



# TOWN OF COLCHESTER

Commission on Aging  
95 Norwich Ave., Colchester, Connecticut 06415  
(860) 537-3911

*Where Tradition Meets Tomorrow*  
**Colchester Commission on Aging**  
**Regular Meeting Minutes**

**Monday, June 8, 2009 – Colchester Senior Center**

RECEIVED  
COLCHESTER, CT  
2009 JUN 10 PM 4:15  
NANCY A. BRAY  
TOWN CLERK  
*Nancy A. Bray*

**Members Present:** Chairman Jean Stawicki, Bernie Erickson, Sue Maikshilo, Betty Ann Oppelt

**Members Absent:** Vice-Chair Clara Erickson, Barbara Warden, Bill Wagner, Theresa Hendricksen

**Others Present:** Patti White, Rosemary Coyle, Norm Dupuis, Tom Maikshilo, other citizens

- 1. Call Meeting to Order:** The meeting was called to order at 1:05 p.m.
- 2. Minutes:** Sue Maikshilo motioned to approve the regular meeting minutes of 5/11/09. Bernie Erickson seconded. All other members present voted in favor. MOTION CARRIED.
- 3. Friends of the Senior Center:** Jean Stawicki pushed this discussion to item 8, Old Business.
- 4. Financial Report:** Bernie Erickson reported that the senior center collected \$341.00 in May from bus transportation. Of that, \$104.00 was from out of town trips.
- 5. Budget:** Patti White reported that the budget passed as submitted.
- 6. Chairman's Report:** No items were reported.
- 7. Senior Center Director's Report:** Patti reported that the grant for the new bus was officially approved. The Lion's Club donated money for a privacy screen to be used for things like medical appointments.

The TRIAD meeting was held at the firehouse. It was well attended.

Bingo started on Wednesday nights. This is a high stakes bingo which was started because they got a permit for people over 60.

Patti asked Ruth Little to talk about the Colchester Craft Guild. Ruth said the Guild has been around for several years but that they couldn't get people to serve as officers and there was not a lot of interest. Then the money was transferred to the town account and they needed to make requisitions to spend any of their money. Currently, there is a balance with the town that is earmarked for a new senior center. They also used some money to pay for programming. Ruth remarked how lucky they are in Colchester because they've never had to pay to use the senior center or participate in programming. The Guild has also given out scholarships to Bacon Academy students.

Betty Ann Oppelt motioned to approve the Senior Center Director's report. Sue Maikshilo seconded. All other members present voted in favor. MOTION CARRIED.

## **8. Old Business:**

**A. Accreditation:** Jean Stawicki began by reminding members that at the last meeting they were talking about forming a committee to find the best way to move forward on the accreditation/senior center building issue. She suggested using people from the community and Commission on Aging. Rosemary Coyle had said that a committee needs to go through the Board of Selectmen.

Rosemary reiterated that the Charter for the Town of Colchester states that any subcommittee or study group of a Commission needs to be appointed by the Board of Selectmen. She met with Linda Hodge, First Selectman and Patti White and they came up with a Senior Center Study Group Subcommittee suggestion sheet that would be in-line with the Charter for the Town of Colchester. Rosemary passed out the sheet (see attached).

There was discussion regarding who the subcommittee would report to. Patti stated this is a positive development for a formal study group to be formed to report to the Commission on Aging who would in turn present their findings to the Board of Selectmen. Jean said she doesn't agree with the establishment by the Town because 7 people couldn't do everything that she sees will need to be accomplished. She also stated that she feels they will get more community support if they are able to be less formal about the process. Rosemary stated that the Board of Selectmen will not take the work seriously if it does not go through the town. Patti asked if going through the town precludes a larger community input. Rosemary explained that anyone can come to the meetings and there should be a spot on the agenda for citizen comments, however, the committee can invite people to speak about areas of expertise. Jean felt that regular citizens would not be able to have the input she'd like in a formal setting with agendas and minutes. She also feels that it will take several years to go through everything this way.

Bernie Erickson questioned whether these seven people can be unbiased in their work. Rosemary answered that there should be a diverse community where many different ideas are presented so everyone gets educated as they follow along with the process. The committee can ask people to speak then the committee can report back to the Board of Selectmen. The town is not willing to finance this, however, so the committee will need to provide their own secretary and meeting minutes. Jean again stated that she feels it should be less formal so they can bring in who they want without going through the whole town process. She sees this as being community driven vs. Board of Selectmen driven, which Rosemary added is community driven.

There was a question that the list did not include anyone from the business community. Rosemary explained that this list is just a suggestion and can be changed beforehand as needed. They included 2 spots for representatives from the Community at Large, one of which could be a business person. She added that they should keep the positions general so that members can be changed as needed. Donna Skawinski asked what the group will be looking at. There was consensus that the three main things are the reports from the Friends of the Senior Center, Parks and Rec and the Board of Education's Facilities Group. The committee will be very important because it will give everything an official status. They can pick and choose what they want and the chair of the committee can decide how to get more information if needed. The committee will be able to decide what they need and/or what they want to research. They can also advertise for volunteers to come to meetings to participate in the discussions. Then the information gets posted at the Town Clerk's office and on the website through the minutes.

Patti stated that the First Selectman has committed her time as the Director of the Senior Center as well as the Director of Planning to this issue. Rosemary also added that this will force a conversation between the Board of Selectmen and the Board of Finance so they will be part of the process also. It will be important for the chair to include as many ideas as possible and whoever serves on the committee should do so with an open mind.

Jean said she sees two very different ways of setting up the committee. One is a much larger group breaking into smaller groups, each generating reports vs. one committee appointed by the Board of Selectmen. She agreed that the goal seems to be the same, but she feels there are more ideas than just the 3 reports to consider. She reiterated that she feels it's more beneficial to have a ground roots group of committees as opposed to one appointed committee through the town.

Norm Dupuis added that he'd like to see accreditation and the senior center treated as two separate issues. He suggested adding a member from the Parks and Rec Commission and one from the CBA to the list of members. He also suggested calling it a study group and not a subcommittee.

Bernie Erickson made a motion to accept the proposal adding 1 member from the Parks and Rec Commission and 1 member from the CBA. Sue Maikshilo seconded. 3 members voted in favor of the motion, 1 opposed. MOTION CARRIED.

Betty Ann Oppelt expressed that this is what the Board of Selectmen wanted them to do so this is what the Commission on Aging needs to do. Sue expressed frustration that they've spent 3 meetings on the same thing. There was a citizen comment that she felt it is important to be sure members are from all different sectors – democrat, republican, rich, poor, etc. Rosemary said she will get this on the agenda for the next Board of Selectmen meeting. They will then advertise for members and appoint others as needed. She again stated that she thinks members should come with an open mind.

- 9. New Business:** Jean would like to develop a new project for the Commission on Aging to work on. Norm said he thinks accreditation is a great idea. Jean felt it wasn't worth it because of the building. Norm said there are other items to consider. He used fire drills as an example.

Patti asked what the Commission thought about Cathy Russi volunteering to create a Power Point presentation on the history of the senior center. Sue motioned to ask Cathy to go ahead with the project. Bernie seconded. All members present voted in favor. MOTION CARRIED.

- 10. Adjournment:** Bernie Erickson motioned to adjourn the meeting at 2:16 p.m. Sue Maikshilo seconded. All other members present voted in favor. MOTION CARRIED.

Respectfully submitted,



Michelle Komoroski

**Colchester Commission on Aging**  
**Senior Center Study Group Sub-Committee**

**Purpose:** To evaluate relevant work done to date and explore options for a recommended course of action to the Commission on Aging for the development of a stand alone senior center or combined community/senior center.

**Composition:** The committee shall consist of seven (7) members appointed by the Colchester Board of Selectmen. The membership shall be comprised of representatives from various sectors of the community as follows:

Commission on Aging Rep	(1)
At large Senior Center Rep	(1)
AARP Rep	(1)
Community At Large Reps	(2)
Parent Rep	(1)
Youth Services Rep	(1)

A representative from both the Board of Selectmen and Board of Finance shall serve as ex-officio members of the committee.

A **quorum** will be required to meet and conduct business and shall consist of 51 % of the seven members (4).

**Terms:** The committee shall be appointed for a term of one year