



TOWN OF MANSFIELD  
COMMITTEE ON COMMUNITY QUALITY OF LIFE  
**Monday, July 26, 2004**  
**Audrey P. Beck Municipal Building**  
**Conference Room B**

**Minutes**

Present: B. Clouette, A. Hawkins, E. Paterson, A. Whitham Blair

Staff: M. Berliner, M. Hart

**I. Call to Order/Roll Call**

Chairman Bruce Clouette called the meeting to order at 6:35 p.m.

**II. Selection of Recorder/Secretary for the Committee**

Matt Hart volunteered to serve as recorder for the meeting.

**III. New Business**

1. *Committee Charge and Statement of Mission.* As explained by Bruce, the Town Council has created this ad hoc committee to examine the issues relating to UConn Spring Weekend and other off-campus activities, and to develop recommendations for the Council as a whole. To begin, Bruce facilitated a discussion to help formulate the committee's charge and mission. In particular, members and staff identified what issues and factors that they see as "problems" or relating to the committee's "mission." The members also identified certain information needs and stakeholders. A summary of the discussion is as follows:

**Mission**

- What is the effect of students living in the community?
- What ordinances do we have, and how are they enforced?

- We want to mitigate the negative impact to persons and property, including property values, which is sometimes associated with off-campus parties and student rental housing.
- The only way to positively impact Spring Weekend is to set a consistent standard of conduct throughout the year.
- The committee should gain a better understanding of the problems, and collect information from other like communities.
- The committee should focus on: 1) identifying what the town can do to mitigate problems; and 2) developing recommendations for town/university task forces on substance abuse and off-campus housing.

### **Problems**

- The problem is not limited to student behavior, but includes new absentee landlords who are buying and renting single-family homes to students.
- Noise is an issue, as well as garbage pick-up.
- Dumpster fires are a problem.
- Bottle-throwing, fighting and assaults are problematic.
- Substance abuse, particularly alcohol abuse, is an issue.
- Media attention at Spring Weekend and final four celebrations can incite the crowd.
- Spring Weekend and other parties attract high school and other underage persons.
- Spring Weekend and other large parties create increased traffic and pedestrians. Parking is also difficult.
- Spring Weekend and other large parties draw heavily upon regional public safety, emergency services and medical resources, which has a budgetary impact upon the stakeholders and the providers.
- The lack of off-campus amenities for students contributes to problematic behavior (“lack of anything else to do except drink”).

### **Information Needs**

- We should look at a license-to-rent program, and other programs and policies that communities around the nation use to manage rental housing.
- With respect to trash and unsightly properties, can you put the onus on the landlord to control?
- Staff to provide the committee with an updated UConn Student Code of conduct.

### **Stakeholders**

- Town government
- University administration, faculty and staff

- Students
- Local schools
- Neighbors and taxpayers
- Landlords
- Public safety and emergency services providers
- Package store owners
- Bars, pubs and related establishments

2. *Committee Name.* The members decided to change the name of the workgroup to the “Committee on Community Quality of Life.”

3. *Next Steps.* The members proposed the following as next steps in the process:

- Staff to present a report on its current related activities
- The committee should contact the National league of Cities and similar organizations for information.
- The committee will meet again at 6:30 p.m. on August 9, 2004.
- At some point, the committee should consider bringing in code enforcement, social services and school staff members to hear their perspective on the issues.
- The development of a code of acceptable conduct should be a priority.

The committee adjourned the meeting at 7:25 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Matthew Hart  
**Assistant Town Manager**