

Commission on Aging
Minutes of Regular Meeting
Monday, December 19, 2011

The Commission on Aging held a regular meeting on Monday, December 19, 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, Joanne Davis, LeReine Frampton, Mary Ellen Lydem, Joan Plouffe, Larry Schneider, Curt Symes, Sheila Torres and Anna Wiedemann.

Member Excused: Karin Aurelia. Member Absent: James Bernardi.

Support & Advisory Present: Ann Piccini, Municipal Agent for the Elderly.

PUBLIC PARTICIPATION. William Thiessen noted that he is interested in becoming a member of the Commission on Aging. He was advised to submit a request to the First Selectman.

CORRESPONDENCE AND ANNOUNCEMENTS. See "New Business."

MINUTES Upon motion of Mr. Symes, the minutes of the regular meeting of November 21, 2011 were unanimously accepted as presented.

TREASURER'S REPORT. (Attachment A to original minutes) Mrs. Aurelia had provided copies of the December 1, 2011 Commission on Aging Gift Fund which presently stands at \$27,238.29. (Attachment A to original minutes). Upon motion of Mrs. Wiedemann, the Treasurer's Report was unanimously accepted as presented. Mrs. Frampton noted that five employees were authorized to receive tickets to the Christmas Party rather than four as requested by Mrs. Place but Ann Benore of Social Services was not given a ticket by Mrs. Place. Mrs. Frampton said that the ticket was given to another senior instead. Mr. Dwyer will check with Mrs. Place on what happened in this matter.

DIRECTOR OF SENIOR SERVICES REPORT Mrs. Place was not present and did not submit a report.

MUNICIPAL AGENT FOR THE ELDERLY REPORT. (Attachment B to original minutes). Mr. Dwyer noted that Mrs. Piccini should be reporting to the Commission on Aging as the Municipal Agent rather than the Director of Social Services. Mrs. Piccini noted that often these overlap. Mrs. Plouffe asked if the Gift Fund can make donations to another fund, for example to assist the elderly. Mr. Dwyer noted that the Commission agreed in the past to keep the purpose of the Gift Fund open. Mrs. Piccini noted that her office has a gift fund which is the Newtown Social Services Gift Fund.

UNFINISHED BUSINESS

Reply to Sheila Torres's *Discussion Points* memo distributed to the commissioners at the September 26, 2011 meeting.

Mrs. Torres proposed that the Commission on Aging have a row in the Victory Garden next year. She suggested a row based on a method that is composted with hay. She also suggested a perennial such as asparagus. She asked for a small donation from the Commission on Aging Gift Fund to start the garden and would like seniors to assist if they wish to. The Commission agreed that having a row would be a good idea and requested that Mrs. Torres report at the next meeting with a proposal.

Mrs. Torres received a call from Synergy Home Care that is interested in speaking to the Commission on Aging about their services. Mr. Dwyer will invite them to attend a meeting at their convenience. Mr. Symes cautioned that there about 40-50 organizations in this area that are in this realm so we should be careful about interacting with only some of them. Mr. Dwyer noted that this is a tutorial for the Commission and we will not be endorsing any group, Mrs. Wiedemann agreed and said that the Town has to provide three names for any services. She noted that perhaps these groups should go to the Chamber of Commerce. Mrs. Lydem said that information to help seniors comes from Social Services and should not come from the Commission on Aging. Mr. Symes suggested that the Senior Directory list these organizations; Mrs. Wiedemann agreed. She noted that she belongs to the VNA which gets involved in these organizations. She feels that the more informed the Commission on Aging is the better it can serve the seniors.

Mr. Dwyer stated that because a question arose at the COA's November meeting as to what defines a "senior" he has looked into this and obtained information showing that it's age 60+ in the State of Connecticut but some state services for the aging are available to those 55 and over. In support of this he distributed documents issue by the Connecticut's Aging Service Division and by the Western Connecticut Area Agency on Aging. (Attachment E to original minutes).

There was discussion about the fact that grants should be pursued and the fact that the Southbury Senior Center has obtained some grants recently. Mr. Schneider asked what do we want a grant for and what would appear in a survey that the seniors need. Mr. Dwyer noted that perhaps grants could be obtained for recreation for additional programs for the seniors. Mr. Schneider noted that Mrs. Piccini talked about grants concerning health. Mrs. Lydem said that when discussion began years ago for a new senior center, there were many grants that could be applied for. Mrs. Place and Mrs. Piccini will be asked what they would like to obtain grants for. Mrs. Frampton said that the Finance Director said that Department Heads apply for grants on their own. Mrs. Plouffe and Mrs. Torres will research what grants are available.

Senior Directory - Report by Anna Wiedemann. No report tonight.

Elderly Services Strategic Plan - Proposal by Anna Wiedemann. Mrs. Wiedemann contacted the Southbury Senior Center and noted that there are buses available to seniors for medical appointments, etc. The Southbury Senior Center opens two nights a week and Sundays as a result of grant funding.

Planned Giving Program - Report by Curt Symes. Mr. Symes distributed information that he gathered on planned giving (Attachment C to the original minutes). He asked for feedback from the Commission before the next meeting. He would like to discuss this at the next meeting. He noted that the First Selectman and Finance Director indicated that they would be very supportive of a planned giving program. He noted that there is a cross clergy group in Newtown that meets once a month and that the group likes this idea.

New Senior Center. This will be carried forward on the agenda.

NEW BUSINESS. Mr. Dwyer distributed the following:

- Information describing Acts affecting seniors that were passed in the State of Connecticut Legislature during 2011.
- Information describing the services provided to seniors by the Western Connecticut Seniors Alliance. Representatives of this organization gave a talk recently at Masonicare in Newtown which he and Mrs. Torres attended. The group is comprised of professionals in the fields of law, accounting, financial services, health care, real estate and insurance who claim to have particular expertise in serving the needs of seniors. (Attachment D to original minutes).
- An article entitled *Boomers In No Rush To Join 'Senior' Centers* from the November 27, 2011 issue of the Danbury News-Times. (Attachment E to original minutes).
- A copy of an email he received recently from the Executive Director of the Western Connecticut Area Agency on Aging providing information as where to look for grants that provide funding for programs, vehicles and transportation for seniors. (Attachment G to original minutes)

ADJOURNMENT. Upon motion of Mrs. Frampton, the meeting adjourned at 6:25 p.m.

Ann M. Mazur, Clerk