



Southington Education Foundation

May 11, 2021

6:30 p.m. to 8:00 p.m.

E-Meeting on Zoom

Meeting Minutes

Quorum= 7

11 Directors Present (of 14): Jerry Belanger, Ellen Bellinger, Gloria Brown, George Fournier, Jan Galati, Paula Knight, Michelle LeBrun-Griffin, Joyce McAloon, Ann Taylor, Dianne Quinn, and Nancy Garry

1 Volunteer Member Present: Lisa Cammuso

1. **Welcome / Call to Order** – Paula

The meeting was called to order at 6:34 p.m.

2. **Approval of Minutes** - Ellen

With no additions or corrections noted, Gloria moved and Michelle seconded approval of the 5/11/21 minutes. All were in favor. The minutes were approved.

3. **Treasurer's Report** - George

a. **April report**

- CHECKING-- \$17,605.89
- TOTAL ASSETS—\$18,233.53
- \$1,017.22 was returned from an unused portion of the Greg Tang grant.
- A donation of \$240 was received from Raytheon via Janice Testa. This is a repeat donation.
- Jerry moved acceptance of the 5/11//21 treasurer's report, seconded by Joyce.
- Question: What happened to the unused CCSU program funds? Was it set aside? It remains in our checking account for other purposes.
- Question: Shall we refine the program application process? There was consensus to look into making any necessary revisions.
- Action: The motion passed. The treasurer's report was accepted

b. 2021 Budget - Paula

Paula proposed the following budget plan for our consideration. Please review it and contact George or Paula with any thoughts or questions. Note: Drive-In fundraiser should be added to the \$5000 projection. No action taken.

Operation Costs		Fund Raising		Profit Projection	
Expenses	Budget	Events	SEF Lead Board Member	Event	Profit
Grants	5,000.00	Virtual Fund Raising Trivia Bee Thank an Educator Amazon. Smile Baseball Tickets Bus Tour	Celebration and Events Committee: • Jerry Belanger • Gloria Brown • Nancy Gary • Trish Kenefick • Paula Knight • Joyce McAloon • Dianne Quinn	Virtual Fund Raising	1,500.00
Programs	0			Thank an Educator	
Scholarships	1,500.00			Amazon. Smile	
Yearly Expenses	2,000.00			Baseball Tickets	
				Bus Tour	
		Shopping Extravaganza	Joyce, Nancy	Shopping Extravaganza	1,200.00
		Honor an Educator	Jan, Ellen	Events Campaign Basketball Art Auction	5,000.00
		SEF Showcase	Nancy and Dianne	SEF Showcase	6,000.00
		Sponsorship Campaign	Paula	Sponsorship Campaign/ Business and Civic Group Partnerships	5,000.00
total	8,500.00			Total	18,700.00

SEF Budget worksheet 2021-2022

5. Committee Work

a. Board Development. - Jan

i. Jan presented the need to create a succession plan into the by-laws. It would help with long term planning and allow for mentorships. The benefits of a co-chair arrangement were given accolades by our past co-chair, Michelle LeBrun-Griffin. George will mentor Dianne next year for the treasurer’s position.

ii. The by-laws will need to be revised to officially change the current chair position to a co-chair position. This will happen at a later date.

iii. Paula announced the following 2020-2021 Slate of Officers:

Co-chairs – Paula Knight and Gloria Brown

Vice-chair – Jerry Belanger

Treasurer – George Fournier

Secretary – Ellen Bellinger

iv. There were no nominations from the floor.

v. With all the nominees running unopposed, the chair declared the slate elected.

vi. Installation of new officers will occur at the June meeting.

b. Membership Committee / Marketing Power Point – Lisa and Jan

- The purpose of the PowerPoint is to market SEF – to make our name more recognizable in the community, to grow our membership, and to increase opportunities for funding and sponsorships.
- The PowerPoint's content will evolve over time as changes occur.
- The member who presents the PP will have a "side kick" to assist and support.
- The committee hopes to be ready to make presentations in the fall. To this end, a special meeting is scheduled on June 22 to make a practice presentation to SEF members. Member feedback is requested.
- Groups to whom we might present: Board of Ed and administrators, PTO groups, and civic groups such as Rotary, Lions Club, and UNICO. (Steve Madancy will be consulted concerning protocol.)

c. Program – Michelle

- LEAF approached Michelle in February with a request to extend our partnership. At that time we didn't have the funds to offer financial support. (See 2/9/21 Minutes.)
- When unused funds from the Greg Tang grant were returned to SEF, LEAF submitted an application seeking funds to defray the cost of their "*Growing Great Gardens in all Grades*" project. (See Addendum.)
- The LEAF application meets all the criteria for an SEF program.
- A discussion took place about the need to develop a form and a timeline for a follow-up report.
- Paula moved to approve LEAF's \$2,000 request for its "*Growing Great Gardens in all Grades*" project, seconded by Jerry. All in favor. The motion passed unanimously.
- George will send a check to Mark Ramsay at LEAF.

d. Celebration / Events – Paula, Nancy, Dianne

- i. **Work Plan** - Paula presented a work plan with possible future events.
 - September – A celebration to showcase SEF grants & programs (Nancy + Dianne)
 - November – A basketball evening fundraiser (Trish)
 - December – Shopping Extravaganza
 - March – Art Auction (Gloria)
 - TBA – Baseball tickets
 - Possible – bus tour to artist's places and lunch
- ii. **SEF Showcase Celebration** - Nancy + Dianne
 - Purpose – to show off our recent grants and programs as well as scholarships, to entice others to apply for grants, to attract new members.
 - Location – Southington Country Club pavilion (free of charge)
 - The Back Nine would charge if drinks and/or appetizers were offered.

- Questions: Should the showcase also be a fundraiser? Have a raffle? Should we have an MC and speakers? A comedian? Should we share the PowerPoint? Who should be invited?
- Next planning meeting – May 18 at 7pm.

iii. Southington Drive-In – June 12

- All hands on deck to work the drive-in.
- Please ask your friends and family to help. We need 20 volunteers.
- Thirteen have volunteered so far: Paula & Rick, Ellen & Peter, Nancy, George, Joyce, Ann +1?, Jerry, Gloria, Michelle +2.
- Paula will email more details.

6. Adjournment The meeting adjourned at 8:22 pm.

10. Dates to Calendar:

Marketing/Membership Committee Meeting – Monday, May 17, 2021 at 6:00 pm.

Event Planning Committee Meeting – Tuesday, May 18, 2021 at 7:00 pm.

Next Regular SEF Zoom Meeting – **Tuesday**, June 8, 2021 at 6:30 pm.

PowerPoint Presentation / Special Meeting – Tuesday, June 22

Southington Drive-In – Saturday, June 12

Potential Meetings Dates for 2021-2022:

Aug.10, Sept.14, Oct.12, Nov. 9, Dec.14, Jan.11, Feb. 8, Mar. 8, Apr.12, May 10, June 14.

Respectfully submitted,
Ellen Bellinger, Secretary

Mission: The Southington Education Foundation, Inc. is committed to instilling a life-long love of learning in all children through innovative, creative learning experiences that expand upon existing educational opportunities. The Foundation will partner with the community to secure resources, inspire excellence, and enrich student achievement.

Core Values: Innovation, Learning, Equity, School-Community Partnership, Integrity.

ADDENDUM

LEAF Application

APPLICATION FOR GRANT FUNDING

Important: The grant committee will use a “blind” review process in evaluating each proposal. In order to maintain the integrity of the process, DO NOT include the names of the applicants, schools, or other identifying features in the Grant Application below. Please submit a typed, complete application electronically to sef.inc.grants@gmail.com at any time of the year.

DATE May 4, 2021

AMOUNT OF FUNDING REQUEST \$2,000

PROJECT TITLE Growing Great Gardens in all Grades.

CONTACT PERSON(S)

Chris Palmieri & Mark Ramsay

EMAIL

cpalmieri@southingtonschools.org

SIGNIFICANCE: Explain why this project is important, what specific needs it will fulfill, and how it will advance teaching and learning.

Integration of agricultural and ecological practices at the Lewis Educational Agriculture Farm (LEAF) and the Southington School System K-8.

LEAF’s historic farm, located on Bellevue Avenue, provides a unique opportunity for local students to connect with the abundant knowledge needed for the sustainable production, nutrition and preparation of food. Crops grown at LEAF will be provided to all school gardens.

The goal is to bring classroom subjects to life, connecting learning with the ecological and social community of which we are all apart.

Farming teaches about the land that sustains us.

ALIGNMENT: Describe how the project aligns with the SEF mission (see above), including a vision for increased S.T.E.M. (Science, Technology, Engineering, Mathematics) learning opportunities and/or developing 21st century skills (e.g., critical thinking, advanced communication and social skills, technology literacy, leadership) using innovative instructional approaches.

The incorporation of stem curriculum is an easy fit when it comes to the production of agricultural products. Growing school gardens provides a hands-on experience for STEM based curriculum.

Science A diverse selection of vegetative plants will be provided for each school garden. They range from 40 kinds of vegetables of which there are more than 200 varieties. Science is everywhere when it comes to the production of agricultural products.

Technology The science of producing agricultural crops is always changing, as is the technology used to grow

these products. LEAF constantly keeps up with the new trends in agricultural technology including:

- The use of computers on the automated watering systems that ensure the proper amount of water is being distributed as to the crops as they grow.
- The state of the art fertilizer injector systems that are used to feed crops with the amount of nutrients needed.
- The grafting of specific vegetable scions to root stocks that control growth, yield and help to prevent disease.

Engineering LEAF uses many different types of engineering to solve problems on the farm, among them, civil, mechanical, hydro and electrical just to name a few.

- Civil engineering is used when laying out vegetable fields, erecting new greenhouses and putting up fences.
- Mechanical and electrical engineering is used when farming equipment breaks down.
- Hydro engineering is used to ensure proper flow rates in greenhouses and irrigation systems.

Mathematics Math is an essential part of planning a school garden including:

- The planning of what will be planted during the growing season, seed counts, plants per acre, yields per acre.
- Determining fertilizer ratios, pest and control formulas, and in watering and water conservation practices.
- The measuring and plant spacing of vegetable crops.

OBJECTIVES: List the primary objectives of the project.

The objectives of this project are to provide students at all levels with hands-on learning about the sustainable production of agricultural products by:

- Teaching about utilizing good safe farming practices that ensure the agricultural products produced have little to no negative impact to the environment or consumer.
- Producing nutrient-rich, delicious and safe fresh produce, while providing education on how food is produced.
- Educating students about having and maintaining a safe sustainable local food system.

PLAN OF ACTION: Describe how aforementioned objectives will be accomplished including timeline for implementation. (If your project is time sensitive, please indicate which weeks or months it will occur.)

The objectives that were stated in the previous paragraph are currently in use at LEAF. As technologies and growing practices evolve, they will continue to establish and implement new objectives and ways to incorporate them into all the school gardens.

The rotation of crops prevents the depletion of nutrients from the soil. Crop rotation is done on a yearly basis in each school garden. Crop rotation also reduces the chances of infection of diseases to the next year's crop.

IMPACT: List anticipated learner outcomes. Include how many and which students will be served (e.g., targeted groups of students in district, specific grade levels/department, or schools).

Students of all ages will grow in numerous ways through hands-on learning. All of Southington's elementary

schools and both middle schools will have school gardens. All the products for these gardens are provided by LEAF.

Due to COVID, we were not able to offer field trips for our students this year so offering school gardens for all students K-8 will directly link to their studies of planting and growing. LEAF also assists teachers with classroom grow kits.

Students will be more involved and engaged in learning.

EVALUATION: Explain how the project will be evaluated including intervals for measuring progress.

School gardens will be re-established at all elementary schools and both middle schools. Any student may participate in their school garden (site specific). Parents and family members are also encouraged to participate during the summer months. Students at DePaolo also then use their produce to operate a farmstand so students learn about engaging with the community, develop social skills, and learn to apply real life math skills.

Studies have shown that providing gardens in our school systems has a tremendous impact on the health and wellbeing of our kids. The globalization of our food system, and the ability to buy any fruit or vegetable at any time of year in a sterile grocery store has limited our children's knowledge of where food comes from and how it is grown.

"Growing Minds: The Effect of a School Gardening Program on the Science Achievement of Elementary Students," discusses how students who participate in garden-based science curriculum, in addition to traditional classroom learning, score significantly higher on science achievement tests than students in a traditional classroom-based environment.

A 2017 evaluation of FoodCorps conducted by the Tisch Center for Food, Education, and Policy at Teachers College, Columbia University found that in schools that provide frequent, high-quality opportunities for hands-on nutrition learning, students eat up to three times more fruits and vegetables at school lunch — regardless of whether or not that food was grown in the garden.

A 2018 randomized control study by Nancy Wells at Cornell University found that children whose schools provided regular school garden lessons had more access to low-fat vegetables and fruit at home than children without that curricula.

According to a study by the National Farm To School Network, when schools offer a garden 44.2% of students eat more fruits and vegetables. There are a multitude of other benefits as well, including student engagement with peers and the community, social and emotional growth, improvement of life skills, and overall education about agriculture and local food supply.

BUDGET: Provide detailed projected costs for research, site visits, instructional materials, equipment, and/or installation.

Elementary School Gardens (These costs include the costs for all 8 elementary school gardens):

- Labor \$1,275
- Plants and Seed \$900
- Soil/fertilizer \$220

- Equipment cost \$250
- TOTAL \$2,645

Secondary School Gardens (These costs include the cost for the two middle schools and Karen Smith Academy):

- Labor \$475
- Plants and Seed \$750
- Soil/fertilizer \$270
- Equipment cost \$945
- TOTAL \$2,440

SUSTAINABILITY: Explain how the project will be sustained after SEF funds have been expended.

As mentioned in the previous section the majority of funding will come from the production of the agricultural products produced at LEAF. In the future LEAF will reach out beyond our own community and offer educational programs (for a nominal fee) to students from surrounding communities.

OUTREACH: Describe how SEF will be acknowledged when this project is introduced, published, or shared in educational presentations.

The Lewis Family has been an active part in the Southington community for more than 200 years. Through continued community involvement, there are many ways that the support of the SEF and educational opportunities will be publicized. LEAF produces a number of different marketing materials throughout the year including CSA signup sheets, brochures, recipes, social media and a web site (www.leafct.com), all of which will have a list of organizations that have supported LEAF in educational endeavors.