

Community Relations Committee Minutes
September 9, 2020

The meeting was called to order at 7:09 p.m. via Zoom call.

Members Present: Wicca Davidson (Chair), Julia Berger, Anne deFontnouvelle, Michele Marston, Danielle Muenzfeld, Aki Peritz, Barbara Rose, Marjorie Rush, Emily Helms Williams, Cathy Wolf, Farrell Rodd

Public Present: Ann Wild

General Business

- The minutes of the May 2020 meeting were presented and approved by the Committee. Aki moved to approve the minutes, and Barbara seconded the motion.
- There were no public comments.
- After introductions, Wicca reviewed the missions of the Committee: (1) to create a sense of community among the Town's residents through organized events; (2) to facilitate communication amongst Town residents, including by providing them with information needed to be active members of the community; and (3) to support the needs of the surrounding community through fundraisers.
- Charitable efforts organized by the Committee include the Thanksgiving Baskets (CRC participates but doesn't plan), which benefitted approximately 100 families in Montgomery County last year, Holiday Gift Donations (benefitting the Family Justice Center), the Winter Clothing Drive (benefitting Montgomery County residents), and donations to Manna Food Center solicited at the Town's annual Chili Dinner.

Old Business

Events and Community Service

- Fourth of July – Wicca reported on production of a video of Town residents reading the Declaration of Independence, which met the dual goals of continuing the traditional reading while addressing audio problems that have accompanied past in-person presentations. The video has been posted to the Town website and could be used in future years. Wicca also described the socially-distanced Town celebration, which included the Rockville Concert Band and the Ben and Jerry's ice cream truck. The event went well and was appreciated by Town residents.

Communications

- Welcome Bags – The Committee discussed Welcome Bags, which have been used to provide new neighbors with information about the Town and its services. The group discussed how best to adjust this project in light of the ongoing pandemic and lack of staff in the Town office, including through posting available information on the website, as well as distribution of hard-copy materials through canvas bags with the Town's logo. Barbara, Cathy, Marjorie, and Michele agreed to coordinate this project and to report at the next meeting.

New Business

Events and Community Service

- Planning Discussion for Future Events – The group discussed potential virtual events, although noted that some residents are experiencing "Zoom fatigue" due to overuse for work and school. The group brainstormed ways that we can build community in the time of COVID, particularly given continued restrictions on use of the Town Hall and on large gatherings. Aki and Farrell agreed to research a potential event and report back at a future meeting.
- Halloween – The group discussed the pumpkin painting event that has been held in past years and considered possibilities for alternative events this year. Julia, Danielle, and Wicca agreed to address next steps.
- Several other ideas for events were presented by Committee members. Marjorie, Cathy, and Aki agreed to follow up on various items.

Communications

- Discussion of event surveys was postponed until the October meeting.

Other Business

- Wicca is serving as Committee Chair for this year but is looking for a Co-Chair for this year, as well as a Chair for next year's Committee.
- Next meeting: October 15, 2020, at 7:00 p.m.

The meeting was adjourned at 8:20 p.m. Cathy moved to adjourn the meeting, and Aki, Marjorie, and Barbara seconded the motion.

Respectfully submitted,

Emily Helms Williams