

**Town of South Bethany  
Community Relations Committee Meeting  
Thursday, December 7, 2023**

**In attendance:** Edie Dondero, Chair; Lisi Biciocchi, Robin Philipbar. Ingrid Moore attended by phone.

**Absent:** Cathy Peck

The meeting was called to order by Ms. Dondero at 10:03am.

**1. Approval of minutes of 11.13.2023**

The minutes of November 13, 2023 were approved without changes.

**2. Public comment**

There were no members of the public in attendance.

**3. Review of Tree Lighting and Community Food Drive**

The Committee discussed the successful tree lighting event and noted suggestions for next year including:

- Provide more light for the table displays or start the event at 4:30pm
- Increase the amount of cocoa and cookies provided
- Supply bottled water
- Light the tree at the end of the hour rather than midway through
- Consider not dating any giveaways so that extras can be reused

There were no issues with the logistics of the food drive. All donations were delivered to the Cape Henlopen Food Basket on Monday morning along with the monetary contributions. The staff was extremely appreciative as stocks were low and the donations were greatly needed.

**4. Planning Events and Proposed Budget Requests for FY2025**

Ms. Dondero shared the ideas submitted by residents for events/projects in the coming year which included the return of the Junior Lifeguard Program (which she noted is run by the Beach Patrol, not this Committee); painting the water tower behind Town Hall; and improving the canal end at the intersection of Tamarack and Canal Drives. Ms. Dondero will discuss the ideas with Town staff.

A discussion was held about events to be proposed for the coming year. It was decided that the following events should be offered again in the May 2024- April 2025 fiscal year: monthly coffee with Council; a welcome event/dinner for the Beach Patrol; one Movie on the Beach; two community bonfires; the holiday tree lighting; and a to-be-determined Earth Day event of some sort. New ideas proposed included a Halloween-themed outdoor event; lectures co-hosted with the South Bethany Historical Society; and, in place of the art show that was formerly held in Town Hall, a changing monthly display of resident art work.

Ms. Dondero will compile the list, assign a funding request to each item, and submit to the Finance Director for inclusion in the proposed FY2025 budget.

#### **5. Discussion of Adopt-a-Canal Program**

The consensus of the members in attendance was that the Committee should recommend ending the adopt program and have the Town take over the management of the canal ends. Reasons for this include the lack of new, willing adopters; the lack of ongoing maintenance of some of the adopted ends; and the potential need for the removal of vegetation in the coming years when bulkheads are replaced and/or raised. Ms. Dondero will talk to staff about this decision and propose that the Council include funds in the FY2025 budget to contract canal end management to a landscaper.

The meeting was adjourned at 11:31am.

*Minutes approved February 6, 2024*