

Commission on Aging, Brookfield CT

Regular Monthly Meeting: March 7, 2012

The meeting was called to order by Betsy McIlvaine, Chairman at 12:05 noon

In attendance were: Commissioners Carol Howe and Peg Kaswer.

Others: Director of Senior and Social Services, Ellen Melville and Municipal Agent & Social Services Coordinator, Jeanette Holliday.

February 1st minutes were accepted as written.

Regular Reports

Senior Center

Ms. Melville reported the Senior Center, through AARP Tax-Aide counselors, continues to schedule tax preparation assistance to low and middle-income taxpayers Friday mornings by appointment. Interested parties should contact the Brookfield Senior Center at 203-775-5308 for more information and to set up an appointment.

Ms. Melville has obtained a senior mailing list for informing seniors about FISH. Commission members will assist in editing the list to ensure one label per senior household.

The Women's Financial Seminar was presented. Ms. Melville indicated another seminar entitled "What Important Papers to Keep" will be scheduled and announced in the Senior Newsletter. Appointments can be made to "Ask an Attorney" a question one Friday a month.

The Senior Center will host a St. Patrick's Day "MISGIVINGS" divine comedy and Corned Beef luncheon March 15th. In addition, on March 31st the center will hold its Spring Boutique.

Ms. Melville was pleased to announce that a Brookfield Boy Scout will work on his Eagle Scout Award to improve the exterior of the building.

Social Service

Ms. Holliday reported a slight increase in the Energy Assistance Program. With regard to the Food Pantry the number of households participating has increased 23 % over last year. She also noted that Goodwill Industries runs a Career Center which assists folks in preparing for a career change with the objective of improving their financial situation as well as lowering their stress with stress management training.

Old Business

FISH Program:

Action item closed: Ms. Howe and Ms. Kaswer forwarded the PR package for use in the Chamber of Commerce Quarterly Newsletter and The Penny Saver publication. The Penny Saver printed the publication release. The Chamber's Newsletter has yet to be published.

Action item closed: Ms. Holliday reported there was no lump-sum grant currently being distributed by area towns for seniors to assist them in roof replacement. There was a program (Home Solutions) administered by CRT in the past. Grants for low-income seniors to make health and safety repairs on their homes continue to be available through USDA's rural development loan/grant program. Seniors in

need of such repairs should contact Ms. Holliday for program information. There are income and asset restrictions.

Action item closed: RSVP & FISH station: Ms. McIlvaine will attend an RSVP meeting on the 13th. She hopes to have clarified the station to which FISH belongs. The results will be reported at the April COA meeting.

Action item closed: Ms. Kaswer and Ms. Howe have compiled a list of area healthcare facilities with phone numbers for FISH use.

Ms. Kaswer indicated there was one request for a ride so far this month (March).

The FISH scheduler, Ms. Effrece, is currently away. However, the April calendar will be e-mailed on or about the 15th March as scheduled. Ms. Kaswer will mail copies to those drivers who do not have e-mail.

Facilities Planning Committee

Ms. Howe and Ms. McIlvaine, at the Facilities Planning Committee meeting, recommended that additional senior housing be added to the list. The three top facility needs are: Huckleberry Hill School Renovations, Brookfield Library/Community facility and a Recreation Center.

New Business

Action items open:

Ms. McIlvaine – contact Danbury Hospital to see if they offer a “When Should Seniors Stop Driving Program”.

Ms. McIlvaine - Contact Housatonic Times and Brookfield The Monthly Magazine to see if they will do a story about FISH.

Ms. Melville – Work on links for COA & FISH to be included in the town website which is being updated. The members of the Commission will assist.

The meeting adjourned at 1:05 p.m.

Respectfully Submitted,

Peg Kaswer, Secretary