

**Commission on Aging  
Regular Meeting  
Monday, June 20, 2016 @ 5:00 p.m.**

THESE MINUTES ARE SUBJECT TO THE APPROVAL BY THE COMMISSION ON AGING

The Commission on Aging held a regular meeting on Monday, June 20, 2016 at the Senior Center, 14 Riverside Road, Sandy Hook, CT. Chairman Curt Symes called the meeting to order at 5:05 p.m.

**Present:** Curt Symes, John Boccuzzi, Margaret Imbro, Barbara Bloom, Anna Wiedemann, Anne Rothstein, Claire Theune, George Guidera, Mae Schmidle, Ruby Ryles, Lisa Krauss

**Absent:** Sheila Torres

**Also Present:** Marilyn Place and 2members of the public

**BRIEF ANNOUNCEMENTS:** Mr. Symes presented his report (Attachment A) and stated that the COA 2016 Primary Focus will be on “the way forward” for the Seniors of Newtown, regarding the pursuit of a new Senior Center and expanded programs, as long requested by the Seniors. In addition, the Newtown Seniors interest in Tax Abatement is growing significantly. Attached is an article from “Voices” about the Board of Finance meeting which Mr. Symes attended and presented at, regarding Seniors Needs. Finally, Ms. Schmidle will be leading work on the COA By-Laws over the summer.

**PUBLIC PARTICIPATION:** Steven Rosenblatt, 50 Watkins Drive, has submitted a plan to the Town to consider giving seniors, who don’t qualify for the Tax Rebate Program, a 10% tax abatement. The Legislative Council is considering it but not expected to make a decision until after June 29<sup>th</sup>. The plan they are looking at is not the one that was submitted and a meeting with Bob Tait will be held for further discussion. Mr. Symes reported that 20 seniors attended the Legislative Council meeting indicating interest is up – tax abatement and a new Senior Center are the two key issues.

**ACCEPTANCE OF MINUTES:**

**Ms. Wiedemann made a motion to accept the meeting minutes from May 16, 2016,** seconded by Ms. Schmidle and unanimously approved.

**Mr. Guidera made a motion to restructure the agenda for this meeting and cover Old Business and New Business before presenting reports,** seconded by Ms. Wiedemann and unanimously approved.

## **OLD BUSINESS**

*Community Center, 2017 CIP Funds & Communications* - Mr. Symes pointed out that now is the time that Newtown begins its Capital Improvement Plan (CIP) Process for 2017. Relevant to the COA is the potential funding for a new Senior Center. The existence of a Community Center allows for an option to build an “add-on” Senior Center. Mr. Guidera asked about the CIP and how it was developed. The CIP is used as a budgeting tool; nothing can be bonded unless it is on the CIP. All Department Heads report their wants and needs to the First Selectman which then goes to the Board of Finance for approval and subsequently to the Legislative Council for approval. There is currently \$500,000 in the CIP identified for Senior Center Design, and another \$2.5 million is to be allocated, hopefully, for Senior Center Construction. Mr. Symes said that it is imperative that seniors become a voice in order to secure this \$2.5 million additional funding.

Ms. Wiedemann suggested gathering contact info, emails and phone numbers of seniors in order to have the ability to communicate notice of meetings when items are on the agenda of various boards that pertain to seniors. Mr. Symes will contact IT Director Al Miles about creating a secure database for this information. Discussion followed.

**Ms. Wiedemann made a motion to create a flyer asking for contact information to be used as a database to communicate to seniors**, seconded by Ms. Imbro and unanimously approved.

**Ms. Schmidle made a motion to create a COA Communications Committee headed up by Ms. Ryles**, seconded by Ms. Imbro and unanimously approved. Ms. Bloom, Ms. Imbro and Mr. Guidera agreed to help with the effort.

Ms. Ryles reported that the Buck Foundation has secured the money needed to create the electronic “hub” for the senior resources website across Western CT. They are approaching area towns to join; an initial commitment of \$5,000 is needed for a town to have its own presence on the website. Ms. Ryles feels that this is a great way to communicate with seniors as well as provide information on area activities/programs. She, Ms. Place and Mr. Symes have been working on this for the past months.

*Friends of Newtown Seniors* – Mr. Boccuzzi said the group is looking to work with church groups and other organizations working with seniors. They are a non-profit group which gives them flexibility and they are hoping to support activities and sponsor some of their own activities. There will be a Friends of Newtown Seniors Social this Thursday, June 23<sup>rd</sup> at Barnwood Grill in Newtown.

## **NEW BUSINESS**

*Newtown Senior Tax Abatement* – Mr. Boccuzzi attended the Legislative Council Ordinance Committee meeting where discussion occurred about the proposed tax abatement; several of

the Committee members are interested and are doing some further research. The next meeting will be held on June 29<sup>th</sup> at 7:30 p.m. in the Council Chambers at the Municipal Center.

**DIRECTOR OF SENIOR SERVICES REPORT:** (Attachment B) - Ms. Place reported that the Annual Senior Outing at Holiday Hill will be on Monday, August 22<sup>nd</sup>. Transportation will be provided by HARtransit as well as the Senior Center van. She is happy to announce that there will be 3 new classes offered in July due to a small increase in program expense funding. Two donations to the Gift Fund were received; \$1,000 from the Lion's Club and \$150 from Taunton Press.

The cabinet in the sitting area was purchased and Ms. Place would like to further improve the area by purchasing new furniture in the future. Ms. Place is hoping to replace the sign at the end of driveway marking the Senior Center. It needs to be more visible for passersby and people specifically looking for the center. A donation of \$2,520 was made to the Gift Account in memory of John Aurelia; those funds will be used for two benches out front in memory of his dedication, support and participation in Newtown Senior Activities.

The Senior Prom was a wonderful event and although attendance was small, seniors had a great time and the High School Culinary Class was fantastic. Ms. Place with the help of Parks & Rec and NHS will hold the event next year as well and wants the word to get out about such a great event. The success of this event and the earlier NHS "Newtown Seniors" Dinner & Play demonstrate the growing interest for senior activities and programs in town.

**MUNICIPAL AGENT FOR THE ELDERLY REPORT:** No report.

**CHAIRMAN REPORT:** (Attachment A) - The Chairman's report was essentially covered throughout the meeting with the emphasis on the upcoming CIP Process, New Senior Center Need, improved Newtown Seniors Communications and now a renewed focus on Senior Tax Abatement.

Mr. Symes encouraged the Commissioners, members of the public and all Seniors of Newtown to now stand tall and get involved in representing the Seniors' Needs, as outlined in the VOICES article referenced earlier.

**TREASURER REPORT:** (Attachment C) - deferred to next month.

There being no further business, **Ms. Bloom made a motion to adjourn the meeting at 7:05 p.m.**, seconded by Ms. Wiedemann and unanimously approved.

Respectfully submitted,

Ann LoBosco, Clerk

AH. A

**Newtown Commission on Aging (COA) - Chairman Report - 6/20/16 Meeting**

Welcome to our June COA Meeting which will continue our focus on "the way forward" for the Seniors of Newtown, regarding the pursuit of a NEW Senior Center & expanded Programs.

In addition, plans for greater Senior Advocacy & Communications are in the works, as well as, an initial focus on the evolving plans for expanded Senior Tax Abatement by the Legislative Council Ordinance Committee.

As I referenced last month, with the passage of the Community Center Referendum on April 5<sup>th</sup>, the path toward a New Senior Center is clearer than ever before. Currently, there is \$500,000 identified and allocated in the 2017-2018 Board of Finance (BOF) Capital Improvement Plan (CIP) for New Senior Center Design and potentially another \$2,500,000 identified for Construction.

The \$2.5M in the 2017 CIP is fair game for appropriation toward the building of a New (DEDICATED) Senior Center, as an add-on to the Community Center.

In the near term Newtown Senior Services and the Senior Center will have the capability to Schedule Programs in the Shared Space components of the Community Center, once constructed. Also, various facilities in Newtown have volunteered their facilities in the near term for use in expanding Senior Center Programs.

The CHALLENGE right now before the 5000+ Seniors of Newtown is to stand-up for themselves and VOICE their support for the NEED of a NEW Senior Center to their Legislative Council Representative, as well as, Board of Finance & Board of Selectmen.

At this point in time since March and the discussions surrounding the Community Center, the COA has now presented Newtown's Senior Needs to the Board of Selectmen (BOS), Legislative Council (LC) and Board of Finance (BOF) with favorable questioning & results.

See attached June 4, 2016 Voices Article by Linda Zukauskas – "Newtown: Needs of Seniors board's Topic" for a very thorough reporting of both the content and discussion of the hour+ interaction.

For the 1<sup>st</sup> time in over 6 years the COA now has a seat in the CIP Process, representing the Needs of Newtown Seniors.

However, it continues to remain with the 5000+ Newtown Seniors, especially the 1200 who responded to the Newtown-wide Senior Survey in 2013-2014, to stand-up, be counted and voice their support for a New Senior Center & Expanded Programs. If the LC - BOF - BOS don't hear from you, they will not prioritize a New Senior Center above the other proposed, competing CIP Projects – Schools, FFH, etc.

Respectfully submitted,

Curt Symes

Chair, Newtown COA

## **Newtown: Needs of Seniors Board's Topic**

by Linda Zukauskas | Posted: Saturday, June 4, 2016 6:00 am

NEWTOWN — The Board of Finance, meeting Thursday, May 26, discussed the present and future needs of the Commission on Aging and the town's seniors.

Commission Chair Curt Symes described the seniors in town as a silent majority that has recently become more vocal. As they've been expressing their views, he's captured profiles of this demographic.

Senior Boomers, residents older than age 60, are a population of 5,000. There is an overall population of 28,000 in Newtown.

Seniors and boomers are the fastest growing segment of the population in the town and state and consist of three distinct subgroups.

The people age 60 to 69 are boomers and young seniors who are somewhat in denial, there are approximately 2,700 of them. They are not currently engaged but are watching what happens in town regarding seniors.

Traditional seniors are 70 to 79 and are seeking their place and services. Mr. Symes said this is the group that is vocal and consists of 1,500 people.

Mature seniors are aging in place and include 900 residents age 80 to more than 100 years old. They are likely to look to other towns to see what they offer in terms of senior services.

Mr. Symes said this composition has been validated over the past few years; the commission received financial assistance to survey every registered senior voter.

There were 1,200 responses, which encouraged the Commission on Aging to believe that seniors care about issues facing them.

According to Mr. Symes, Newtown is viewed as deficient in its senior services; seniors are going elsewhere to fill their needs.

"Seniors are not bashful," he said, adding there is ample feedback on how seniors use services such as programming or trips in other towns. These people ask Mr. Symes when the town will offer them more and better services.

Senior boomers have said they want a place to congregate and call their own and an intergenerational facility.

They also want a variety of opportunities to exercise and health and wellness programs. Additional requests are for educational and motivational sessions, a kitchen, library and computer facilities.

The board presentation included a set of next steps, acknowledging that the new community center can be a cornerstone for a new and dedicated senior center.

Mr. Symes recommended the town pursue funding for a new senior center as described in the Capital Investment Plan, adding that there has been no major progress on meeting senior needs for almost 15 years.

“Make the commitment,” he urged. “The seniors in town really feel now is our time.”

The finance board asked if the center must be a new building and Mr. Symes said many seniors patronize the Newtown Youth Academy and walk the trails on the Fairfield Hills campus. With the community center planned for this campus, the seniors would like to have their own center attached to this new facility and the features they already enjoy.

He qualified his comments by saying that, if someone with deep pockets were to offer a facility off campus or build a center somewhere else in town, the seniors would be interested in a discussion.

First Selectman Pat Llodra commented that money in the CIP currently labeled as a community center might be appropriately used to create an addition as a senior center.

The intent of the community center will be to have a footprint that does allow for additions. However, until a footprint exists, there is no way to express details about how that might look.

Following the presentation, the finance board members spent almost an hour engaged with Mr. Symes to better understand this particular demographic.



### **COMPLETED EVENTS:**

- Masonicare Lunch and Learn Cooking Demo May 13
- Craft of the month....Native American Talking Stick w/ Toni May 19
- Sounds of Springtime w/ Billy Michaels May 19
- Lunch and Learn Masonicare Cooking Demo May 20
- Senior Prom May 20
- LifeLine Screening May 27
- AARP Safety Program June 3
- Music Entertainment by Bob Mell June 8
- Arthur Gottlieb presentation on The Intrepid June 16
- Newtown Comprehensive Foot Care on Diabetes June 17

### **UPCOMING EVENT:**

- Masonicare Lunch and Learn Cooking Demo May 13
- Craft of the month....Native American Talking Stick w/ Toni May 19
- Sounds of Springtime w/ Billy Michaels May 19
- AARP Safety Program June 3
- Music Entertainment by Bob Mell June 8
- Newtown Comprehensive Foot Care on Diabetes June 17
- Stars and Stripes cake demo w/ Maplewood July 1
- Lunch & Learn Art History and Mendala w/ Masonicare July 15
- Arthur Gottlieb presentation on Long Island Sound July 20
- Lunch and Learn and Bingo w/ Regional Hospice August 17
- Arthur Gottlieb presentation on Margaret Burke White August 18

### **TRIPS:**

- One World Observatory & the Spirit of NY June 22
- The Boston Pops @ Tanglewood July 10
- Italian Fest at Aqua Turf July 12
- Mohegan Sun July 14
- Old Sturbridge Village Lunch & Cabaret July 27
- Lobster fest and Patsy Cline Tribute Aug 25
- The Dupree's at Grand Oak Villa Aug 31
- 9/11 Memorial and Museum Oct 5

### **OVERNIGHT TRIPS:**

- Best of Bar Harbor May 31 – June 3
- Mackinac Island July 12-19
- Lake George and Saratoga August 10-12
- New Bushkill Inn in the Poconos Sept 19-22
- Autumn in Lancaster, PA including Samson Oct 19-21

### **CRUISES:**

- Alaska Cruise Tour May 29- June 8
- Canada & New England Oct 8 -15
- Hawaii Oct 29-Nov 5
- Florida & The Bahamas Feb 19-26, 2017



**New programs:**

1. Craft of the Month (alternates w/ different senior volunteers) 4<sup>th</sup> Thursday of the Month
2. Qi gong will start again July 11
3. Morning Meditation Tuesdays @ 9

**Lunch and Learns will continue with some great info seminars:**

1. Interactive Cake Stars and Stripes Cooking Demo w/ Maplewood July 1
2. Art History and Mendala w/ Masonicare July 15
3. Regional Hospice and Home Care August 17

**Cultural History Series: Continues w/ Arthur Gottlieb LSCW**

July 20 Long Island Sound

Aug 18 Margaret Burke White

**ONCE A MONTH CRAFT CLASS:**

This has taken off with positive inter-action!

Different seniors volunteer their creative knowledge to facilitate a craft, teach it and add to the items for the upcoming annual Bazaar in the Fall. A new member will be painting shells on July 14.

**2016 Annual Statewide Senior Outing @ Holiday Hill is scheduled Monday August 22**  
**Transportation provided by HARTransit, plus the van.**

**Annual Newtown senior picnic Friday September 16 @ Masonicare**

**UPDATE:**

**SENIOR PROM** is scheduled for Friday May 13 from 4-8 @ the HS cafeteria. \$10pp We are still taking sign-ups.

Transportation is offered for Nunnawauk Meadows residents. Why not join us!

**UPDATE:**

WAS A WONDERFUL EVENT!!!!!! It was small attendance but incredibly great time w/ seniors and those all involved. We will do the same for next year it was that good!

**GOOD NEWS!**

TV is mounted on wall.

Cabinet purchased

Flowers planted

\*\* Linda Pickeney RN from Regional Hospice in Danbury (she did the Senior Fair in Southbury last year for the seniors which was a success) I saw her recently whereas she offered to sponsor the Senior Fair at our Center in the Fall. I will continue to have dialogue with Linda to have this come together. This will take place in Sept during w/ our Flu shot clinic.

**Senior Services Gift Fund:**

2 benches will be purchased for the front of the building in memory of John Aurelia there was \$2520 donated in his name. The family will have final plans this week for purchase.

Happy Summer!

Keeping the seniors busy and active.

Marilyn



A.H. C

SENIOR SERVICES GIFT FUND							
DATE	RECEIPTS/DISBURSEMENTS	C/R	C/D	FRANK KNOTTS TRUST FUND	NEW SENIOR CENTER	GRANT	BALANCE
7/1/15	Beginning Balance						43,169.00
7/6/2015	DONATION- TAUNTON PRESS- T-3319		150.00				43,319.00
7/8/2015	DONATION- NEWTOWN LIONS CLUB- T-3320		1,000.00				44,319.00
7/20/2015	TRUST DISTRIBUTION- T-5727			598.40			44,917.40
7/30/2015	Ck #19567- Holiday Inn(3 STAFF/7GUESTS)	(310.00)					44,607.40
7/30/2015	Ck #19532- Alan Devalerio(White House Speaker)	(100.00)					44,507.40
8/12/2015	S.C. TEE SHIRT- T-9066		10.00				44,517.40
9/17/2015	Ck #20233 Arthur Gottlieb- History Pres- Sept/Oct/Nov	(330.00)					44,187.40
10/23/2015	TRUST DISTRIBUTION- T-23697			598.40			44,785.80
10/29/2015	Ck #20828- CS Consulting & Services	(125.00)					44,660.80
10/29/2015	Ck #20875- Image One	(495.60)					44,165.20
11/12/2015	Ck #21130- Rafel Sgammato- Music Therapy	(150.00)					44,015.20
11/12/2015	Ck # 21092- Michael's At the Grove- Deposit for Xmas party	(200.00)					43,815.20
11/19/2015	Annual Holiday Bazaar- T28709		2,463.75				46,278.95
11/30/2015	Bazaar Monies T30656		50.00				46,328.95
12/3/2015	Ck #21428- Michael's At The Grove- Holiday Party	(725.00)					45,603.95
12/3/2015	Ck #21426- Sean Mckee- DJ for Holiday Party	(250.00)					45,353.95
12/8/2015	Bazaar monies T-32152		20.00				45,373.95
12/10/2015	Ck #21526- Rafel Sgammato- Music for Dec 18	(150.00)					45,223.95
12/18/2015	Holiday Bazaar Raffle- T-34351		310.00				45,533.95
1/21/2016	TRUST DISTRIBUTION- T-37791			557.46			46,091.41
4/19/2016	TRUST DISTRIBUTION T-51771			557.46			46,648.87
4/19/2016	TRUST DISTRIBUTION (Add'l Int.) T-51772			358.00			47,006.87
5/4/2016	P-Card- Big Y	(71.46)					46,935.41
5/4/2016	P-Card-Dollar Tree	(22.33)					46,913.08
5/4/2016	P-Card- Michaels	(76.69)					46,836.39
5/4/2016	P-Card- Shoprite	(44.34)					46,792.05
5/26/2016	Ck #23403- Arthur Gottlieb- History Presentation	(330.00)					46,462.05
5/26/2016	Ck #23452-Marilyn Place- Reim for Senior Appreciation Day	(46.53)					46,415.52
		(3428.95)	4,003.75	2,669.72			46,415.52
GRANT-WCAAA							
7/29/2015	ck #19744-Claudia Landwehr					(200.00)	
7/29/2015	ck #19721-Susan Bradley					(200.00)	
7/29/2015	ck #19722-Eileen Byrnes					(200.00)	
8/6/2015	ck#19638-Susan Bradley					(160.00)	
8/6/2015	ck#19640-Eileen Byrnes					(160.00)	
8/6/2015	ck#19675-Claudia Landwehr					(160.00)	
9/7/2015	Grant Received					1,080.00	
9/10/2015	Ck# 20185- Eileen Byrnes					(160.00)	
9/17/2015	Ck #20260- Claudia Landwehr					(160.00)	
9/17/2015	Ck # 20183- Susan Bradley					(160.00)	
9/17/2015	Grant Received					480.00	
10/15/2015	Ck #20602- Susan Bradley					(160.00)	
10/15/2015	Ck #20606- Eileen Byrnes					(120.00)	
10/15/2015	Ck #20687- Claudia Landwehr					(200.00)	
11/2/2015	Grant Received					480.00	
11/12/2015	Ck #20991- Susan Bradley					(120.00)	
11/12/2015	Ck #20993- Eileen Byrnes					(120.00)	
11/12/2015	Ck #21076- Claudia Landwehr					(160.00)	
12/10/2015	Ck #21454- Eileen Byrnes					(160.00)	
12/10/2015	Ck #21500- Claudia Landwehr					(160.00)	
12/10/2015	Ck #21452- Susan Bradley					(120.00)	
1/27/2016	Ck #21970- Eileen Byrnes					(120.00)	
1/27/2016	Ck #21968- Susan Bradley					(200.00)	
1/27/2016	Ck #22007- Claudia Landwehr					(200.00)	
2/18/2016	Ck #22197- Eileen Byrnes					(120.00)	
2/18/2016	Ck #22194- Susan Bradley					(160.00)	
2/18/2016	Ck #22254- Claudia Landwehr					(160.00)	
						(1,800.00)	
GRANT- REGI-POTTERY CLASS							
12/30/2015	GRANT- T-34782					4,954.00	
2/18/2016	Ck #22326- Lynn Welsh					(149.55)	
2/18/2016	Ck #22192- John Bocuzzi					(27.90)	
3/4/2016	P-Card- Ceramic Supply, Dickblick, Dollar Tree					(474.69)	
4/4/2016	P-Card- Blick Art Supplies					(218.55)	
4/14/2016	Ck #22946- Lynn Welsh- Pottery Supplies					(21.25)	
4/14/2016	Ck #22822- John Bocuzzi- Pottery Supplies					(48.84)	
4/28/2016	Ck #23090- Lynn Welsh-Pottery Class(March)					(390.00)	
5/26/2016	Ck #23501-Lynn Welsh-Pottery Class(April)					(345.00)	
						3,278.22	