

Citizens for Milford

Public Meeting, January 14, 2014

Opening

Members of Citizens for Milford met at the Milford Town Library with other interested members of the community. Approximately 27 people attended, including 14 non-CFM members. Kevin Rudden from the Milford Town Crier was in attendance. Community attendees included Selectman Bill Buckley and candidates for Selectman, Will Kingkade and Mike Visconti.

Co-chairs Steve Trettel and John Seaver introduced themselves along with the purpose of the group to newcomers and asked current members to give an overview of the projects taken on since the last public meeting.

Downtown Decorations Report

Amie Sanborn reported that several CFM members met with Highway Surveyor, Scott Crisafulli and Liz Fernandes from the Selectmen's office throughout the summer and fall. The group researched the pricing of various seasonal decorations for downtown Milford. After a presentation to the Board of Selectmen, the group was awarded \$20,000 for the purchase and maintenance of US Flags, winter banners, spring/summer banners and lighted wreaths. A small budget will cover the cost of putting the decorations up and taking them down.

Town Beautification Day

Amie Sanborn reported on plans for a 'Milford Beautification Day.' Volunteers will pick up trash along Main Street and possibly in the Routes 16 and 109 area depending on the number of volunteers. Gloves and bags will be provided. The Board of Health and Transfer Station will be contacted regarding the event. In addition to community volunteers, groups to consider contacting for assistance include the Boy Scouts, Girl Scouts and the Worcester County Sheriff's Department. The cleanup will coincide with the bike trail cleanup which will be on the Saturday following Earth Day, April 25th.

Citizens for Milford Website

Cathy Mitchell and John Tehan reported that the CFM website is full of information about the group and the projects we are pursuing. There are pages to assist residents with all voting needs including links to forms for voter registration and absentee voting as well as where to vote. Information about Town Meeting, what it is and how it works as well as CFM contact info and upcoming events are also listed. Past projects are also posted, including two successful candidate forums.

Local Election Candidate Forum

John Seaver reported that the group will hold a local candidates forum on Thursday, March 19th from 6:30-9:30 PM at the Milford High School Auditorium. There are four contested races: Selectman, Tax Assessor, Board of Health and Library Trustee. The format will be the same as the two previous forums. The Milford Town Crier will be co-sponsoring the event. Mike Visconti, a member of the group, excused himself from the room prior to the discussion, saying that he will not be part of the planning of the forum and did not want his presence to be seen as a conflict of interest. Mike is running for an open Selectman's seat against Will Kingkade.

Town Meeting Reform

As a followup to a suggestion from Reno DeLuzio with respect to improving the Town Meeting process, Jose Costa gave an overview of their efforts to date. Both Jose and Reno investigated how several other towns run their Town Meetings and the innovations they have implemented. Jose stated that some towns have unique plans such as electronic voting, trips to areas being voted on by town planning boards, etc. that can streamline our own Town Meeting. More to follow.

Impact of Immigrants on School System

Steve Trettel discussed a meeting that was held by the core group regarding the impact of immigration on our school system. Dr. Robert Tremblay, Milford School Superintendent, Scott Harrison, Chairman of the Milford School Committee and Paul Mazzuchelli, Health Officer, Milford Board of Health addressed the group. In recent years, the Milford School System has had an influx of non-English speaking students. Although mandated by law to accept any and all students, towns receive no Federal assistance and funding from the state is not adequate to offset the cost of educating them. Local taxpayers are making up the difference. More to follow.

Voter Precinct Locations

Cathy Mitchell reported that the group has heard complaints with respect to voting locations. She spoke with Amy Neves, Town Clerk. New precinct assignments are the result of redistricting during the last census and cannot be changed until the new census in 2020. There are limited locations that have offered not to charge the town for polling locations. As a result, there are four precincts that vote at the Portuguese Club (Precincts 5,6,7,8), which causes overcrowding and traffic issues. The group has asked to have the Town Clerk attend a future meeting to discuss alternatives.

Open Discussion

- Diane Canino, a twelve year resident of Milford, expressed a need for public transportation in town, sharing a personal story in which she found herself in need of a ride and nowhere to turn. The Senior Citizen van was able to help out, but it is overwhelmed with requests and her experience with it was not an easy one. Prior to the meeting, she did some public transportation investigation on her own and found that the Metrowest Regional Transit Authority (MWRTA) <http://www.mwrta.com/> covers a large area, but limited service to Milford. In addition, taxi service in Milford, she said, is expensive and very limited. Further investigation led her to Harold Rhodes, Chairman of Milford Commission on Disabilities.
- Mike Visconti relayed a positive and affordable experience with finding a taxi service in Milford.
- Harold Rhodes addressed many of Diane's questions. Per Harold, through discussions that he has had with Clergy, Milford Hospital, doctor's offices, etc., transportation is by far the greatest challenge expressed by residents. He is currently working on a MWRTA transportation proposal with a scheduled Milford route to be presented to the BOS sometime in January or February. He will be looking at funding through various sources including grant money. Dial a Ride may also be an option for transportation in addition to scheduled MWRTA routes.
- Kevin Rudden, speaking as Finance Committee Chairman for the Community Health Network Access Group (CHNAG) stated that a small percentage of grant money is required to be set aside for the community from the funds raised for the Milford Hospital expansion. He suggested that

this grant money could possibly pilot a transportation program in town, based on a determination of needs (DON). Within the community, the hospital currently has no shuttle service for the Kennedy Community Health Center and Dana Faber.

- Peter and Claudia Scandone stated that they were organizing friends and neighbors to join them for a rally in support of the Milford Police. It is to be held on Saturday, January 24th from 10 am-noon at Draper Park. Though not a CFM sponsored event, they hoped that others in attendance might consider joining them.
- John Seaver mentioned a National First Responders Day on September 27th that Citizens for Milford will spearhead in our area.
- Bill Buckley stated that the town is addressing issues of rainwater management and EPA requirements, IT infrastructure, illegal boarding houses and diversifying energy consumption. He noted that Milford is one of five communities with a private water company and explained the reason for the eleventh hour bill that Governor Patrick signed amending the charter the town holds with the Milford Water Company.
<http://www.milforddailynews.com/article/20150110/News/150119715>
- Steve Trettel noted that members of the Industrial Development Committee (IDC) Peter Scandone and Rob Mitchell were present. They reported that meetings were ongoing.
- Beverly Swymer summed up by asking for people to join in and help on projects that may be of interest to them.

Requests for Future Guests

Police Chief

Town Clerk

Board of Selectmen

Milford Fire Chief

Highway Surveyor

Board of Health

School Committee Chairman

Respectfully submitted,

Cathy Mitchell

January 15, 2015