

Colchester Commission on Aging
Regular Meeting Minutes
Monday, May 12, 2008 – Colchester Senior Center

MEMBERS PRESENT: Chairman Bernie Erickson, Vice Chairman Ann Smyk, Clara Erickson, Jean Stawicki, Barbara Warden, Bill Wagner

MEMBERS ABSENT: Sally Carbone, Betty Ann Oppelt

OTHERS PRESENT: Cathy Russi

1. **Call Meeting to Order:** The meeting was called to order at 1:05 p.m.
2. **Minutes:** Ann Smyk motioned to approve the regular meeting minutes of 4/14/08. Clara Erickson seconded. All other members present voted in favor. MOTION CARRIED.
3. **Financial Report:** No items were reported.
4. **Chairman's Report:** Bernie Erickson reported that Betty Ann Oppelt has been moved from alternate to full Commission member. She is filling the vacancy left by James Cunningham. Currently the Commission has a full complement of members and is short one alternate.
5. **Friends of the Senior Center Report:** The Friends of the Senior Center will meet this month, but not during the months of June, July and August. Linda Hodge was at the last meeting and was asked to report in September what direction the Senior Center/Community Center will go.
6. **Senior Center Director's Report:** Cathy Russi attended the CT Association of Senior Center Personnel annual conference on May 2nd. Cathy asked the speaker to do a presentation at the Colchester Senior Center. She has a slide presentation that details self assessment for senior center accreditation. Cathy recommends the entire Commission on Aging attend the presentation because it will explain exactly what the process is and what it would mean to the town. She feels it is important for everyone to see how other senior centers are moving forward, and also realize that accreditation would open up the possibility of more grant funding. Cathy related that the cost is based on the budget and for Colchester it would be about \$1,300 plus the cost of expenses for the person

who performs the evaluation. This is a fee that can be split between two towns if there is another town nearby that is undergoing the process. There is also a handbook available for purchase that provides a self assessment. Bill Wagner asked if the status of the building would be an issue and Cathy said that that is why they should look into the self assessment to see exactly what would be required. It is a long process that has taken other towns about a year to complete.

The Small City Block Grant is looking for public input on their regulations. Cathy had a few thoughts including the fact that they require the center to be open from 8:30 to 4:30, Monday through Friday. Cathy feels that they should grant some flexibility to those hours by requiring the center to be open 40 hours per week so that there could be evening or Saturday programming as well. Also, the meals-on-wheels program is geared for people 60 and over, but this grant is for people 62 and over. Another question involves any monies that are granted for a senior center housed within a community center must now be used exclusively for seniors for a period of time however the new regulations will increase that to a period of 25 years. Linda Hodge asked Cathy to write a letter detailing her ideas, which she did. Jean Stawicki offered to read over the regulations and offer input also.

Cathy participated with Linda Hodge in a breakfast on May 5th at Family Pizza. One person made a suggestion to her about keeping the transfer station open on a Sunday, especially once in the fall and again in the spring.

Cathy attended the annual Town Meeting. The budget goes to referendum on Tuesday, May 13th.

The senior center offered breakfast for the Department Head meeting as May is Older American's month.

Next year, Cathy wants to check with commission members before she sets the date for the volunteer dinner. She would like to be sure that more members could attend. The theme this year was 'Our Volunteers are a Treasure'. Bernie, Clara and Bill were in attendance this year. Bill complemented the dinner and presentation.

Cathy will be attending training on sexual harassment this afternoon (May 12th) from 3-5 pm. All department heads must attend this training periodically.

Cathy has been invited to the Lion's Club Annual Night of Giving. This program is on Wednesday night, May 14th.

Rockville Bank has invited Cathy to their opening at 11:30 on Thursday, May 15th. It was reported in the newspaper that Rockville Bank will be making \$1,000 contributions to the Colchester Hayward Volunteer Fire Department, the

Colchester Police Department, the Colchester Historical Society, the Colchester Senior Center and the Cragin Memorial Library. Cathy asked the commission for ideas on where to apply this money. Ann Smyk asked about equipment for the kitchen, and Cathy replied that she has already submitted a grant request to Eastern Bank for that.

A senior center volunteer who is also an Aetna employee is trying to secure a grant from the Aetna Foundation. If received, these funds will go to the Green Team.

Pricilla is going to Dayton Arena on Friday, May 16th for an expo.

Cathy is leaving on the Russia/Scandinavia trip on May 16th and will return on the 31st. There are 26 people going. This is a working trip for Cathy. She pays for any side trips that she wants to take, but cancels if she is needed by any of the people in the group. Everyone else on the trip is a paid traveler.

This Thursday is the Spring Fling picnic. All seniors will be honored because it is Older American's month, with one person in particular. It will be held at 12:30.

Cathy has applied for new funds from the Department of Transportation.

Cathy and Pricilla will attend the annual Task Association - ethical dilemmas in Glastonbury on June 12th.

June 5th is 'Get the Scoop' at St. Andrews from 10 am – 2 pm. Cathy asked the commission to get the word out to people who may be reaching retirement age because there will be many support services there. The Golden Glow will provide entertainment. They will have a resource booklet there. There is no charge for tables, but supporters have the option of buying advertising space for a nominal fee and donations will also be accepted.

The intergenerational butterfly program will be held at Colchester Elementary School on Monday, May 19th instead of traveling to Massachusetts on Wednesday.

Mirrors have been installed in the hallway of the senior center for security purposes. Many times people are alone in the building and will now be able to see the front and back doors from the office.

Cathy attended the Department Head meeting on April 23rd and brought up the condition of the hallway floors. The linoleum is coming up in areas and Cathy is worried about it being a tripping hazard for seniors. She also mentioned it to two members of the Board of Finance during the Town Expo. They both expressed concern over liability issues to the town. Linda Hodge referred Cathy

to Greg who will get back to her with a recommendation. Jean Stawicki mentioned that when she spoke about the front door as a safety hazard, the town responded that they are willing to address safety hazards and she thought they would be open to the senior center using grant money to make other repairs or changes.

Cathy mentioned that she was honored to be asked to speak at the Bacon Academy High School Graduation.

On June 26th, Dr. Priya Tandon will be at the senior center to discuss women's issues. She is a new doctor in town and is affiliated with Backus Hospital. The morning speaker will discuss moisturizing of the hands.

The seniors have been playing the new Wii game. They really like it and have been bowling regularly.

Cathy asked the commission for any recommendations on programming that they would like to see offered.

Cathy will start up the Wednesday night dinners in July and August. Jean asked about programs and Cathy said they will provide either games or a movie or some other form of entertainment.

Clara Erickson motioned to accept the Senior Center Director's Report. Ann Smyk seconded. All other members voted in favor. MOTION CARRIED.

7. Old Business: No items were reported.

8. New Business: No items were reported.

9. Adjournment: Ann Smyk motioned to adjourn the meeting at 1:51 p.m. Clara Erickson seconded. All other members present voted in favor. MOTION CARRIED.

Respectfully submitted,

Michelle Komoroski