

Commission on Aging
Minutes of Regular Meeting
Monday, March 21, 2011

The Commission on Aging held a regular meeting on Monday, March 21, 2011 at the Senior Center, 14 Riverside Road, Sandy Hook, CT. Chairman Thomas Dwyer called the meeting to order at 5:00 p.m.

Members Present: Thomas Dwyer, Karin Aurelia, Carol Mattegat, Joan Plouffe, Curt Symes and Sheila Torres.

Members Excused: LeReine Frampton, Mary Ellen Lydem, Anna Wiedemann. Member Absent: James Bernardi.

Support & Advisory Present: Marilyn Place, Director of Senior Services; Ann Piccini, Municipal Agent for the Elderly; Bob Sharpe and John Aurelia of the Senior Action Committee.

Also Present: Costas "Gus" Thanasoulis, owner of Senior Helpers

PUBLIC PARTICIPATION. (See "New Business.")

CORRESPONDENCE AND ANNOUNCEMENTS. Mr. Dwyer notified the commissioners that Carol Mattegat is in the process of changing her political party affiliation from Republican to Democrat and said that he has been informed by the First Selectman's office that this will not affect her status as a member of the COA.

MINUTES. Upon motion of Mrs. Plouffe, the minutes of the regular meeting of February 28, 2011 were unanimously accepted as presented.

TREASURER'S REPORT. Mrs. Aurelia distributed copies of the March 3, 2011 Senior Services Year-To-Date Budget Report, the March 16, 2011 Senior Services Trip Account Report and a report of activity in the COA Gift Fund for the period July 1, 2010 to March 10, 2011, all of which were prepared by the Finance Department and are attached to the original minutes.

DIRECTOR OF SENIOR SERVICES REPORT. Mrs. Place distributed her report for the period February 28, 2011 to March 21, 2011 (copy attached to original minutes) and requested that \$289.00 be withdrawn from the COA Gift Fund to pay for sponsoring 44 Newtowners at \$6.00 each to the 38th Annual Recognition Luncheon for the Retired & Senior Volunteer Program (RSVP) of Northern Fairfield County which is to be held at the Ethan Allen Hotel in Danbury on May 18th. The amount also includes \$25.00 for an ad promoting Newtown's senior center which is to be placed in the event's Sponsor Booklet. The Newtown group will consist of 42 RSVP volunteers plus First Selectman Llodra and Mrs. Place. Mrs. Plouffe moved to authorize payment from the Gift Fund of the \$289.00 amount requested, seconded by Mrs. Aurelia and unanimously carried.

MUNICIPAL AGENT FOR THE ELDERLY REPORT. Mrs. Piccini distributed a report of her office's activities since our last meeting (copy attached to the original minutes) and reviewed it with the commissioners.

UNFINISHED BUSINESS.

New Building. Mrs. Place noted that this will be placed in the Capital Improvement Plan this year. Mr. Symes suggested that we send a letter to the Fairfield Hills Authority notifying them that we are desirous of having a stand alone senior center built on the Fairfield Hills campus. Mr. Dwyer said he would draft up such a letter and circulate it to the COA commissioners for their approval before sending it out.

New Senior Center Van. Mrs. Place stated that the application for a state grant for a new van, which was reported as being worked on at the COA's February meeting, will not be submitted this year because of a requirement that can't be met but she has learned that used vans in excellent condition can be purchased by civic organizations in Connecticut (municipalities, etc.) at special weekly auctions for prices not exceeding \$5,000 each. The vehicles sold at these auctions were previously owned by civic organizations in Connecticut and originally purchased by them with grant money provided by the state therefore the state will only permit this type of organization to bid on them and mandates that the sales prices not exceed \$5,000 each. In view of this Mrs. Place said that she plans to bid on a van to replace the current one and requested a commitment from the commissioners that they will authorize the withdrawal of up to \$5,000 from the COA Gift Fund to pay for one if she's successful. Mrs. Mattegat moved that the commissioners agree to authorize such a withdrawal from the Fund if requested by Mrs. Place for this purpose. Second by Mrs. Aurelia and unanimously carried.

Booklet Of Services Available To Seniors. Regarding the guide to local facilities of potential help to Newtown seniors that Mrs. Place and Mrs. Wiedemann are preparing, Mr. Symes gave Mrs. Place a copy of a similar guide that has been issued by a senior citizen advocacy group in nearby Woodbury, Connecticut. He also lent her copies of such guides that have been issued in several other municipalities.

NEW BUSINESS.

Fund Raising Raffle. Mrs. Mattegat stated that she is working with a group that is planning to hold a raffle to raise money to go toward the purchase of a new senior center van with the drawing of winning tickets to be held at a Victorian Tea in the Senior Center on May 15th. The plan is still in the formative stage and further details will be given at the next meeting.

Senior Helpers. As agreed at the February meeting, Costas "Gus" Thanasoulis, the owner of Senior Helpers, was invited to tell the commissioners about the services provided by his business. He stated that they supply professional companions and Certified Nurses Aids (CNAs) to seniors who need assistance in one form or another but wish to remain in their homes rather than go to assisted living facilities. Arrangements can be made with them for the supplying of such help on a flexible basis, from a few hours a week to round-the-clock service with live in personnel. He distributed literature describing their operation in detail (copies attached to the original minutes) and pointed out that Senior Helpers is a national organization from which he has a franchise to operate in the central and northern sections of western Connecticut.

ADJOURNMENT. The meeting adjourned at 6:20 p.m.

Ann M. Mazur, Clerk