

**Community Relations Committee
MINUTES
June 17, 2009**

The meeting was called to order at 7:08 p.m. in the Town Hall.

Members present: Ann Wild (chair), Kathy Strom (Town Council liaison), Putnam Ebinger, Rose Edwards and Cathy Wolf. Rose Miller arrived at 7:20, and Martin Gold came at 7:30. Also present was Ingrid St. Villier, director of the Lawton Center; town resident Bridget Hartman arrived at 7:15 p.m.

Rose Edwards offered a motion to approve the minutes of the May 20, 2009, meeting. Kathy Strom seconded the motion, which was approved.

Ingrid St. Villier, who introduced herself to the committee, said she hopes to recruit Town residents for the Lawton Center Advisory Committee. She agreed to submit an article about the advisory committee to the Town Forecast.

Bridget Hartman and Cathy Wolf, who are co-chairing the Centennial Supper on Sept. 12, 2009, offered an update on their planning and shared drafts of written material about the event. Four families so far have volunteered to be hosts of the Centennial Supper, which is being held to mark the 100th anniversary of the first platting in Chevy Chase. The event will start with hors d'oeuvres and other refreshments at the Lawton Center before residents head to host houses for dinner and dessert. Bridget and Cathy, who are looking for host families and cooks, said they would submit an article for the July Forecast and prepare a flyer to be mailed in August.

Turning to events, members reported on several that were well-attended and successful: a discussion and dessert with Town resident and political analyst Charlie Cook, the garden tour and volunteer appreciation event, a Chevy Chase Dinner Out Club gathering at Gaffney's restaurant and the Leland Center Renaming event.

Rose Miller said that the Manna Food Drive collected about 32 pounds of food this month, which is less than in earlier months.

Kathy Strom said the committee planning the July 4th celebration is looking for teenagers to help with set-up.

Kathy Strom also reported on the Neighborhood Watch program. So far, 15 people have volunteered to be block captains, and five are thinking about it. Julie Stanish has agreed to offer an article about Neighborhood Watch for The Forecast; block parties also may be a good place to recruit people. Kathy said the training and launch of this initiative will be in the fall.

Martin Gold described various improvements he is recommending for the Town Web site. He also said the Town staff had already made the site more user-friendly. His proposed changes include an information box on the front page and separate sections for traffic and security. Martin and Kathy Strom plan to meet with Town staff to discuss the proposed changes soon.

Ann Wild said she would send committee members a draft of recommendations on improving communication with the Town council and among committees.

Rose Miller said the June 18 discussion and dessert is on track. At the event, three Town residents and economic experts, Barbara Opper, Peter Winglee and Michael Lebowitz, will talk about the economy.

Kathy Strom discussed an offer by Katie Vita, a Town resident and artist, to draw portraits of Town dogs and their owners.

Regarding next year, Ann Wild, Kathy Strom, Julie Stanish and Putnam Ebinger plan to remain on the committee. Rose Miller and Cathy Wolf are undecided. Martin Gold and Rose Edwards, citing busy schedules, said they would not be members in 2009-2010.

In response to a suggestion by Rose Miller on volunteer training, the committee agreed that volunteer orientation would make sense. Kathy Strom said she would suggest that the Council invite committee members to the orientations it holds for council members and committee chairs at the start of the year.

Rose Miller also suggested creating a Town volunteers list of people willing to be called on to help with events and other Town activities. Other members suggested putting out a call for volunteers once a year, after a list of events and activities becomes available.

Rose also said the Revels said they would consider singing at the reopening of Elm Street Park this fall or holding a Spring Sing toward the end of May.

The meeting adjourned at 9:05 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,
Rose Edwards