

Craftsbury Neighbor2Neighbor Committee Meeting Minutes February 2nd, 2023

Kris called the meeting to order at 7 p.m. Present in person at Town Hall: Susie Houston, Tim Fritz, Leslie Taylor, Kit Basom, Kris Coville, Kim LaRose, Penelope Doherty

1. Adjustments/Changes to the agenda - Review committee member terms, expirations and reappointments, and Decide on annual meeting schedule changes were moved to the top of the agenda to make sure these business items were taken care of.
2. Approval of Minutes - Copies of the minutes of the 10/24/22 meeting were missing due to Secretary error. **Tim moved, Kim seconded, approval of the minutes which were posted on the Town website.** Discussion: going forward, the Secretary shall bring hard copies of the minutes to the meeting to allow review and proper discussion. The Secretary shall also check in with members monthly between meetings to follow up about action items noted in the minutes of the previous month's meeting, and shall send the minutes to committee members before the upcoming meeting for review. **All in favor - minutes approved.**
3. Review committee member terms, expirations, reappointments and meeting dates - Kris Coville's and Tim Fritz's terms on the committee are set to expire at Town Meeting 2023 as the terms were staggered at set-up to avoid everyone's terms expiring at the same time. Both Kris and Tim are willing to continue on the committee so Susie will pass along the recommendation to the Select Board to reappoint them to the committee starting at Town Meeting 2023.

Penelope moved, Kim seconded, to move the Neighbor to Neighbor committee meetings to the 4th Thursday of January, April, July and October to avoid conflicts with holiday activities and other town committee meetings. **All in favor - motion passed.**

4. Discussion about rethinking, updating and expanding our mutual aid network – Kris led the discussion. The town website wording re: the N2N Mutual Aid Form needs to be revamped, starting with the wording on the button. We want to use the committee's mission language, something about assisting town residents in times of need, and possibly adopting the name Neighbor to Neighbor Network. We need to have the button set up to "push" notifications so someone will be alerted when someone signs up either for assistance or to volunteer.

Other thoughts about changes to the info on the form:

- Keep "In Emergency dial 911"
- Remove verbage about Covid
- Add 988 to emergency numbers, for anyone experiencing a mental health crisis

The committee wishes to keep this structure in place for times of emergencies and natural disasters, and also make it useful during "usual times". Leslie will work with Kris on updating the information and recommending a process for keeping the system functional. We still need to reach out to everyone currently on the list to refresh the information on it.

Discussion about how to learn more about the informal neighbor to neighbor connections already existing in the town, and share the information in a way that will help us build a more comprehensive network going forward: There are many new residents in the town who aren't very well connected and may wish to be part of helping their neighbors. Who knows who? and who needs what? The town clerk, select board and fire department members, along with a few others, have a great deal of knowledge that would help us know where the gaps and opportunities are. At the next committee meeting on April 27th we would like to plan a special meeting to bring these key people together and share their knowledge with us. We could use both the Grand List and a town map at the meeting to identify the gaps and opportunities. This will be a start in figuring out how to build/rebuild community connections in post pandemic times.

5. Review N2N assigned tasks from newly approved Hazard Mitigation plan - Penelope led this discussion based on a handout she created from the town's newly adopted Local Hazard Mitigation Plan. The tasks with a Neighbor to Neighbor responsibility include:

- a. Identify an alternate emergency shelter for the town when the Academy can't serve as shelter.
- b. Participate in keeping the Local Emergency Management Plan up to date.
- c. Ensure residents have timely information about solid waste disposal options.
- d. Establish a permanent location for the Craftsbury satellite Food Pantry.
- e. Integrate the operations of N2N into the Local Emergency Management Plan
- f. Promote safe winter driving practices
- g. Promote awareness of a winter tire access program for low income residents
- h. Establish a network of volunteers to dig out residents who need help in extreme snow events
- i. Work with home health care providers and volunteers to increase awareness of heat illness
- j. Identify elders at risk in a heat emergency and identify places where they can find relief

6. Check in: Thoughts/Needs/Concerns from representatives:

- Food Pantry, Everyone Eats, and food system grants - Kris announced that the food pantry site will remain at the Church for the next three years. The pantry seems stable with the increased numbers of recipients and with fundraising. The final end of Everyone Eats on March 31st is still a big loss and Kris is thinking of other possible ways to support the suppliers and eaters who benefitted from the program.

Kris has submitted reports on the food system grants received last year. There are cows still to raise, and some money left in the Youth Leadership grant which will be used for Grow Your Own workshops, but the reporting has been done.

- Mental Health - Kim said the Mental Health committee has been compiling a list of recommended books for schools on the subject of mental health. They are also looking at organizing additional training in Mental Health First Aid.
- Business/School/Churches – Kit said the loss of the Localvore funding program is a big blow to the Genny's bottom line, especially at the Albany store. Emily is working hard on other possibilities for filling the gap. The low snow winter has also meant business is way down. Lack of after-school programming is a big concern because it has so many ripple effects with workers and families. Kim reported that both churches in town are holding services in person but

continue to send links out for streaming services so church attendance has not returned to normal.

- Health Officer – Tim said Hardwick Rescue continues to have issues with staffing and difficulties responding to calls. Glover ambulance will respond in Craftsbury but is pressuring the town to sign on and pay a fee.
- Emergency Management – Penelope covered in earlier discussion
- Community Connectedness - Leslie expressed an interest in conversations & putting feelers out with other residents interested in grassroots community-building, however it might happen.

7. List of Action Items for follow-up:

- Leslie work with Kris on updating mutual aid form, processes & verbage about it
- Susie mention to other SB members about N2N idea for a special meeting, who else should be invited? Start list of key people in stores & neighborhoods who have a pulse on needs.
- Kris find out about role of Fire Auxiliary
- Penelope is prepping a summary of the Hazard Mitigation Plan and its annual review for the town website. When that's complete she'll send it to N2N members along with a copy of the complete HM plan and the task notes she reviewed today.
- Kris give Kim access to Mutual aid list Google sheet
- Kris check with Michelle if she attempted to contact those on the mutual aid list

8. Adjourn - Kris adjourned the meeting at 8:45.

Submitted by
Leslie Taylor