

**TOWN COUNCIL**  
**Community Wellness Organizational Meeting**  
**Approved Minutes**  
**February 9, 2021**  
**7:00 p.m.**  
**VIRTUAL MEETING**

Chairman Slapikas called to order the Special Meeting of the Prospect Town Council @ 7:01 p.m. This is the Community Wellness Organizational Meeting. The meeting was a Virtual Meeting by video conference via GoToMeeting as authorized by Executive Orders 7B and 7I. The meeting began with the Pledge of Allegiance.

**Organizer of Virtual Meeting Present:** J. Slapikas

A roll call for attendance was taken by Chairman Slapikas.

**Via Online:** J. Slapikas, R. Blanc, P. Geary, M. Patchofsky, L. Fitzgerald, S. Pilat, S. Lusas-Kolodziej, T. Graveline, K. O'Leary

**Council Members Absent:** none

**Guests:** Chris Moffo, John Weih, Capt. Matt Devan, Nelson Abarzua, Kate Galendon & Sarah Steinberg

**Discussion of Community Wellness Project and Membership:**

M. Patchofsky mentioned the draft plan explaining the Councils thought process. They are hoping to establish one group to reach out to the community, businesses, groups, residents etc. The Council's goal is to help with whatever they can to bring everyone together and start some local town initiatives. The hope is that those that want to be part of the committee can offer their thoughts. A lot of them do a lot of what this committee can provide. This will be a way to house everything in one area.

P. Geary stated that they all offer tremendous services to all the people in Prospect. The Council realized there is no one place where the posting/knowledge of all the services are made available to the residents. Having one spot where all of these programs, activities service etc. are posted would really benefit the citizens. T. Graveline reiterated what P. Geary said. The Council recognizes that all these offerings do exist; they also think there is potential for more. The Council feels this would make more awareness within the Town and help with overall community spirit, health, wellness, community events and participation. They see a need especially in these pandemic times to give opportunity for people to get together in new ways with new opportunities and growth. The more the Council and Committee can do as a community to make these available to our citizens the better we are all going to be. It is essential to have all this information on one site for everyone to know that this is the "go to zone". This is where you go to see what's going on in the Town in every area. J. Slapikas stated this was set up to get people excited and more involved. Ex: wrapping street signs. That brought everyone together and kept everyone occupied.

*Kate Galendon, Chesprocott Health District:* Kate stated that this sounds something great in the works. Chesprocott has formed a three town community coalition. This focuses on what the residents want according to a survey that is sent out. This focuses on mental health, nutrition, exercise etc. They also send out a brochure with different local parks, hiking places, farm stands etc. This helps make community members aware of all these local services on hand. Chesprocott is always looking to do more to overall increase community spirit. P. Geary stated she recently became aware of many things Chesprocott offers. She *thinks* the programs are so valuable and they need to be publicized. The same is true for all the organizations. Kate stated they do whatever they need to do to get the word out. Examples are stickers posted at local restaurants re: where residents can get the vaccine.

*Capt. Matt Devan, Prospect Fire Dept.:* Capt. Devan thanked the Council for allowing the Fire Dept. to be involved. He spoke with Chief Lauber and Chief Guastaferri. He mentioned October being National Fire Prevention Month. The Fire Dept. already established a committee within the dept. to sponsor more events. This will help with more exposure to the public. Instead of just being focused on one evening or day they are planning on many different events during the week and weekends to involve the community more. They have also elected a new EMS Captain. They are working with him to start establishing monthly CPR classes for the Community. They are trying to figure out the logistics due to the current restrictions. Lastly, he is the officer in charge of the junior program for the last several years. He currently has 28 juniors between the ages of 14-17. They are hoping to be more visible in the community. For example, assisting in at Toll Brothers, the Senior Center etc.

*John Weih, Prospect Public Library:* The library has been offering virtual children's programs, they also worked with the Goodwill to help with job training. The library also offers museum passes for cultural activities. They have approximately 1300-1400 people on their email list. John also mentioned the library being a member of the Cultural Arts Group in Waterbury. P. Geary stated she is impressed with what the Library has done during this pandemic. Even though the library was closed they offered virtual arts and crafts, reading activities, and games. They have gone above and beyond to provide a service during this pandemic. P. Geary thanked John for what they do.

*Sarah Steinberg, Region 16 Schools:* Sarah is the Asst. Director of Special Education. She stated this is a wonderful initiative. There are so many projects happening; student lead, staff lead, extracurricular, and PTA events as well. There is definitely a need for this especially for the students who are doing remote distance learning. They are willing to do whatever they can to help. They are happy to be a part of this.

*Chris Moffo, Board of Recreation:* Chris stated that it is great that we are getting together and getting everyone in the same room. It will be a huge asset for the Town to have everything in one place. Chris mentioned a few events they offer such as the Fishing Derby, the Summer Concert Series, and Movie Nights which are about bringing the community together. Huge asset to the town.

*Nelson Abarzua, Director of Public Safety & Representing the Prospect Police Dept.:* Nelson thanked the Council for the invitation. The Police Dept. supports this effort 100%. They have not been able to go into the school systems because of Covid. They are working on a project for the middle school. They are also trying to put together a Police Citizen's Academy. Each instructor would sign up for one hour to attend the meetings. Anything they can do the PD is willing to do for the town. Nelson also works very closely with the employees from Chesprocott. This program is a plus for them. It gives them another avenue to put their information out there and offer more services for the Town. L. Fitzgerald asked how the Police Explorers Program is going. Nelson stated they stopped that program 4 years ago. There weren't enough kids that wanted to be involved and also the Fire Dept. put together the Fire Cadet Program. R. Blanc mentioned the Citizens Police Program and asked when it will start because he would like to get involved. Nelson stated there are 16 lesson plans that they just finished putting together on all different topics. They are not just taught by Police Officers.

M. Patchofsky mentioned scheduling the next meeting so they can start researching the goals of the Committee. A survey would help to find out what residents are looking for and some areas of interests. Several council members are willing to attend to help with any questions they might have. It is up to the committee members to finalize. They will need to compile their expertise re: involvement in the community. A lot of them work day to day with residents so they can find out what the needs are. So the next step is to form the actual committee. P. Geary stated she would like to see the Senior Center get involved. They offer many great programs that are both informational and recreational. They have been closed but they are still providing meals to the seniors, contacting them, setting up a program for vaccinating etc. Region 16 offers adult education programs and there are a lot of seniors who are anxious to become an important function of Region 16. J. Slapikas will send out an email again to see if they can get more involvement. They want to have enough people to come up with different ideas and keep it going well. T. Graveline asked if the Prospect Business Association responded. J. Slapikas stated they did not. T. Graveline will reach out to them. T. Graveline stated that another component the Council is hoping to promote is shopping local. There are over 350 businesses in the Town of Prospect. She stated there is a lot going on that people may not be aware of. The representatives who are going to form the committee need to think about what might be the best way to get all this info. out there to the entire community. Is there something else other than social media? This also can't be a one-time thing. It can't be a single brochure because things change every month and there always new events happening. J. Slapikas reiterated that this is something the Town Council is not running. Nelson asked if there would be a webpage. J. Slapikas also mentioned posting in the Citizens News. They can use social media but they should reach out to every avenue they can to get information out there. P. Geary thinks one of the first things that need to be done would be to set up a place where there is contact information for all the groups. Whether it be the town website or something else. It would list the email addresses and websites for each organization. T. Graveline agrees, there needs to be a central place to do all of this. They discussed having one central calendar that every organization can upload their events to. M. Patchofsky agrees with having one central calendar. At the moment an email should be set up for the Committee so everyone can email things they have planned for now until we can get a site up and running. She also mentioned setting up a new page on the town website. This way they can at least get everything out there. J. Slapikas likes that idea. L. Fitzgerald agrees as well. Chris Moffo stated he thinks they should set up another meeting to elect officials for the Committee. Sarah likes the thought that each of these 6 organizations has a representative. Capt. Devan asked how often the Committee will meet. J. Slapikas stated it would be up to the Committee how often they need to meet. John likes the idea of a central website. Nelson also thinks it's a great idea. This is a good source to expand information they want to put out to the public. They currently use Facebook and an email tree. They are already trying to figure out the car seat clinics under Chesprocott guidelines. They also have some spring programs coming up. Kate is happy to meet once a month. There should also be steps in between to accomplish this goal quickly. They discussed options for the next meeting date. Capt. Devan mentioned scheduling in two weeks so the Town Council can oversee them until the Committee is set up. T. Graveline stated the next meeting needs to be another Organizational Meeting held by the Town Council until the Committee is created.

A Special Meeting was scheduled on February 23<sup>rd</sup>, 2021 at 7 p.m. to take nominations for this Committee for officers.

J. Slapikas will reach out with another email tomorrow and make a few phone calls to see if there is any more interest. P. Geary knows that each of the representatives are very involved and very busy. She doesn't anticipate they will have a lot of meeting once they get organized, decide on their plan and mission and how they are going to implement it. M. Patchofsky thanked everyone for taking the time and brainstorming.

**Correspondence:**

1. Agenda
2. Community Wellness Draft Plan and Letter

**Motion** made by S. Lusas Kolodziej seconded by R. Blanc to accept and place the correspondence on file. **Unanimous.**

**Public Participation:** (5 Minute Time Limit): none

**Adjournment:** **Motion** made by R. Blanc, seconded by S. Lusas Kolodziej to adjourn the meeting at 8 p.m. **Unanimous.**

*Jeff Slapikas, Chairman*