

Connecticut State Employee Campaign Committee Meeting Minutes

Date: 2/9/2021 Time: 1:32 PM – 2:24 PM

Attendees

Connecticut State Employees Campaign Committee

- Betsy McDermott - Office of the State Comptroller – Committee Chair
- Charles Kistler- State Retiree
- Cindy Cannata (Freedom of Information Commission)
- Julie Bernosky (Department of Administrative Services)
- Kathleen Gensheimer (Judicial Branch)
- Ina Wilson (Department of Education)

PCFO – United Way of Central and Northeastern Connecticut (UWCNCT)

- David Reeves (CSEC Partnership Manager)
- Jesse Mejia (Corporate Workplace Giving Director)
- Bob Williamson (Partnership Manager)

Federations

- Brittney Claridades (America's Charities)
- Karen Torgus (Community Health Charities)
- Gary Johnson (United Way of Milford)
- Jessica Teta (Corporate Workplace Giving Director New Haven)
- Sandy Wilder (Global Impact)
- Tony Davis (EarthShare)
- William Broughan (America's Best Charities)

Agenda:

Committee Chair Update: Betsy McDermott

- Review and Approve Previous Minutes

CSEC Update: Jesse Mejia, Director and David Reeves, Partnership Manager

- Campaign Status Update
 - Current Total: \$377K (YOY \$503K), shortage of \$126K
 - Special Event Push: Cutest Pet Contest – <https://app.mobilecause.com/vf/CUTEPETCT>
 - Lapsed Donor Outreach Effort
- New Committee Member Nomination
 - Department of Agriculture Campaign Coordinate, Lindsay Raymond
- 2020-2021 Campaign
 - Review Federation Application Process

Roundtable: Committee

Roundtable: Federations

Meeting Minutes:

Betsy McDermott called the meeting to order at 1:32 PM.

Committee Chair Update: Betsy McDermott (CSEC Committee Chair)

Review and approve previous minutes motion to approve by Betsy.

Charlie Kistler approved; Cynthia Cannata 2nd approved.

Campaign Status Update

- Jesse started by acknowledging that a year ago, yesterday (2/8), the campaign was at \$503,000; this year's campaign was at \$377,000. The campaign is under by \$126,000.
- Jesse spoke about having one more push with a creative and innovative twist to make up for the deficit. The push would be the CT State Employees Cutest Pet Contest. After having a conversation with campaign coordinators, asking what exactly we want to focus on in the month of February to do a final run. Sandy provided a list of which causes are major in the month of February and the list was narrowed down to Cancer and Social Justice. After weighing the pros and cons, it was decided to do the Cutest Pet Contest. Site will be rolled out on 2/10. Jesse explained that it will be \$5 to enter the contest and \$1 to vote. Individuals can choose to donate more.
- Kathleen asked if the campaign chair would be sending out the email. Jesse responded that he is happy to draft the email and send out to employees on coordinators' behalf. Kathleen responded that she thought it should come from coordinators. Jesse agreed and confirmed that he will draft email for coordinators to send.
- Betsy expressed concerned about timing (submitting pets and voting process) and wondered if it was worth doing. Charles supported by saying it could also go toward next year's campaign. Cynthia agreed. Kathleen supported if the messaging is clear and appropriate to relieve the issue of lateness. After being asked for alternatives, Betsy confirmed that she is open to having the competition but wanted to make sure that the email is sent out immediately. Jesse confirmed that the draft will be sent to coordinators by afternoon for them to send tomorrow (2/9).
- Charles suggested to see if it works and if it does, try again in the fall when there is more time.
- Bob indicated that this push does not preclude from sending out last minute solicitations 1 to 2 weeks out from 3/1.
- Sandy expressed that she thinks it will be fun and good to hang publicity on to easily promote; suggested that the goal be decreased (for example: \$30,000) and as thresholds are surpassed, the goal is gradually increased to \$100,000. Jesse agreed.
- Jesse introduced the LYBNT process (last year but not yet this year) for the lapsed donor outreach effort. The internal team will pull reports to identify those who gave last year, but not yet this year and sends a "We Miss You" letter at the tail end of the campaign.
- Kathleen asked if it would be possible to identify retired individuals and those who have left state service and asked whether the outreach would be made via mail or email. She also

indicated that it might be a vehicle for Betsy to consider for state retirees. Jesse responded that email would be more secure and that when bounce backs are received, it would confirm if the individual is still a state employee.

- Jesse indicated that Lindsay Raymond, campaign coordinator at the Department of Agriculture, expressed interest in joining the committee. He wants to know how to proceed. Betsy expressed that the committee is always open to new members. She said that in the statute, there are appointments the Governor can make, and the comptroller can sit on or have a designee (now, Betsy). There are some vacancies on the committee. Kathleen indicated that they would need a resume outlining Lindsay's background. Betsy stated that Lindsay's name would be submitted for review from the Governor's office and the appointment letter would be sent to Betsy. If the process is done quick enough, Lindsay may be able to join the next meeting.
- Jesse and Betsy have been receiving emails from individuals asking about the 2020-2021 Federation Application process. They were asked to send a letter of intent. Jesse received 2 or 3 so far. Jesse asked if the evaluation process should be modified considering COVID-19 and moved online. Betsy had a conversation with David to discuss gaging interest moving forward and limiting or breaking the number of charities currently in the directory.
- Last spring, it was voted to do away with new applicants and use the previous years' directory. The issue is not wanting to lose out on applicants but wanting to streamline the process. The primary concerns were creating a centralized process where not just one person is reviewing applications and reviewing what is being asked for within the application.
- Betsy asked if there is a way to focus on more Connecticut based charities. Jessica said that she was in favor of moving the process online and suggested a maximum that each federation can submit or a lowered admin percentage. Jessica also indicated that some non-profits may not be open anymore and suggested to limit nationally run charities to applying to one single federation.
- Karen said that other state campaigns do limit non-profits to one federation. It is estimated that 20-40% of charities will not be here in the next six months because they rely on campaigns and special events, which have not been being held because of COVID. Most of these non-profits are in the business of helping people. There are usually a dozen federation and at least 1,000 charities.
- Sandy seconds Karen's statement and stated that not all charities choose to participate in every single state campaign. She says that charities often self-select. She supports the application process being moved online.
- Karen stated that many states provide a certification and recertification process.
- Tony suggested taking additional deep dives to see what kinds of parameters would be set and also suggested that moving online would be a simplified process.
- Jennifer stated that other state campaigns have restrictions for those non-profits who did not raise a lot of funds in the past campaign – those who did not reach a certain threshold in one year may be asked to sit out for one campaign year and then invited to reapply the following year.

Roundtable Update

Committee:

- Charles asked what the response from the January outreach is. Jesse responded that it has been small so far, but he is optimistic.
- Charles asked what the time frame for the payroll deduction from the first check is. Betsy responded that she is not entirely sure because it depends on when the pledge card was returned. Jesse stated that once it is received, a list is compiled to submit to care upload. It might take up to two page cycles for it to click. There have been a few instances with other donors where there were challenges, but they are outliers. It all depends on the core upload and it being successful and then two pay periods.

Federations:

None

Betsy adjourned the meeting at 2:24 PM.