

Craftsbury Neighbor2Neighbor Committee
1/6/22 Meeting Minutes
7pm via Zoom

Attending: Kris Coville, Chair; Penelope Doherty, Kim Larose, Tim Fritz, Leslie Taylor, Kit Basom; Susie Houston, SB Liaison; Nathalie Jonas and Louise Calderwood, citizens.

- 1. Discuss and approve minutes of 10/7/21 meeting.** Kris explained the circumstances of low attendance at October meeting and that one member in attendance had since moved from Craftsbury, and therefore this review was unusual. She invited any questions from attendees. There being none, Penelope moved and Tim seconded that the minutes be accepted as presented. Motion carried unanimously.
- 2. Welcome to new members! Overview of N2N purpose and scope.** Kris briefly reviewed the origin and history of Neighbor to Neighbor, with its primary mission of supporting the community in times of distress. She explained that in usual times (as opposed to an emergency activation) the group has the flexibility of going more dormant (keeping a finger on the pulse of the community) or it can take on projects to support the overall well-being of the community. She then reviewed the composition and members determined by the task force last summer and fall, which was brought to Select Board on December 7, 2021 and approved/appointed by them via unanimous vote.
 - Food pantry rep: Kris Coville
 - Mental health rep: Kim Larose
 - Town Health Officer: Tim Fritz
 - Church/school/business rep: Kit Basom
 - Emergency management rep: Penelope Doherty
 - Two qualified at-large members of the community:
 - 1) Leslie Taylor
 - 2) currently vacant.

Kris pointed out that four members constitutes a quorum. She then asked each member to briefly introduce themselves, after which she pointed out we have one open At-Large position. Kris emphasized that N2N holds fully open meetings, encourages interested citizen participation, and welcomes full discussions. A question was raised about why a firefighter was not specifically in the membership; it was explained that N2N members bridge to multiple elements in the community: the Church/School/Business rep bridges to those elements rather than all of them sitting on the committee; the EM rep bridges to emergency management entities in Craftsbury and beyond, which includes bridging to our Fire team; and so on.

Susie asked Kris to add Town Report for discussion under Other Business.

- 3. Discuss and decide term lengths.** Kris explained that as a new “official” committee we need to decide terms. She suggests we manage the impacts of turnover by considering 3 year terms, with a proposed staggering of terms in the following manner: Kris and Tim begin with 1 year terms; Kit and Penelope begin with 2 year terms; Kim and Leslie begin with 3 year terms. Tim moved and Penelope seconded that the standard term of membership be 3 years, with initial terms staggered as Kris proposed. Motion carried unanimously. Susie pointed out that the term timelines typically start on March 1 (Town Meeting time); until then we are all in a “general” term length.

Discussion then followed regarding length of officer terms. As it would be difficult to commit to a 2 year term with the staggering proposed, Tim moved that officers serve for 1 year terms, with option to stand for subsequent terms should they desire. Kim seconded and motion carried unanimously.

- 4. Propose and elect slate of officers:** Chair (currently Kris, appointed by SB), Vice Chair, Secretary. Kris began by asking did any member have a desire to serve in a particular position? There being no requests, Kris proposed a slate: Kris is willing to continue as Chair for the next year; she proposed Penelope as Vice Chair as Kris has been leaning heavily on her for brainstorming and organizing and it works very well; she then proposed Leslie Taylor as Secretary due to her experience in other mutual aid groups. Penelope and Leslie stated willingness to serve, with Leslie commenting it would be a good way to get to know the community better.

Tim moved to accept the slate of officers suggested by Kris, with Kim seconding. Motion carried unanimously.

- 5. Vermont Everyone Eats** – Kris reviewed the premise of VEE: to provide food to those in need via local restaurants/caterers/stores, with a requirement that 10% of ingredients used be locally sourced. Everyone is supported. The program has been extended until April 1 and for the past several iterations has been focused on those in need, not the broader “those impacted” by the pandemic. Discussion clarified there are two distribution pathways: one via an app connecting to restaurants/stores, and another via “hubs” such as our food pantries. Kit says this has been hugely successful and helpful for their stores, particularly Albany – so the impact is seen in all directions.
- 6. Discuss possible adjustments to weekly COVID postings** – Kris says we’ve all seen what we developed last year that Brian diligently posts each week. Brian has ideas for tweaks and Kris would like input: is the current level of detail enough? Too much? Tim opened by stating the posting is very important. He’d like to see the Craftsbury numbers stated

more directly: “VDH reported X number of new cases in Craftsbury this week, bringing the new cumulative total to X.” All agreed the posting was very important. Kris introduced the idea of including the rate per 100,000 population. Discussion followed regarding benefits of clarity, potential perception that numbers are being inflated, simplicity and more.

Consensus was reached that simpler/clearer would be good, and we should probably not add new data types. Louise volunteered to work with Brian on it. Kris asked Penelope to be committee anchor for the undertaking.

- 7. Discuss offers of two food supply grants; decide whether N2N wants to anchor these and recommend that Select Board accept the offers.** Kris explained things went a little backwards on these, as she learned of the grants less than 48 hours before applications were due. She applied with little optimism of success – but the ideas were accepted! She described the interlocking grants through New England Grassroots Environment Fund (who also gave N2N its first \$1000 grant): 1) a Grow grant to explore the feasibility of community-raised beef at a price-point food pantries could sustain, providing funds for supplies; and 2) a young leader initiative called Craftsbury Local Food Networking (CLFN) focused on bringing/encouraging more young people to join community work. The CLFN empowers a young leader to recruit from CA and Sterling to help explore/map our local food system and, among other things, ways we might establish local meat “growers” to expand food pantry options (think “Grow Your Own” in Hardwick). This second grant includes some administrative funding, which Kris believes provides the capacity needed to undertake it. Kris brought this to the Select Board on Tuesday to be sure they are receptive before asking N2N to consider them.

Tim said this sounds like a great opportunity. He discussed the relative efficiency of producing beef versus smaller animals, including environmental and processing realities. Discussion followed regarding local processing options, researching a broader animal approach, and whether as an innovation grant we could likely approach the grantor to adjust animal parameters should research show a benefit to that.

Kris feels if we take this up there is limited commitment required from the whole committee. She would want one or two members to join her on this initiative along with community partners (youth leader, CA, Sterling, farmers, processors, etc). The work would take place outside of N2N, with progress brought back at appropriate times for reflection. There was consensus that as an exploration of community self-sufficiency and resilience, the initiative is well within N2N’s wheelhouse/purview, and excitement was expressed at the possibilities. Tim volunteered to work on it, as did Leslie. Others will be consulted as needed.

Penelope moved and Tim seconded that N2N should anchor this initiative and recommend to the Select Board the acceptance of the underlying grants; and that in coming weeks Kris, Tim and Leslie undertake outreach and formation of the partner group. Motion carried unanimously.

8. **Local Emergency Operations Plan** – update on status. Penelope shared that the hoped-for funding for a contractor may not materialize and that as of Tuesday, Bruce was still investigating that. We should hear soon. Penelope will rep N2N in discussions with support from Kris/others as needed.
9. **Discuss refresh of mutual aid lists and forms** – create small group to address? Kris reviewed for new members that we began with two mutual aid lists: one for neighbor needs and another for volunteers. It was online form; we also had a phone number (Susie's) neighbors could call and Susie would get the info to Kris. The committee has been discussing since last spring the need to refresh/update the lists, rethink tasks and processes, incorporate lessons learned, etc. Kris recently saw that the form had been taken off the town website.

Discussion followed regarding the need to get something out there fairly quickly, even if interim, as case rates are surging. Kris asked Penelope and Leslie to help her with this: first undertaking a quick review of the last version for glaring issues before posting an interim tool, then looking at the full refresh. Susie requested that posters also be part of the equation.

Kim offered to help with the mental health pieces/outreach and asks that we put transportation needs on the list of things to look at. General discussion followed that multiple committee members will likely be contacted for their takes on pieces of the refresh.

10. **Other Business.**

- Kim asked if we've heard whether water customers on the Common are ok; they are, with District board members, neighbors, and food pantry ensuring supplies are available as appropriate.
- Kit asked whether there are dollars left in the N2N fund. Genny customers are going through a lot of masks at considerable expense, as many people have stopped carrying their own. Other businesses may be experiencing same. As masks are an already-approved use of those funds in this pandemic, Tim moved we use \$500 to purchase masks for local businesses to offer to customers. Penelope seconded. Kit offered to provide information on sources/best prices they know of. Motion carried unanimously.

- Susie asked Kris to submit a one-page N2N report this week for the Town Report, covering list of officers and member roles and including accomplishments and plans for the coming year. She'd also like to see the mission stated at the top as we did last year.
- Susie asked Kris to get the terms and officers to Michelle for town records.
- Susie wants everyone to be aware that town ARPA meetings are upcoming and we want participation from as many citizens as possible.

11. **Adjourn.** Meeting adjourned at 8:40pm.