



TOWN OF COLCHESTER

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

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Linda Furman
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TOWNS CLERK

Colchester Commission on Aging Meeting Minutes

Monday, December 11, 2017 - Colchester Senior Center

Members Present: Jean Stawicki, Ellie Phillips, Marjorie Mlodzinski, Goldie Liverant, Roberta Avery, Linda Grzeika

Members Absent: Jennifer Raybern DeHay

Others Present: Patty Watts, Rosemary Coyle, Mary Tomasi, Mike Egan, Sandy Planeta

- 1. Call Meeting to Order:** J. Stawicki called the meeting to order at 8:30 a.m.
- 2. Minutes:** L. Grzeika motioned to accept the November 13, 2017 minutes with the following amendment: add "according to news reports" to the first sentence in item 10 between, "E. Phillips remarked that" and "the Renter's Rebate program had been cut from the state budget. M. Mlodzinski seconded. E. Phillips abstained. All other members present voted in favor. MOTION CARRIED.
- 3. Financial Report:** M. Mlodzinski reported there is currently \$567.26 in the Commission on Aging line item and \$300 in the town's Commission on Aging line item for printing and publication. P. Watts clarified that the September minutes should have read that there was no deposit for August transportation, rather than it would be reported the following month. November daily transportation collected \$121.00 and trips collected \$203.00 for a total of \$324.00. YTD total is \$1,650.11.
8:45 J. Raybern DeHay entered the meeting.
- 4. Director of Senior Center Report:** P. Watts reported that the state budget has had many negative ramifications for low income seniors, affecting the Renter's Rebate and the Medicare Savings Programs. Renter's Rebate issues were resolved in legislative session and checks have been issued by OPM. The Medicare Savings Program changes are much more dire. The income thresholds have been decreased by over 50%, therefore approximately 83,000 seniors and disabled individuals will no longer be eligible. There are 3 tiers of benefits and 90% in the program were receiving QMB benefits, which includes their Medicare Part B Premium, help with co-insurances and co-payments and LIS which allowed for steep discounts on prescription drug benefits. With the late passage of the budget, everyone is scrambling to educate their clients as to what this means. DSS has sent generic mailings to all MSP recipients, but will be sending specific mailings later which will explain the impact of these changes to their households. Implementation will be March 1, 2018. A grace period has been issued so the LIS will stay in force in 2018 for those who were approved to receive it. State legislators will further discuss this issue due to the massive number of complaints this change has provoked. Senior center staff has been very busy fielding many inquiries and are encouraging seniors to reach out to their legislators and senators to tell their stories of how these changes will affect them. CoA could assist with advocacy which may help reverse or amend these changes. The Holiday Box Program with Jack Jackter Intermediate School will help 26 needy seniors in Colchester this year. The center will be closed on 12/22 so staff can receive the boxes from the school and deliver them to recipients. Energy Assistance is currently open and is running smoothly.

An ECSU student intern will begin a 120 hour internship in January. The senior chorale group "Senior Moments" was invited to sing at the Wadsworth Atheneum's Festival of Trees and Traditions this year. The Senior Center made and donated a tree entitled "What's Cooking at the Colchester Senior Center?" for the festival. The Annual Holiday Fair & Open House on 11/18 was a success, yielding \$3,430.37 for programs and supplies. This total exceeds the previous 5 years. Over 100 gift baskets were donated and raffled off. Many thanks to the community support and 30 volunteers who helped. It was a great day! Patty is heading into budget and grant writing season early in 2018. There will be a budget forum with the Board of Finance, held at the senior center at 6 pm on Wednesday, 1/17/18. Commission members are welcome and encouraged to attend. October meal statistics: 163 meals served on site, 378 Meals-on-Wheels delivered. Transports in October were 715. Monthly unduplicated attendance in November was 1,173 and active members at the end of November were 1,084.

5. **Preparation of Annual Report and Budget:** E. Phillips reporter that M. Mlodzinski, R. Avery and herself have been working to gather statistics. They will have a report to present to both the Commission and the Board of Selectmen in early 2018, after the 2017 year has completed. M. Mlodzinski stated she will work with the Board of Finance on the budget. R. Avery motioned to ask to maintain the \$300 for printing and publication. M. Mlodzinski seconded. All other members present voted in favor. MOTION CARRIED.
6. **COA Projects:** E. Phillips reported she and M. Tomasi attended the CorePlus presentation on the dangers of scams. It was very informative and the presenters offered to bring it to the senior center free of charge. They also include a light lunch. Members agreed to pick a date in April for the presentation. Ellie also reported they will show the film "Harvesting Stones" at the senior center at 10:30 am on 1/12/18. M. Mlodzinski reported the 40th Anniversary Ruby Jubilee planning is moving along. It will be held at Villa Louisa on 9/16/18 from 1:30-5:30. A Jazz trio has been secured for entertainment and the center will run busses for attendees to the venue.
7. **Commission Membership:** Since the November meeting, R. Avery was appointed to the Commission and L. Grzeika was appointed as an alternate. R. Avery moved to recommend to the Board of Selectmen to move L. Grzeika to the open member position. E. Phillips seconded. L. Grzeika abstained. All other members present voted in favor. MOTION CARRIED. After that move, there will be two open alternate positions on the Commission.
8. **Old Business:** P. Watts reiterated the status of the Renter's Rebate program. The language was rectified in legislative session so that the program was funded 50/50 between the state and towns. Checks have been sent out from OPM.
9. **New Business:** R. Coyle, M. Egan and P. Watts spoke about the State budget cuts, how town boards are trying to find solutions and some of what was cut.
10. **Citizen's Comments:** None.
11. **Adjournment:** E. Phillips motioned to adjourn the meeting at 9:40. G. Liverant seconded. All other members present voted in favor. MOTION CARRIED.

Respectfully submitted,


Michelle Komoroski