"Opening Doors" Minutes

July 21, 2025, 10-11am

Present: Laura Mooney, Holly Rubino, Margaret Lancaster, Ellie Sutton, Greg Miller, Karen Geisler, Kristina White, Janet Spoltare

Call to Order

Laura opened the meeting at 10:07. A special thanks to new guest Janet Spoltare for sharing what she and her staff are doing with students at Connecticut College.

Roundtable Discussion

Resources

- Surgeon General's "recommendations for stakeholders" is a good structure to follow: fostering belonging, volunteering across the generations, educating and raising awareness, building partnerships (see chapter 4, page 62 of *Our Epidemic of Loneliness and Isolation*)

Collaborating

- Co-host programs with the Senior Center using their mailing list (Land Trust does this with "Wednesday Walks with Wendy" for people with limited mobility). Then build similar partnerships with other groups in the coalition.
- Should we still create a booklet with brief descriptions about what each organization does or could this info go on the library webpage?
- Invite head of the PTO to a meeting
- Find passionate ambassadors who can lead various programs
- Can we plan more activities with Park and Rec for all age groups? (The 30-44 age group is reportedly the loneliest.)
- Set up a Ledge Light table event with Margaret Lancaster at the library.
- Lions Club works with younger people through community service clubs.

Reaching Our Target Audience

- Senior Center is a resource for identifying those in our target audience.
- Voting records and Kathy Tisdale's list are other ways of finding out this info but we must be mindful of HIPAA laws.
- Create pamphlet – "Do you have a special talent you want to share with our community? We want you to share your passion with us, and we can create the structure for it to happen."
- Have a table at the Hamburg Fair on Saturday, August 16 with a banner, pamphlets, and sign-up lists for people who want to lead programs and those who want to participate (Holly to contact Dave Roberge)
- Host events in different places at different times for different age groups (example, kickball game followed by picnic)
- Sell people on the "what" of a program rather than the "why."
- Create a page on the library website solely devoted to the Opening Doors Coalition
- Create small, focused programs that allow people to get to know each other (examples, meditation group at Hadlyme Public Hall, afternoon movies at the library followed by a potluck, craft groups, jam sessions for musicians, meadow walks for gardeners, etc.)
- Meet with Chad and Kristina to strategize how best to market in print and on social media all of this to the community.
- Laura, Mike, and Holly to have Zoom meeting with CT Collaborative to End Loneliness rep.

Next meeting: TBD