appointment, and then safely bring them home. Even though the senior centers offer some limited rides, these clients need help getting from their door into a vehicle and public transportation does not offer that. Also, many of the clients have to pay for taxi service or private rides that they can't afford if they need to go to their doctors frequently. Friendly Medical Rides is safe, free, and falls into TVCCA's Healthy Futures Aging in Place work plan. TVCCA also offers shopping and visiting programs. The funding would be used to reimburse the volunteer drivers in all three programs at 62 cents/mile.
3. Karen Oakley pitched **Clean Up Sound & Harbors (CUSH)**. Its mission is to clean up and protect Fishers Island Sound and its coves, inlets, bays, rivers and harbors. Twenty-five CUSH volunteers collect water samples, monitoring the water quality of Stonington

and Mystic Harbors, the Mystic River, Pequotsepos and Wequetequock Coves, and the major freshwater streams that feed them. Using methods developed by the University of Rhode Island's Watershed Watch, CUSH's volunteer citizen scientists are trained to test for dissolved oxygen, salinity, nitrogen and phosphorus, chlorophyll, fecal coliform, and other indicators. Those results are then formulated into a single Aquatic Health Index, a useful water-quality score developed by the Buzzards Bay Coalition in Massachusetts. CUSH shares its data with state and local officials as well as regional environmental organizations and the general public. Long-term monitoring can reveal the biggest pollution challenges and help identify how to fix them.

The pitch that received the most votes was **CUSH**. Checks can be made to CUSH; payment options will follow in an email along with these minutes.

Meeting was adjourned at 7:45 pm.

Next Meeting: Our next meeting is scheduled for November 8, 2022.