

ELDERLY COMMISSION MEETING

SPECIAL MEETING: March 31, 2008 at 5:00pm

East Windsor Town Hall Meeting Room

Meeting Minutes of March 31, 2008:

- I. Meeting called to order at 5:09pm, by Claire Badstubner, Chairman.
- II. Attendance:
Present Members: Claire Badstubner (Chairman), Elizabeth Burns (Municipal Agent), Catherine Drouin, Madeleine Thompson, Deb Donovan
Absent Member: Trevor Bray
Guest: Dale Nelson, Board of Selectman
- III. Previous Minutes:
Regular Meeting 2/25/08:
MOTION made by Ms. Donovan to accept minutes of the above regular meeting, as presented. **SECONDED** by Ms. Drouin. **ALL IN FAVOR, MOTION CARRIED.**
- IV. Cell Phones for Seniors:
Ms. Donovan updated group: met with Verizon representative, Ralph Sciaburri. Very receptive to idea - open to the idea of a community service (for Verizon) in terms of phone donations, donating time to check phones and servicing them for 9-1-1 capability. Verizon would consider being a drop off point for such phones as well (location at Sophia's Plaza in East Windsor). Verizon would not distribute to seniors or "teach" them how to use the phones.

Ms. Burns added that some periodic advertising will have to be done regarding the program. Ms. Burns also suggested an informational pamphlet be developed to explain who qualifies for the phones, when they should be carried, purpose of the phone, etc.
- V. Seniors/Active Adult Survey:
Ms. Drouin and Ms. Donovan presented some "test" surveys to the public since the last meeting. The surveys have created some excitement. Since "testing" the survey, they have made some changes to it – adding elements/questions to the survey. Both report that the survey takes approximately 8-9 minutes to complete. They also stated that they focused on keeping the survey objective and did not "lead" the questions. Ms. Donovan surveyed a group of people outside of Geissler's Supermarket while Ms. Drouin surveyed individuals/couples at their home. Approximately 25-28 people were surveyed at this time. Ms. Drouin and Ms. Donovan found that everyone asked was willing to volunteer a few minutes to complete the survey.

Ms. Drouin asked how the town residents know of the calendar activities at the Senior Center. Ms. Badstubner stated that the calendar is only available at the Senior Center. A discussion followed regarding how to inform the public. Ms. Drouin showed the commission bulletins that she had from Enfield and Windsor Locks. Such bulletins can be found at various locations throughout those towns (i.e. "CVS", grocery store).

Ms. Donovan mentioned that a newsletter would be simple and inexpensive to do with a couple of town sponsors, including a printing company.

The commission discovered that there, currently, is an internal survey at the Senior Center to find out what activities seniors want. It was agreed that those individuals who are doing that internal survey may be helpful with doing the Elderly Commission's survey as well.

The commission also agreed that surveying residents in the 55+ communities would be beneficial as those "seniors" are not the traditional seniors that most think of. Ms. Thompson stated that those residents are of a different age group and therefore do different things and have different needs from the older seniors.

A brief discussion followed regarding the lack of volunteers to present programs at the senior center.

Ms. Badstubner added that the monthly social was crowded this month. Many seniors come out to the event for the food and entertainment.

Ms. Burns suggested that the commission submit the survey and plan of action in the BOS informational packet for their 4/1/08 meeting. This would let the BOS know what the commission is currently working on so that they can review the survey and possibly give the commission some feedback as well.

The commission members discussed Community Day (5/10/08) as a good day to reach people for the survey. Ms. Burns will complete forms for Community Day so that the Elderly Commission will have its own "booth". Commission members agreed that this would be a good "kick-off" day for the survey (for the members to do). All other recruited leaders will be trained after this date to perform the survey.

Ms. Donovan explained that the immediate goal of the survey is to identify and recruit leaders who will recruit volunteers to do the surveys. She suggested that the leaders approach 5-10 people who will then recruit 10+ people each to do the survey. Once the leaders are recruited, the commission will hold a special survey training for these individuals to learn how to approach people and also how to present the survey so as not to "lead" the people through with their answers.

The commission discussed how many surveys would produce a good sampling. Based on the 2000 census, seniors made up approximately 10% of the population. The commission agreed that the figure may be closer to 12% taking in account that this survey will include age 55+, not just 65+. The current town population is probably close to 12,000 now, therefore a good sampling would be 2000 surveys (this would include residents 55+ and also families who may take care of a senior).

The commission members brainstormed names of potential leaders. All members have individuals' names who they will contact. Ms. Badstubner volunteered to approach groups (i.e. Senior Center) regarding the survey. Ms. Thompson volunteered to go into the 55+ communities with the surveys. All present commission members will come up with a list of names and send them to Ms. Donovan. Ms. Donovan will then contact them once a training date has been established – by the April meeting (or earlier).

Both Ms. Donovan and Ms. Burns will look into obtaining numerous copies of the survey.

VI. Miscellaneous Business:

Ms. Drouin (co-chairman) will act as Chairman at the April meeting. Ms. Badstubner will not be present.

VII. Adjournment:

MOTION made by Ms. Drouin to adjourn meeting at 6:24pm. **SECONDED BY** Ms. Donovan.

Respectfully Submitted,

Christine Pellegrini