1. Call to order
   ▶ Mr. Iacofano called the meeting to order at 11:08 a.m.

2. Approval of Minutes from the October 31, 2022 meeting
   ▶ Ms. Whitley moved to approve the minutes, seconded by Ms. Corley. All present voted in favor.

3. Public Comments
   [None]

4. Update from local school board members and discussion
   ▶ Mr. Iacofano stated that he has asked Mr. Keith Grybowski and Mr. Ed Kelley, newly elected Board of Trustee Members, representing District 1 and 2 respectively to come and address this Committee.

   ▶ Mr. Grybowski stated that this will be the most interesting board, as 8 out of 9 members of the Board of Trustees are new. He feels that Mount Pleasant is blessed to have both Ed Kelley and himself because they are looking at many things that have been changed over the past 10 years in policy. He spoke about Title 59 and the Legislation on how it is funded. He stated that their budget is very close to spending more than what they are receiving. He said their budget is balanced and they will have a reserve, because revenue is up. He asked what would
happen if a recession took place. He said Mount Pleasant is the shining light in the district. He said the principals and constituents are on board. He said Mayors are approaching them regarding family centers and feels that Mount Pleasant needs to get one as well. He stated that the Town is likely low on the priority list because scores are so high. He said getting the community involved in education needs to begin at home with parents before they start school. He said the focus is to get literacy started at an earlier age.

Ed Kelley stated that early childhood education is a big part of what CCSD is focused on at this time. He said the intent is to involve family members, stakeholders and caretakers. He is this is ultimately the point of having the family community centers.

Mr. Iacofano asked about the involvement, with the municipalities and CCSD, of the family centers that have already been created.

Mr. Kelley stated that this was a project that pre-dates both he and Mr. Grybowski so he is unaware of the planning phase and local engagement with municipal leaders. He said it would be reasonable to engage with local partners and he is a fan of small government who is closer to engaging with their residents. He said the Town would be better suited to know what is needed at the local level. A partnership would make more sense. He stated that what he is focused on at CCSD is finance, where he is a co-chair of the Finance Committee. On Policy, his intent is to build ownership. He firmly believes that parent’s ownership in a child’s education is how the literacy gap and reading scores as a whole will be solved. When mom, dad or the caretaker of the child is actively engaged in their education, this is where the teachers will receive respect and authority. He stated that he has discussed ways to get parents/families involved in early education with Mr. Kennedy. He does not believe they have direct control over the outcome of children. He feels they are able to set the stage and provide resources, but ultimately it is families and local communities that need to be able to execute. He views his position in government is to be an equipper and then move away and not to dictate. He stated that this is how he is tackling policy changes. He said it is designed to allow parents to do their job and the government to do theirs which is not to parent.

Ms. Corley stated that this is a daunting excursion. She stated that she is excited to see how this goes moving forward. She asked how they
would implement ideas, thoughts and policy in this culture of not being able to hold anyone accountable. She would ask that they look at empowering school leaders to support their teachers so they are able to support their students.

Mr. Grybowski discussed with Ms. Corley and the Committee how for profit charter schools make money on education when CCSD is unable. He said they are only three months into this position and wish to involve parents. He said they will be working on different types of platforms. He said that they would like to see every child reading a grade level.

Ms. Whitley stated that a lot of what Mr. Kelly and Mr. Grybowski are trying to do to create equality of opportunity but recognizing that even with equality of opportunity it does not equal equality of outcome. She said if all the components are not together with the parents working with the school and the student, she does not feel they will achieve the outcomes for the students if the parents are not involved. She said that the Town is one of the shining stars and the schools are excellent. She added that her four children are in CCSD schools and they have loved their experience in the schools and appreciate the magnet schools as well. She added that one of the things that could be valuable is the school’s resources as far as recreation facilities. She said Mount Pleasant students are bursting at the seams when it comes to recreation and there is opportunity with the school district for usage of these facilities. She said there needs to be more discussion on this.

Mr. Grybowski stated that recreation funding is evenly divided to every school and no school receives more funding that another. He said what they are currently dealing with at this time, they were not involved with from the beginning. He said this new board with so many new members were never involved in the current budget. He said nothing will change overnight but hopes in the next two years there will be major inroads from conversations such as this one.

Mr. Kelley stated that both he and Mr. Grybowski are residents of the Town and he would support any type of co-usage which would make the community better as a whole and accomplishes the main mission of engaging with families.

Ms. Whitley mentioned the “Art on a Half Shell” program. She stated that the Cultural Arts Commission has been attempting to work with the
public schools in Mount Pleasant to get them an oyster so that the students could decorate it as a piece of art in their front lobbies.

Mr. Kelley stated that this would be best addressed to Mr. Borowy, Chief Operating Officer of CCSD. He added that a principal should be able to make this decision.

Mr. Grybowski added that he would like to see the Town build houses that teachers are able to afford.

Mr. Kelley stated that teachers spend 73% of their income to live in Mount Pleasant based on CCSD wages.

Ms. Whitley added that what Planning Committee has put in front of Council is a reduction in overall density from 12 units an acre to 8 units an acre; however, half of these units would be required to be attainable housing for the workforce. She said full Council will need to vote on this proposal.

5. **Adjourn**

   *There being no further business Committee adjourned at 11:37 a.m.*

Respectfully submitted,
Barbara Ashe MacDonald
February 6, 2023