

**Colchester Commission on Aging**  
**Regular Meeting Minutes**  
**Monday, June 9, 2008 – Colchester Senior Center**

**MEMBERS PRESENT:** Chairman Bernie Erickson, Jean Stawicki, Sally Carbone, Barbara Warden, Betty Ann Oppelt

**MEMBERS ABSENT:** Vice Chairman Ann Smyk, Clara Erickson, Bill Wagner

**OTHERS PRESENT:** Cathy Russi, Rosemary Coyle

1. **Call Meeting to Order:** The meeting was called to order at 1:06 p.m.
2. **Election of New Officers:** Bernie Erickson asked if there were any other nominations for the Chairman or Vice Chairman positions. As there were none, he motioned to elect Jean Stawicki as Chairman of the Commission on Aging. Sally Carbone seconded. All other members present voted in favor. MOTION CARRIED. Bernie Erickson then motioned to reelect Ann Smyk as Vice Chairman of the Commission on Aging. Jean Stawicki seconded. All other members present voted in favor. MOTION CARRIED.
3. **Minutes:** Jean Stawicki motioned to approve the regular meeting minutes of 5/12/08. Sally Carbone seconded. All other members present voted in favor. MOTION CARRIED.
4. **Financial Report:** Bernie Erickson offered to replace Jean Stawicki in the role of financial reporting. He stated that \$155.57 was collected in April from bus transportation, and \$277.00 was collected in May from bus transportation and 4 outside shopping trips.
5. **Chairman's Report:** No items were reported.
6. **Friends of the Senior Center Report:** The Friends of the Senior Center will suspend meetings until September.
7. **Senior Center Director's Report:** Cathy Russi reported that the Scandinavian cruise was a success. There were two incidents, one lost piece of luggage and one injury which was handled very well by the cruise ship which provided an interpreter and offered any assistance that was needed. Otherwise,

it was a wonderful experience for all. Cathy brought along flat Lulu who appeared in many pictures to include those who couldn't attend.

Cathy reported that the ramp that the Bacon Academy students are building turned out to be a bit more complicated than anticipated. When material was ordered, it was received in wrong and there was a difference in the planning of the design. However, the school will come back on Wednesday to complete the project.

The senior center did not get the \$1,000 grant from Eastern Bank that Cathy had planned to use for the purchase of a new warmer for the kitchen. She would like to use the grant they received from Rockville Bank for this purchase instead. Rosemary suggested the Commission vote on this change so that Cathy could write a request to present at the Board of Selectmen's meeting. Jean Stawicki motioned to use the Rockville Bank grant to buy a warmer for the kitchen since the grant from Eastern Bank is not available. Betty Ann Oppelt seconded. All other members present voted in favor. MOTION CARRIED.

Cathy asked Rosemary if she wanted to add the elderly tax relief information to their newsletter. Rosemary reported that the modification to the ordinance is going to town meeting on Thursday. If it is accepted, she will create a new flyer. Cathy complemented her on the excellent job that the committee has done. Rosemary said the changes include lowering the interest rate to 3% on the deferral, expanding the income level to \$5,000 above the state level, extending the filing period to August 1<sup>st</sup>, adding a 5 year review process and adding 'permanently disabled' wording. She also stated that you don't need to apply every year, so that if you only need it for one year, you have that option.

The TRIAD 'Get the Scoop' Expo went well. There was a booklet with a lot of information including several resource phone numbers for seniors. Some money was raised through advertising which will go to TRIAD to reimburse them for the booklets. The Golden Glow performed, there was a Wii demonstration and both the police and fire departments were represented as well as several local businesses. There were antique cars on display, also. Cathy expressed her gratitude to the people from St. Andrews who set up the sound system that was used. She would like to have a wrap up meeting to discuss changes for next year. The Department of Social Services remarked that it was a phenomenal presentation. Jean spoke with a Glastonbury police officer who said they were so impressed that they want to follow Colchester's lead. Rosemary said they also took the tax relief information to look into for themselves.

Cathy stated that she felt the senior center would again receive funds from the State Matching Grant for the 2008-2009 fiscal year. This money is used for transportation for new initiatives which include out of town trips that are not on the regular schedule. These trips are very popular and successful. They take

numerous hours of coordination and are very expensive. Cathy also remarked that they haven't heard about the funding from DSS yet. She had applied for two types of grants from them, one as municipal agent, and the other as the senior center. She is hoping to use these funds for computer equipment and a sound system.

Pricilla is taking charge of the Green Team. She is currently working with a master gardener.

The Victorian Lady is coming to the senior center for tea on June 18<sup>th</sup>.

Dr. Priya Tandon, who is a new doctor in town, will talk to the seniors on June 26<sup>th</sup> for Ladies Day. There will be several events on that day, centered on women's issues.

Jean asked about the person who does the presentation for senior center accreditation. Cathy said she will see her on Thursday and will ask for some dates for her to come and explain what accreditation is and why it is so important. Sally suggested she come either before or after the Commission on Aging meeting. Cathy stated that Norwich just completed the application process. She said that it takes about a year and is expensive.

Cathy remarked that she was asked to say a few words at the Bacon Academy graduation. She said the kids suggested her and Cathy is very honored. She feels this is due to the intergenerational program that is so successful.

Jean asked about the Small City Block Grant issue that was discussed last month. Cathy said that the senior center meets the parameter for hours that the senior center is open. She also said that they meet some of the other criteria, but not others. For example, they state that the center be used only for seniors, but Cathy questions the use by disabled citizens as well.

Cathy asked Rosemary to look into a \$7,500 donation to the senior center that was received when Jenny Contois was in office. It was given by an anonymous member of the community. Rosemary said she would email Linda, Bruce and Maggie about it and asked Cathy for any documentation that she had regarding it. Cathy stated that there was a letter from Jenny that she would look for.

Rosemary reported that the Board of Selectmen approved the linoleum and it will go to the Board of Finance next.

The cleaning of the senior center and youth center will be done in-house beginning on July 1<sup>st</sup>. Cathy remarked that she asked Greg to send the current contractor a letter letting them know of this change as they have had this job for several years. When the town takes over she is hoping to keep the current schedule of  $\frac{3}{4}$  hour per day and 3-4 hours on the weekend. She said that any

messes that occur outside of those hours she takes care of herself. Jean suggested that since the cleaning will be done in-house, the town should provide assistance with extra cleaning issues as they could create a safety issue.

Cathy again asked the Commission if they had any suggestions for new programming. She said she is beginning to shift some of this responsibility to Pricilla. Jean inquired how she could find time to plan new programs when her schedule is already so full. Cathy answered that new ideas help them to adjust current programming to fit the needs of the community, as well as provide new programming. Jean also asked about advertising for the senior center. Sally suggested submitting pictures to the newspaper.

Jean Stawicki motioned to accept the Senior Center Director's Report. Sally Carbone seconded. All other members voted in favor. MOTION CARRIED.

**8. Old Business:** No items were reported.

**9. New Business:** No items were reported.

**10. Adjournment:** Sally Carbone motioned to adjourn the meeting at 2:04 p.m. Jean Stawicki seconded. All other members present voted in favor. MOTION CARRIED.

Respectfully submitted,

Michelle Komoroski