

# Meeting Minutes from Town of South Bristol Committee for Community Engagement

Tuesday, April 27<sup>th</sup>, 2026

**Attendance:** Christopher Bennem (Chair), Deborah Denome, Lenore Friend, Tom Hawks, John Holtz, Amy Luersen

**Observing:** Jaimie Hall (Board Liaison), Meg Fuller

## Overview

The Community Engagement Committee meeting focused on planning upcoming community events and discussions. The group reviewed their first panel discussion, which was successful, and discussed plans for a second community conversation scheduled for July 20th at 7pm with Chris DeBolt and Carla Jordan as confirmed speakers. They also addressed plans for a fall event, tentatively scheduled for early November, and discussed the need to review the comprehensive plan. The committee celebrated the publication of "South Bristol Connected," a newsletter compiled by Tom Hawks, and explored options for promoting upcoming events through local media outlets. Additionally, they discussed potential improvements to town communication methods, including the possibility of installing electronic message boards at the town hall and transfer station.

## Next steps

### Chris & Lenore

- Confirm Jim's availability for the July 20th community conversation panel
- Write up a one-sheeter proposal for the solid waste/landfill community conversation flyer grant and submit to county
- Follow up with Beth to get more information about 250th celebration events and coordinate creation of a flyer
- Reach out to Scouts and VFW to coordinate rededication of Veterans Garden (targeting around Veterans Day)
- Find out when the next 250th celebration committee meeting is scheduled
- Try to get calendar of 250th events from Beth for promotion
- Send out follow-up email to committee about grant money for solid waste conversation promotion
- Send out electronic version of South Bristol Connected to be added to website
- Look into whether there's setup for Election Day that would affect early November event scheduling
- Send digital version of suggestion card to Meg in both Word and PDF format
- Put together designed brochure of 250th events for early June distribution at Freedom Festival
- Reach out to Beth and try to get a calendar of 250th events
- Piggyback on next 250th celebration meeting to coordinate promotion efforts
- Promote November 11th Canandaigua Treaty re-signing event in calendar of events
- Do a little more research about digital sign options before formally suggesting to town board

- Celebrate Tom's work on South Bristol Connected (Note: This appears to be recognition rather than an action item - removing)
- Send out electronic version of South Bristol Connected (Note: Already noted in item 16 - duplicate)

### **Meg**

- Coordinate the digital suggestion cards (Chris will send files in Word and PDF format)

### **Tom**

- Work on the next issue of South Bristol Connected newsletter
- Print and make South Bristol Connected available (Note: Already completed - not a future action)

### **Collaboration**

- Lenore and Chris: Review the first batch of suggestion box submissions using the rubric
- Chris and Lenore: Coordinate content/questions for the landfill community conversation panel
- All committee members: Review the comprehensive plan this month and identify potential updates or actionable items for next meeting
- Chris and Lenore: Pass along information about the grant promo when they meet to discuss suggestions

### **Follow-up Meeting Discussion Summary**

The group discussed following up on items from the previous meeting, particularly regarding a panel discussion that was deemed successful, with Jamie serving as the moderator. The meeting had to end by 5:45 to accommodate an upcoming Pinewood HOA meeting.

### **Community Conversation Planning Meeting**

Lenore discussed plans for the second community conversation, confirming Chris DeBolt and Carla Jordan as participants for July 20 at 7pm. Lenore mentioned challenges reaching Jim, who reluctantly agreed to participate after objecting to the week of July 4th, and planned to follow up with him via phone. The group decided to hold the event at the town hall for consistency, and Lenore proposed raffling a composting kit to attendees who complete surveys. Chris noted that surveys from the previous community conversation had been received but not yet analyzed.

### **Fall Event Planning Discussion**

The team discussed planning for a fall event, focusing on scheduling in early November. They considered various dates, avoiding November 9th due to a town board meeting and the week of Thanksgiving. The group tentatively agreed on November 2nd as a potential date, though Chris noted concerns about setup requirements for that day, which coincides with Election Day. The

discussion also briefly touched on potential travel considerations for some panel members, particularly Sam, though it was determined that most participants would not be affected by Thanksgiving break.

### **Suggestion Box and Beautification Plans**

Chris discussed the implementation of suggestion boxes, confirming that they will be placed in the Town Hall and that he and Lenore will review initial suggestions using their rubric. Chris decided to maintain the current design featuring the Overlook as their unofficial town emblem. Regarding beautification outreach, Chris reported postponing this initiative until May and mentioned reaching out to Tom McAleese as an early representative from the Woodville neighborhood to help guide the project.

### **250th Celebration Planning Coordination**

Chris discussed the 250th celebration planning, noting that Beth was handling much of the coordination but had not shared details with the group. Chris proposed creating a marketing brochure or poster to advertise events across Bristol, Canandaigua, and South Bristol, potentially including activities like blacksmith demonstrations and horse events, to be promoted at the Freedom Festival. The group agreed it would be beneficial to coordinate all events happening in the Bristol Hills corridor for comprehensive marketing purposes.

### **Cemetery Tours and Events Planning**

The group discussed implementing tours at cemeteries, with Chris planning to follow up with Beth to gather more information and create a flyer. They also reviewed plans for a cotillion dance at the Grange in the fall, with two modern bands potentially available. The main focus of the meeting was to review the comprehensive plan, with Chris suggesting the committee examine it in May to identify outdated elements or potential implementation opportunities for community engagement initiatives.

### **Community Engagement Committee Updates**

Chris discussed the Community Engagement Committee's plan to solicit volunteers for action-oriented tasks, distinguishing between theoretical discussion and practical implementation. He praised Tom Hawks for creating the South Bristol Connected newsletter, which summarizes the work of various ad hoc committees, and confirmed it would be added to the website and made available in print form. Chris also mentioned reaching out to county-based organizations about funding for the newsletter, though the organizations indicated their funds were not suitable for this purpose but offered alternative support options.

## **Landfill Closure Promotion Planning**

Chris discussed a flyer promotion for community conversations about landfill closure, explaining that the Department of Solid Waste has funding available to cover the costs of creating and mailing flyers to South Bristol residents. He noted that while the email list currently reaches about 20% of households, they could include an invitation to join the email list on the flyers. Chris mentioned he would need to write up a one-sheeter application and coordinate with others on content development, including reviewing the landfill plan and preparing relevant questions for panelists.

## **250th Celebration Planning Discussion**

Chris discussed follow-up actions from a recent panel, including pursuing grant money for solid waste conversation and coordinating with Lenore on promotional activities. The group discussed plans for the 250th celebration in 2026, with John suggesting a rededication of the Veterans Garden around Veterans Day (November 11th) and proposing to include information about the Canandaigua Treaty re-signing on February 11th in their calendar of events. John agreed to reach out to the Scouts and VFW regarding the Veterans Garden rededication timing.

## **Community Planning and Promotion Coordination**

Tom expressed concerns about the lack of clarity and education regarding ongoing planning activities, emphasizing the need to transition from planning to promotion by early June to allow time for designing a brochure. He discussed the importance of coordinating with the 250th celebration committee and obtaining a calendar of events to better align community engagement efforts. Jaimie clarified that while they need to connect with the community, planning for certain events, like Veterans Day, falls under different groups' responsibilities, and they will share information once received.

## **Community Event Promotion Strategies**

Chris discussed strategies for promoting community events, including using the Freedom Festival calendar and potentially advertising in the Pennysaver. She also mentioned exploring PR opportunities through media contacts, including Finger Lakes 1, Canandaigua Messenger, and the Pennysaver, with the help of a pro bono PR contact named Nancy Napurski.

## **Community Communication Board Improvements**

The committee discussed two main communication improvements: an electronic board for community information and relocation of the current bulletin board at the transfer station. Jaimie proposed researching specific LED sign options, including cost considerations and technical requirements for wireless connectivity, with estimates ranging from \$700 to \$4-5,000 depending on features. The group agreed to formally present a proposal to the town board after conducting more detailed research on specific models and implementation details.