

TEAM Westport Meeting Minutes
October 2, 2012, 7:30 AM
Room 201
Westport Town Hall, Westport, CT

Attendees: Stu Losen, Patricia Wei, Maggie Mudd, Brett Aronow, Judy Hamer, Harold Bailey (Presiding), Bernicestine McLeod, Steve Daniels, Dolores Paoli, and Barbara Butler

Harold called the meeting to order at 7:33AM.

Minutes: The draft minutes for our September 11, 2012 meeting were reviewed. Maggie made a motion that the minutes be approved. Patricia seconded. The minutes were approved and will be filed.

New Business

What's Up?

- 1) Congratulations to Brett who has been named to the Board of Education.
- 2) The Playhouse is thrilled by all the community activities around 'A Raisin in the Sun'.
- 3) Steve gave a brief update about housing for seniors in Baron's South.

Old Business

- 1) Several of us attended the services held on September 16th for our TEAM Westport member Nick Rudd. Steve spoke about Nick's many contributions within Fairfield County at the services.
- 2) Playhouse Partnership Update
 - Brochures describing most of the activities related to the run of 'A Raisin in the Sun' at the Playhouse were distributed and discussed.
 - We reviewed the sessions held at Norwalk Community College on September 24th and at Sacred Heart University (SHU) on September 27th. We were particularly struck by comments from students at SHU about the 'American Dream' – what it is and whether 'it' is achievable or even desired.
 - Upcoming Activities
 - o Tonight a discussion of the play takes place at the Unitarian Church led by the Social Justice group at the Church (Catherine) and David Kennedy from the Playhouse.
 - o The Chief Diversity Officers of some of the major corporations in the area are due to meet again this Friday at the Playhouse. However, the time may be a problem.
 - o Larri Mazon, who helped TEAM Westport get underway, is pulling together a Community discussion/conversation session on October 22nd in Bridgeport around 'A Raisin in the Sun'. Representatives will be present from both New Haven and Fairfield Counties in preparation for the performance of 'Clybourne Park' to be held at Long Wharf in the spring. The Westport Playhouse and Long Wharf are partners in this particular effort and will attend. The conversation will continue throughout the winter of 2012 and the spring of 2013.
 - Action Items:
 - o Publicize all of the upcoming activities including the Sugarman/Buckley film series being held at the Senior Center on four successive Wednesday afternoons.
 - o Harold can break up all of the activities in order to push them out onto Facebook and the web. Constant Contact can be used as well to send out our calendar.
 - o Contact Eileen Weisman who's now at Long Wharf.
 - o The Interfaith Association is willing to do something else instead of a singing program for the observance of MLK Day.

TEAM Westport Meeting Minutes
October 2, 2012, 7:30 AM
Room 201
Westport Town Hall, Westport, CT

- We can plan programming during February and March. Certainly the recent census results that show that CT is the most segregated state can provide a backdrop for programming.
 - i. Perhaps the author of 'The Children in Room E4', Susan Eaton, can be brought in. She came to speak to the Journalism class at Staples a few years ago.
 - ii. Also, there is a Yale professor who grew up in CA in a town like Westport who might come to speak.
 - iii. At Connecticut College there is a professor who wrote about the death toll of blacks after the Civil War (1M died from disease) and who might be able to speak. Maggie will get details.
- 3) Education Committee:
 - We can play a role in helping to determine what Westport can do with respect to new standards for teacher education that would include culturally responsive education. People need to understand diversity.
 - For students, including diversity in the curriculum has been discussed in the "skills for the 21st century" town sessions. Bill Howe drafted was involved in this effort at the State level. Several years ago we proposed a group activity at Staples that would consist of a math problem to be considered from the perspective of different social backgrounds.
 - There are grants for which towns can apply to facilitate the interaction of kids across towns. It is up to individual teachers. The grants may have gone away; however, we need to see if they do still exist and can be utilized.
 - We need to reflect upon how to improve interrelations between students in Westport and other school districts on an equal exchange basis – not 'givers' vs. 'takers'. Shared projects or interactions are needed to bring them together. For Westport students, we'd like to focus on the concept of respectful sharing since by comparison they have a lot. Examples of sharing over Skype include 'To Kill a Mockingbird' as highlighted in the New York Times. Middle schoolers may be a perfect age group for this sharing. Kids hear diversity and think they're being reproached for being racist or they say that they are color blind.
 - Lis Comm will have teachers attend the next Educators session for 'A Raisin in the Sun'.

The meeting was adjourned at 8:57 AM.

The next meeting will be held at 7:30 AM on Tuesday, November 6, 2012, in Room 201 of Westport Town Hall.

Respectfully submitted,

Bernicestine McLeod
Secretary