



## **CROMWELL CREATIVE DISTRICT**

Town of Cromwell – Mayor’s Office, Attn. Cromwell Creative District

41 West Street, Cromwell, CT 06416

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### **Meeting Minutes (Teleconference)**

**November 21, 2020**

**9:00 am**

**Call to Order:** The teleconference was called to order at 9:03 am.

Present: James Demetriades (JD), Ann Grasso (AG), Rosemary Matus (RM), Joan Pendleton (JP), Joan Foose (JF), Joan Bent (JB), Katie Daigle (KD)

**Approval of the Agenda:** JD asked to have Nomination of a Publicity Chair and Potential Virtual Coffeehouse added under New Business. RM moved that the modified agenda be approved; AG seconded. All in favor; motion passed.

**Public Comments:** No public comments.

#### **Chair’s Report (James Demetriades):**

1. JD offered kudos to the Scarecrow Search committee—AG, JF, Erika Doolittle, and Jen Tallman. Tokens that Jen designed and made have been given to businesses. This was an example of how to draw attention to the district and to CCD, how to sustain growth and attract new members/Friends.
  - a. AG is compiling a list of steps for whoever leads the group next year.
  - b. AG is also drafting an entry about the Search for the newsletter.
2. Facebook and the website have been updated with information about the Holiday Decorating event #inthedistrict. Interest in the event is building; this year there will be no companion event in Holiday on Main.
3. The officers (Executive Committee) now have a monthly meeting before the general monthly meeting. JD will update membership at general meeting. This month’s agenda included:
  - a. AARP grant not received for two murals on businesses. Kickstarter being considered.
  - b. Technical and procedural issues for the website discussed and facilitated.
  - c. Discussion of townwide event with CCCWC: Luminosity

*Rethink How You See Cromwell*

### **Vice Chair's Report (Ann Grasso):**

1. AARP grant not received; the grants were given to projects with specific Covid themes. CCD will hear about Community Foundation of Middlesex County grant on December 28.
2. *Rare Reminder* had a press release about the Holiday Decorating Contest this week.
3. Central Connecticut Community Women's Club (CCCWC): AG attended the monthly meeting (virtually).
  - a. They have invited CCD and CAA to participate in Luminosity, a townwide event for 2021. It will not compete with CCD's Holiday Decorating. Other groups may be invited to join, and CCCWC will put together a proposal for how to move ahead with this.
  - b. CCCWC is also doing a clothing collection, a major fundraiser for them. They collect new and gently used clothing from the community and sell it at an organized event. They work with Human Services to let the families in need, who are registered with the Town, take advantage of the sale first before others come in. They will have bins at two businesses in town that are owned by a member's family and will also be asking the Town Manager if they can put a collection box in the Town Hall for donations.
4. **Scarecrow Search:** AG is distributing the tokens Jen Tallman made and giving information on the Holiday Decorating Contest. Businesses reported seeing much more pedestrian traffic, families walking by looking for the scarecrows, taking pictures. For now, businesses, like residents, are overwhelmed, and it's not clear how many will participate in the holiday decorating.
5. **Murals:** The *Middletown Press* had an article covering an issue with a major mural in the city:  
<https://www.middletownpress.com/middletown/article/Middletown-mural-repainting-sparks-talks-of-15737675.php>
6. **Space Assessment Study:** AG gave a presentation to Town Council on November 18. The presentation focused on the request for nonprofits and civic organizations to be included in the upcoming Space Assessment Study. A list of nonprofits and civic groups, including mission statements and other information, was provided. A review of the garages that will become available included photos and provided options for future use. There was no vote, but it was the consensus of the Town Council that the Space Study will include nonprofit and civic organizations. JD: the space study had been postponed because of Covid; it is now reactivated. CCD's request is that the study consider nonprofits' possible use of the town buildings.
7. **Christmas:** On December 5, there will be a virtual tree lighting in Cromwell.

## Treasurer's Report (Rosemary Matus)

1. Balance is \$2349.04.
2. Total donations to date are \$13,080.45.

## COMMITTEE REPORTS

### Membership (Erika Doolittle)

No report in Erika's absence.

### Publicity (No chair yet; report given by James Demetriades)

1. **Committee chair:** Katie Daigle has volunteered to be Publicity Committee chair.
2. **Social media:** Holiday Decorating Contest is posted on Facebook and CCD website.
  - a. **Website** is updated with finale of Scarecrow Search Success and new photos under Events/Album.

## OLD BUSINESS

1. **Audio Tour:** Only three houses have responded so far; Richard Donohue is going to write postcard notes to the other fourteen. Access to the audio tour platform will be available in January.
2. **Rail 99 and Cromwell Energy Murals:** Two groups of people are interested in working on these, but CCD needs to raise money to pay for the paint. JF working on mural designs for Rail 99; KD will research dinosaurs indigenous to Connecticut River Valley. Cromwell Energy wants sunflowers as part of mural.
3. **Paint-by-Number mural:** Erin Trousdale's fall course load requires that she wait until the first of the year to become involved again; on December 28, CCD will learn whether grant money will be received for this specific mural.
4. **Rainbow/Pride Crosswalks:** Town manager says these are not allowed under state regulations and that if one group does it, others will want to. He believes that towns/groups who have painted these are violating state regulations. He will look into the possibility of having them at parking lots, school property.
  - a. How have town insurers handled this in other towns?
  - b. Is there any merit in having others also look into it?
  - c. JD will reach out to Middletown mayor for information on the painted crosswalks newly unveiled there.

## NEW BUSINESS

1. **Kickstarter/fundraising ideas:** Money is needed for the murals planned on the two businesses. Kickstarter could be an effective way to get funding because of specific goals and visual representation of what the money goes toward. AG: she supports and could get groups working on mockups of the murals after the first of the year.
  - a. CCD hasn't worked yet to figure out how to raise funds. Coffeehouse was held, and then Covid hit.
  - b. It would be helpful to gather a group to really think about this—a strategic planning group that includes people comfortable with fundraising.
  - c. How do we reach out to Friends? Newsletter: could ask for ideas and participation.
  - d. AG: the paint for the murals will probably be about \$2,000-\$3,000 each. There are issues with the kind of wall material, because some paints don't work with vinyl, for example.
  - e. KD: Kickstarter idea good because a specific goal is more motivating.
  - f. AG: Businesses will contribute some money for paint, but they don't have the labor, which CCD will provide through volunteers.
2. **Holiday Decorating.** RM: About 270 letters were sent, and 27 returned by post office. Some may have been addresses without buildings; RM and Joanne Golden may investigate, or might ask Erika Doolittle because of her experience with the flyers. Everything else going well, according to plan.
3. **Publicity Chair:** Katie Daigle introduced herself as volunteering for the position. She lives on Arrowwood Drive, has two children in the school district. She is a licensed clinical social worker; interested in creativity.
  - a. JD nominated KD to be Publicity Chair; AG seconded. No other nominations offered. RM moved that the nominations be closed; JB seconded. Nominee voted in by default.
  - b. JD: all officers and members are willing to help KD learn her role: AG will connect KD with Rebecca Mead.
4. **Virtual Coffeehouse:** would be a fundraiser. People would pay to get a link to log in and view live or prerecorded acts. No celebrities involved, but family members will want to see their children or other relatives performing.
  - a. AG: resources will be needed; will performers be able to provide videos?
  - b. Live or prerecorded? It's easier to have videos prerecorded.
  - c. It can be available long-term as a paid event.
  - d. Artworks: AG suggested having photos of works of art interspersed with musical/comedy events.

- e. JD will research platform: KD will get information from PTO on how it got its virtual talent show together.

### **Approval of the Minutes**

This item was overlooked and will be attended to at the December meeting.

### **For the Good of the Organization**

KD: Connecticut Main Street Center has a goal similar to CCD's; it might be possible to check out resources they have that CCD can use.

JD: CAA and CCD have agreed to have liaisons at each other's meetings to share reports on each group's activities and maintain the close relationship now in place. For now, JD will represent CCD, and RM will represent CAA. Line items will appear in the agendas for reciprocal reports.

### **Adjournment**

KD moved to adjourn at 10:15 am. AG seconded. All in favor. Motion passed.

Respectfully submitted,  
Joan Pendleton, secretary

Meetings for CCD in 2020 and 2021 will be held on the third Saturday of the month at 9:00 am in the Senior Center dining room. They will be held by teleconference while Covid-19 restrictions are in place.

### **2020**

December 12 [second Saturday]

*Please note change for December meeting.*

### **2021**

January 16  
February 20  
March 20  
April 17  
May 15  
June 19

July 17  
August 21  
September 18  
October 16  
November 20  
December 11 [second Saturday]

Meetings for CAA in 2020 and 2021 will be held on the first Monday of the month at 6:00 pm in the Cromwell High School media room. They are also being held virtually for now.

## **2020**

December 7

## **2021**

January 4

February 1

March 1

April 5

May 3

June 7

July 5

August 2

September 13

October 4

November 1

December 6

## **To-Do List**

All members:

1. Keep track of your volunteer hours for CCD and report to RM at the end of the month.
2. Offer ideas to AG about community needs and ways to help, both during this shutdown and afterwards, as well as ways to keep CCD strong.
3. Think about family and friends who might be interested in joining CCD and recruit them. There is a new Friends category, which indicates support for the organization but not active membership.
4. Consider possible methods of fundraising to be discussed at future meetings; think about joining the strategic planning group.

All committee chairs: Send a brief summary of what you will say at the monthly meeting in advance to the secretary.

JD: Talk to Middletown mayor about crosswalks.

Research platform for virtual coffeehouse.

KD: Get information from PTO about virtual streaming event.