

TOWN OF EAST WINDSOR ELDERLY COMMISSION

REGULAR MEETING (*DISCUSSION*)
MONDAY, APRIL 24, 2017 AT 5:30 P.M.
TREASURER'S OFFICE, TOWN HALL
11 RYE STREET, BROAD BROOK, CT. 06016

I. **Call to order:**

See notation below regarding inability to establish a quorum.

II. **Attendance:**

Present: Claire Badstubner (Chairman) and Bob Cormier. Also present was Kristen Formanek, LMSW, Municipal Agent.

Absent: Elizabeth Burns, and Nancy Viets

Guests: Stephen Smith, Board of Finance member/resident.

The Meeting began at 5:30 p.m. in the Treasurer's Office, 11 Rye Street, Broad Brook, CT.

An informal discussion took place with no motions or votes, as a quorum was not established.

III. **Added Agenda Items:** See general discussion below.

IV. **Approval of Minutes –February 27, 2017:**

Approval of Minutes postponed to next regularly scheduled meeting.

V. **Open Discussion:**

a) **Senior Survey:**

**East Windsor Elderly Commission
Regular Meeting – April 24, 2017
GENERAL DISCUSSION NOTES**

The recording secretary had prepared a spreadsheet comparing questions raised in surveys presented in five other towns and a survey presented by the Warehouse Point Library. The Commission will review the spreadsheet for discussion at the Commission's next regularly scheduled meeting.

b) Senior Center Update:

Ms. Formanek reported a new bus, which replaces the oldest bus in the transportation fleet, has arrived; a ribbon cutting is planned for Thursday, April 27th.

Ms. Formanek reported she will also be initiating discussion with seniors who visit the Senior Center regarding recent budget cuts which will impact program availability and cost.

c) Community Day:

Community Day is scheduled for September 24th, which is just prior to the next regularly scheduled Elderly Commission Meeting. Ms. Formanek reported she usually staffs a table during Community Day; if anyone from the Elderly Commission would like to join her she would welcome their participation. Ms. Formanek's table is a combination of Human and Senior Services, and usually includes a component of the Hunger Action Team (HAT).

Ms. Formanek reported she is still investigating use of the Annex for a replacement Senior Center. She has made a \$200,000 request under the Capital Improvement Plan to fund a feasibility study and for preparation of renovation plans for a shovel-ready project should the funds become available. She noted that funding request is also subject to passage of the current budget referendums.

Chairman Badstubner questioned the status of the Senior Center budget and the Elderly Commission budgets? Ms. Formanek reported \$2,000 was cut from the program line item of the Senior Center budget; she understands the Board of Finance wants the seniors to pay for their entire ticket prices for events and trips rather than use any tax

**East Windsor Elderly Commission
Regular Meeting – April 24, 2017
GENERAL DISCUSSION NOTES**

money. Regarding the Elderly Commission budget, she had put in for recording secretary services as she did last year; that budget has passed in its entirety at this point.

Chairman Badstubner suggested she would like one of the Elderly Commissioners to investigate what other surrounding towns, or towns with similar populations, do with regard to an Elderly Commission. Mr. Cormier reported he had called South Windsor; although he awaits a return call from the senior center representative he is aware they do not have an Elderly Commission. Mr. Cormier volunteered to continue to research additional communities. Chairman Badstubner reported when she had done similar research some time ago; so much was dependent on funding. She suggested this Commission would like to be an active part of the community.

VI. Public Input –Comments only (5 minute maximum):

Steve Smith: Mr. Smith advised the members and Ms. Formanek that as a Board of Finance member he has three goals: public safety, infrastructure, and education. Mr. Smith reported the Board of Finance went through the budgets line by line and have proposed a budget for referendum which represents a 2.49% increase. That budget increase includes a 1.5% increase for the Board of Education, although they requested a 4.5 or 4.7% increase. Mr. Smith reported he's glad to see the Commission members initiating research; it's not that he likes to cut anything but, based on the history of past votes the budgets go to the 2% increase. Mr. Smith reported he voted to the cuts referenced by Ms. Formanek regarding the Senior Center; he also voted to cut the library funding. Mr. Smith reported he doesn't want to eliminate the Senior Center but there will be only so much money. Mr. Smith would like the Commission to tell him what options there are; he is asking if the budget doesn't pass what are the options?

Ms. Formanek suggested she didn't think the seniors, or the Commission, would advocate to cut programs for the Senior Center. She noted the programs are more than trips; they provide meals for the elderly, and transportation to medical appointments. Ms. Formanek questioned if Mr. Smith had asked other departments what options they have regarding budget cuts? She noted the Police Department had submitted a significant budget.

**East Windsor Elderly Commission
Regular Meeting – April 24, 2017
GENERAL DISCUSSION NOTES**

Mr. Smith suggested cutting police staff creates a safety issue as it increases response time. Ms. Formanek questioned if it was the Commission's position to consider programming or service changes? Mr. Smith suggested he was appearing this evening as a member of the public; Ms. Formanek pointed out all of his questions have been related to the budget reductions. Mr. Cormier reported he, too, had been a previous member of the Board of Finance; their suggestion during that time would have been to cut the Police Department. Mr. Smith cited other budget reductions – the Warehouse Point Library was reduced, the Broad Brook Library funding was eliminated, the Senior Center was cut \$2,000. Mr. Cormier questioned if the Board of Finance factored in any revenue from the casino into this budget; Mr. Smith replied negatively, noting that would have been premature.

Chairman Badstubner questioned what could be cut from the Senior Center budget? Ms. Formanek suggested the programs associated with trips or events can be cut, which will require seniors to pay for these programs themselves, but any deeper cuts would impact transportation to medical appointments and the meal programs. Ms. Formanek reported increasing the cost of programs/events will prevent some seniors from participating in the events. She suggested basically you are destroying a department.

Ms. Formanek suggested the Board of Finance should educate the public of the need to pass the budgets. Mr. Smith felt that wasn't the role of the Board of Finance. Discussion followed regarding the voting history of various blocks of residents. Chairman Badstubner questioned if any layoffs were discussed; she recalled potential teacher layoffs suggested in the past. Mr. Smith suggested the Board of Education budget couldn't be cut below what they received last year; they are an Alliance District.

Mr. Smith suggested if the seniors want to keep their programs something needs to happen; either they vote for the budget or there will be budget cuts. He noted he understands seniors are on a fixed income. He questioned if the budget is put before the seniors? Mr. Smith reported he doesn't want to cut the Senior Center; he put it out there to explore options – such as regionalization. Discussion continued.

Chairman Badstubner thanked Mr. Smith for attending the meeting; she suggested the Commission might not like his comments but he is a member

**East Windsor Elderly Commission
Regular Meeting – April 24, 2017
GENERAL DISCUSSION NOTES**

of the Board of Finance. She suggested the Commission doesn't have any answers either. Mr. Smith indicated whatever options the Commission has he's there to listen.

VII. Adjournment:

Chairman Badstubner adjourned the meeting at 6:07 p.m.

Respectfully submitted:

Peg Hoffman, Recording Secretary, East Windsor Elderly Commission