

Colchester Commission on Aging
Regular Meeting Minutes
Monday, July 14, 2008 – Colchester Senior Center

MEMBERS PRESENT: Chairman Jean Stawicki, Vice Chairman Ann Smyk, Bernie Erickson, Clara Erickson, Sally Carbone, Betty Ann Oppelt

MEMBERS ABSENT: Bill Wagner, Barbara Warden

OTHERS PRESENT: Cathy Russi, Pricilla Clesowich, Sue Maikshilo

1. Call Meeting to Order: The meeting was called to order at 1:07 p.m.

At this point, Sally Carbone motioned to hold the meeting out of order so that Cathy Russi could present her report first. Clara Erickson seconded the motion. All other members present voted in favor. MOTION CARRIED.

5. Senior Center Director's Report: Cathy Russi reported that no one has been hired to clean the senior center yet. Greg said that there is someone, but their information hadn't been processed through the 1st Selectman's office yet. Cathy has kept up with the cleaning of bathrooms and they did send someone down once to do the whole facility. She distributed a list of cleaning duties broken down by day, week, month and year. These are items that have traditionally been taken care of by the cleaning service. She also included a new request for sweeping twice a week. This money has been taken out of the senior budget and the town is supposed to hire part-time personnel to clean both the senior and youth centers.

Cathy will be out on August 12, 13 and 22 for personal days.

On Monday, September 8th, Diane Stone, Newington Senior Center Director, will present a program about self-assessment for accreditation at 1:30. Cathy considers it very important for the Board of Selectman Liaison, the First Selectman and the Commission to attend.

Cathy sent the Department of Transportation a bill for \$7,864 for the 1st quarter of new initiatives. This covers bus transportation for out of town trips.

Wednesday night suppers have started again. They are \$5.00 and start at 5:00 pm, followed by a movie or games.

Cathy asked Jay Cohen to mulch the side of the building because the mowers keep hitting the bushes that were donated to the center. The tractor showed up today to begin loosening the soil.

July 22 is Dude Ranch Day.

There will be a trip to New London to the Jewish Federation picnic. There is limited space and will be filled on a first come, first serve basis.

The Master Gardeners (not the senior center) applied for and received a grant for \$250.00 for the Green Team program. They will decide with the children on what supplies to purchase.

A budgetary line transfer occurred on Linda Hodge's recommendation to purchase supplies to fix the flooring in the back hallway. The funds came from the salary line because the program coordinator position was unfilled for a time.

The ramp is completed. Norm and Irene Dupree created the project with Bacon Academy students and carried it through to the end. The Friends of the Senior Center asked the Lion's Club for \$750.00 for supplies. The balance of the project was funded by the Craft Guild.

On August 20th, the Green Team will hold a Block Party. Cathy encourages the Commission members to attend.

Cathy applied for \$15.00 vouchers for farm markets and they will go to those who qualify. It is income predicated.

Cathy talked to Linda Hodge about a water cooler that the Craft Guild would like to purchase. It is a monthly payment that they will finance. Linda said that would be fine.

A Municipal Management Bulletin was circulated by the Connecticut Conference of Municipalities regarding the Small City Block Grant. They are asking for input regarding their criteria so they can reevaluate their program requirements. Cathy feels the age limit restriction could be lowered to 60 and over to match the meals-on-wheels requirement. Cathy is also concerned about this requirement because Colchester serves disabled citizens as well as seniors. They would like to extend the deed restriction for senior centers housed in community centers from 7 to 25 years. And finally, they require a center to be open weekdays from 8:30 to 4:30. Cathy suggests changing that to a minimum of 40 hours per week to provide some flexibility to each town. Jean Stawicki offered to write a letter to them with Cathy's recommendations.

Cathy asked the town if they could use the money they received from Rockville Bank for a warmer for the kitchen however, TVCCA may have a warmer that

they could borrow. She is still checking on prices to purchase one. Cathy is also quoting new refrigerators. They have one in the dining room that always leaks and one that is not large enough. There is money set aside for a new one, but they have to go through the proper channels and get 3 prices including delivery and pickup costs.

There is a new State Department of Aging being created. It will be operational on July 1, 2009. A press conference was held on July 9th with this information.

September is National Senior Center Month. Colchester's theme is Russia. Cathy is looking for any Russian contacts that may be able to help with programming.

On September 24th, World War II veterans of Colchester and Salem will be acknowledged at the senior center by Susan Bysiewicz, Secretary of the State. Cathy stated that the Commission should be there.

Sally Carbone said that the Commission was supposed to have a picture taken today for submission to the newspaper. **It was decided that the picture would be taken at the August meeting and that all members should be there.** Sally remarked that there should be a picture in the newspaper each week to bring exposure to the senior center and what goes on there.

Jean Stawicki asked Cathy about the \$7,500 donation that Cathy brought up at the last meeting. She said the town did find it. It was a donation to the town for \$7,000, which was placed in the Community Center Building Fund. There is a balance in that account of \$7,050.

At this point, Cathy Russi left to attend a Senior Center Director's meeting in Montville.

Pricilla added that the senior center will have a booth at the 57 Fest. She is on the committee who came up with the idea of 'show us your 57'. They are looking into other ideas for the booth. The Golden Glow will also be performing at the festival.

Pricilla reported that a senior from the community offered to donate a folding ping pong table in exchange for a spot to practice for the Senior Olympics.

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

- 2. Minutes:** Jean Stawicki asked to clarify the sentence in the last paragraph of the Senior Center Director's Report from the June 9th minutes to read: Jean inquired how Cathy could find time to plan new programs when her schedule is already so full. Clara Erickson motioned to approve the regular meeting

minutes of 6/9/08 with the change. Betty Ann Oppelt seconded. All other members present voted in favor. MOTION CARRIED.

3. Financial Report: Bernie Erickson stated that \$311.15 was collected in June from bus transportation. \$45.00 of that was from outside trips and the rest was from in-town transportation. Ann Smyk motioned to approve the Financial Report. Betty Ann Oppelt seconded. All other members present voted in favor. MOTION CARRIED.

4. Chairman's Report: Jean Stawicki reported that she offered to meet with Cathy on a regular basis to help with budget items and to address any other needs or concerns that come up. She feels it is important for Cathy to have support particularly with budgetary issues and that her position is to advocate for the senior center.

Jean would like to expand the financial report so the Commission can see a bigger picture of the center's position. Jean stated that she'd like to get the center more money with accreditation as a goal. She'd like to tap more into the community and form partnerships with businesses to increase donations.

Ann Smyk mentioned a new for-profit business in town called House Calls. They will interview seniors and match them up with services as needed. Ann was very happy with them because they helped her find a company that didn't require her to sign a contract and would come only when requested. House Calls charges a modest commission for this service.

Sally Carbone motioned to approve the Chairman's Report. Clara Erickson seconded. All other members present voted in favor. MOTION CARRIED.

6. Old Business: Jean Stawicki asked about forming a committee to brainstorm new programming ideas for Cathy. Pricilla mentioned that she would like ideas to get younger people involved. Bernie mentioned that the Friends of the Senior Center previously put together a list for Cathy of some suggestions. Jean stated that she would set up a meeting time with Cathy and Pricilla and let the Commission know when it would be if they are interested.

7. New Business: No items were reported.

8. Adjournment: Bernie Erickson motioned to adjourn the meeting at 2:26 p.m. Ann Smyk seconded. All other members present voted in favor. MOTION CARRIED.

Respectfully submitted,

Michelle Komoroski