

BRANFORD HUMAN SERVICES BOARD

September 10, 2019

The meeting was called to order at 8:10am.

Present: Peter Cimino, Mike Randi, Bill Keane, Sarah Lockery, Jane Novick, Betty Haas, Elizabeth Sattelberger, Lexi Klarman, John Mooney

Excused: Ed Mapp, Maria Storm

- I. **Minutes:** Minutes from June 11, 2019 meeting were read and approved.
- II. **Communications:** Letter from Board member Bill Keane re: presentation from Wayne Cook to Board.
- III. **Income (donations, fees, etc.):** \$11,421 in donations was received since 7/1/2019.
- IV. **Statistics:** Clinical report was not available.
- V. **Social Services/Basic Needs Account:** Since 7/1/2019, 28 families were given rental assistance, 20 families were given utility assistance, 6 utility shut offs were stopped, and 2 families were helped to reconnect utility service.
- VI. **Director's Report:**
 - *Family Day* – Sunday September 15 will be our annual family day event on the Green from 1pm-4pm.
 - *Open House* – Date was decided to hold an open house. Thursday October 24, 2019 from 5:30pm – 7pm. Invites will be extended to elected officials as well as current candidates for office, department heads, donors and service club members who have supported us. Purpose to educate people about the services offered by the agency. Also will unveil new logo. Planning committee will meet next week.
 - *Membership* – Two newest Board members were introduced, John Mooney and Lexi Klarman.
- VII. **Old Business:** None.
- VIII. **New Business:** None.
- IX. **Any other business that may properly come before the Board:**

The next meeting of the Branford Human Services Board will take place on Tuesday October 8, 2019 at 8:00am at Branford Counseling Center, 342 Harbor Street, Branford, CT 06405.

Minutes submitted by Sarah Lockery.

I'm sure the minutes will reflect this, but I'd like to reiterate my displeasure at having a passively defamatory poster prominently placed for all to see during our meeting this morning. It was part of Wayne Cooke's opening presentation, set on a tripod, and it juxtaposes the word "fraud" with the recognizable faces of three Branford citizens.

Apparently, Mr. Cooke has filed a lawsuit seeking monetary remuneration for perceived damages related to a failed attempt for a new Costco development. Fine, and frankly, informative.

While I think it was wise to allow Mr. Cooke some time at the outset of our meeting to speak his mind, I think it's also worth noting that the Human Services Board does not adjudicate matters of alleged Town Hall corruption.

I realize most of Mr. Cooke's public expositions can be seen as a joke, but my sense of humor does not extend to implied defamation and slander of people.

For a quite some time (two decades, at least) our country has been beset with an extreme approach to polarizing political discourse that is willfully inflammatory. Personally, I think it's damaging to all Americans in general, and our community in particular.

In my opinion, the poster Mr. Cooke set up for our engagement perfectly reflects this malady.

The people depicted are real individuals, and implying that they are fraudulent conspirators is not something I was prepared to let silently pass. That would be the real joke.

Silence often conveys assent, and, as it unfolded, I was not prepared to quietly ignore a cleverly devised, defamatory statement we were all exposed to.

Inasmuch as the Human Services Board is involved in our Community's well-being, perhaps we might attempt to get ahead of the curve and consider sponsoring a presentation related to non-toxic ways of being socially and politically vocal and active, without being personally venomous and broadly destructive.

Rev. Bill Keane

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