

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

The Commission on Aging held a regular meeting on Monday, November 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, James Bernardi, Joanne Davis, LeReine Frampton, Joan Plouffe, Clarence (Larry) Schneider, Curt Symes, Sheila Torres and Anna Wiedemann.

Members Excused: Mary Ellen Lydem.

Support & Advisory Present: Ann Piccini, Municipal Agent for the Elderly and John Aurelia of the Senior Action Committee.

**PUBLIC PARTICIPATION.** None

**CORRESPONDENCE AND ANNOUNCEMENTS.** Mr. Dwyer introduced Joanne Davis who was recently appointed to the COA as an alternate member.

**MINUTES.** Upon motion of Mrs. Plouffe, the minutes of the regular meeting of October 17, 2011 were unanimously accepted as presented. Mr. Dwyer referred to the section of the Minutes stating that the matter of senior housing and a senior center at Fairfield Hills would be discussed at the COA's November meeting and stated that he is deferring this to the December meeting because he needs more time to do the necessary research.

**TREASURER'S REPORT.** Mrs. Aurelia stated that the balance in the Commission on Aging Gift Fund was \$26,688.29 on November 1, 2011 (Attachment A to original minutes) but this does not include a recent \$1,000 donation and an expense of \$1,025 which was sent to Cappellaro's Grove as a deposit for the Senior Center Christmas Party. As she didn't have copies of her report to distribute at the meeting a copy is attached to each of these minutes.

**DIRECTOR OF SENIOR SERVICES REPORT.** Mrs. Place was not present but had arranged to have a report of her recent activities distributed to the commissioners (Attachment B to the original minutes).

**MUNICIPAL AGENT FOR THE ELDERLY REPORT.** Mrs. Piccini said that her office has prepared 19 Thanksgiving baskets for seniors. She has received this year's winter guidelines for Operation Fuel and noted that people will be getting only a third of what they had gotten in the past. The fuel deliveries did not start until November 15; they used to start on November 1 so that seniors who had delivery early in November will have to pay for the fuel. She has also been doing much work with the Food Pantry.

**UNFINISHED BUSINESS.**

**Reply to Sheila Torres's *Discussion Points* memo distributed to the commissioners and Mrs. Place at the September 26, 2011 meeting.** Although Mrs. Place was not present she provided written responses to the points and a copy was given to each of the Commissioners for comment:

**Needs of Seniors:** She stated that a survey of senior needs was made four years ago and recommended that such a survey be performed every four or five years. Mrs. Torres and Mrs. Frampton pointed out that we should be concerned about all seniors in town not just those who use the Senior Center and that a survey of the town's senior population would indicate what services would be of interest to them that aren't currently being provided. Mrs. Frampton suggested that Newtown resident Paul Lundquist, who is experienced in the field of preparing and taking surveys, be invited to address the Commission on this subject. Mrs. Torres asked Mrs. Piccini to notify the Commission of any senior needs she's aware of that are not presently being provided. Mrs. Wiedemann and Mr. Symes proposed that we obtain input on this matter from organizations in town that routinely deal with seniors such as as Meals On Wheels, Golden Opportunities, Nunnawauk Meadows and the churches. Mr. Aurelia suggested that we contact Commissions on Aging in other Connecticut towns to find out how they reach out to seniors.

**Age of Seniors:** Mrs. Place stated that the age at which a person is considered to be a senior is defined in state law but didn't provide it. Mr. Dwyer will contact the state on this and report his findings at the December meeting. It was pointed out by several commissioners that it varies from place to place thus it's 65 for full Social Security benefits, 60 in the COA's Bylaws and 50 in the town ordinance that created the COA.

**Grants:** Mrs. Torres noted that the COA is required by their Bylaws to make applications for grants to state and federal agencies on behalf of Newtown seniors and Mrs. Place stated that she is not a grant writer. Mr. Dwyer said that he would explore the procedure for obtaining grants with Robert Tait, the town's Finance Director, and report back at the next meeting. He will also coordinate with Mrs. Place on finding out how other towns go about obtaining grants for the benefit of their seniors.

**COA Five Year Plan:** Mrs. Place wrote that she looks forward to a stand alone Senior Center (i.e. no shared space), installation of a Bocce Court and a bigger parking lot. Although all three are dependent on town funding Mrs. Torres hoped that a grant could be found that would pay them..

**Other Points:** Because of time limitations comment on the remainder of the *Discussion Points* was deferred until the December meeting.

**New Senior Center.** Referred to under other topics.

**Senior Directory.** Mrs. Wiedemann reported that she has given her notes to Mrs. Place and expects to have a draft for review at the December meeting.

**Elderly Services Strategic Plan.** Mrs. Wiedemann had to leave early and will report on this at the December meeting.

**NEW BUSINESS.**

**Schedule of meeting dates for 2012.** Mrs. Mazur distributed a list showing proposed meeting dates for 2012 and upon motion from Mr. Symes they were unanimously approved as presented.

**Amend Bylaws to allow for Co-Vice-Chair.** Mr. Dwyer pointed out that when officers for 2012 were elected at the COA's October meeting two commissioners were elected to the position of Vice Chair but because the Bylaws only allow one to serve in this capacity it's necessary to amend them so that two can serve. He therefore proposed a wording for such an amendment (Attachment D to original minutes) which was moved by Mrs. Frampton, seconded by Mr. Bernardi and unanimously carried.

**Planned Giving Program.** Mr. Symes stated that he has been researching the matter of setting up a program whereby town residents would be encouraged to bequeath money to the COA's Gift Fund in their wills. He has discussed this with First Selectman Llodra, Finance Director Bob Tait, the C. H. Booth Library and others and will report further at the December meeting. He said that the Town of Newtown does not appear to be a "not for profit" organization which complicates the estate tax aspects of such a program.

**ADJOURNMENT.** Upon motion of Mrs. Aurelia, the meeting adjourned at 6:05 p.m.

Ann M. Mazur, Clerk