

**COMMISSION ON AGING
REGULAR MEETING
4:00p.m.
December 5, 2007
STONINGTON HUMAN SERVICES BUILDING COMMUNITY ROOM**

Minutes

The regular meeting of the Commission on Aging was held on December 5, 2007 in the Human Services Building Community Room. Members present were Maryann Bessette, Stacy Cassata, Betty Croteau, Faith Claspell, Robert Elmer, Toni Potter, Lisa Ryan, David Schmidt, and Jennifer Young. Also in attendance were Beth Stewart, Alicia O'Neill, Carol Umphlett of the Human Services Department and First Selectman Ed Haberek. Unable to attend were Karen Hawthorn and Virginia Turek.

The meeting was called to order by Robert Elmer at 4:01 p.m.

Minutes of the November 7, 2007 meeting were presented. Motion by Maryann Bessette to accept the minutes and place on file. Seconded by Betty Croteau. Motion carried.

Treasurer's Report was presented by Jennifer Young. The following amounts are available for use: postage: \$4,304.00, reproduction and printing: \$1,100.00, and program expenses \$1,945.38 for a budget total of \$7,280.09. There is \$2,237.96 in the post office account and \$276.37 in the postage due account. The senior activities balance is \$648.15. Motion by Maryann Bessette to accept the report and place on file. Seconded by Stacy Cassata. Motion carried.

Beth Stewart presented the senior activities report. The workshop held on November 28th, "What Hospice Can Do For You" was attended by three people. The Dementia workshop held today was attended by seven people. Upcoming events include intergenerational holiday bingo at Edith K. Richmond in mid-December, a trip to a UCONN basketball game on January 19th, a trip to White's of Westport for St. Patrick's Day, a trip to see the Broadway musical, "Stomp" in April, and workshops on grandparents raising grandchildren and probate court.

Beth noted that an insert on the Workforce Housing Committee will accompany the Stonington Human Services newsletter going out on December 27th. The goal of this committee is to establish a workforce housing plan to provide affordable housing in the Stonington area.

Carol Umphlett reported that she is focusing on energy assistance applications currently. Applications for assistance have exceeded 200 this year so far. Carol is also providing assistance with Medicare Part D. As it is a period of open enrollment right now, this allows those who have had any problems with their Part D plan to change to another provider.

Lisa Ryan reported on senior legislative issues. She provided all present with the recent edition of the CT Coalition on Aging newsletter which recapped last year's legislative activity affecting seniors. Lisa noted an article in the newsletter that addressed the rental housing locator service and the fact that there weren't any properties listed in Stonington. A press release will be sent to encourage landlords to list their properties in Stonington.

Alicia O'Neill shared that many seniors from the community have completed and returned surveys from the CT Coalition on Aging.

Beth Stewart informed those present that a bill was passed that will provide municipalities with \$5,000 to help with the cost of providing case management to seniors. Stonington Human Services will be a recipient of this money.

OLD BUSINESS

As requested at last month's meeting, Carol Umphlett provided First Selectman Haberek with a list of suggested members for the senior center sub-committee.

Maryanne Bessette and Betty Croteau will head-up the nominating committee for the election of officers for the COA for 2008. Elections will take place at the January meeting.

NEW BUSINESS

First Selectman Haberek updated those present that Edith K. Richmond is not eligible for FEMA funding to repair the alarm system (a cost of roughly \$145,000), but he is investigating other promising options.

He also shared that he is investigating whether town or private land can be utilized to duplicate Stonington Arms to provide additional housing to seniors within Stonington.

Mr. Haberek noted that he has recently learned that outside of the Board of Education, the Reverse 911 program has been unused. He suggested this service be utilized to provide emergency information to seniors. This program provides a recorded message to all phone numbers on its mass list. Multiple lists can be utilized, contacting certain populations within town when desired. Per. Mr. Haberek's request, Lisa Ryan will touch base with emergency management in Stonington to explore this option further.

First Selectman Haberek informed the Commission that he has found \$37,911 for senior transportation that Stonington has been granted but not applied for yet. He will be checking this out.

Mr. Haberek discussed implementing what he referred to as a "Senior Center Operations and Planning Session" (S.C.O.P.S.) to address the senior center project. He noted the project entails two dimensions, the first being the building aspect involving the architects and builders, with the second dimension involving the actual operation of the facility (i.e. how it will actually be run). So far the group includes Beth Stewart and Carol Umphlett (Stonington Human Services), Stacy Cassata (Stonington Arms), Kelly from Westerly Adult Day Services, Jenn Young (COMO), Vicki Anderson and Bruce MacDonald (PNC), a representative from the COA, and a town resident who will also represent TRIAD. This group will gather information and decide on the issues and objectives involved in this project. Mr. Haberek noted that this planning session will break into smaller groups to address the procedural aspects. Lisa Ryan suggested Bob Elmer act as the representative for the COA. Bob suggested David Schmidt who accepted but noted his absence in winter months. David agreed to attend when able, Bob agreed to attend in David's absence. The first meeting of this group will take place at the Human Service Community Room on Monday, December 17th from 9-10 am. First Selectman Haberek noted that the issues concerning the addition and the senior center must be settled before the physical building is built, not after. Bob Elmer noted that this has been the opinion of the Commission on Aging.

Beth Stewart noted that after further review of the grant for the project, she learned that the language in the document specifies that the addition is the "Stonington Senior Center."

David Schmidt received the application for the Mystic Women's Club grant which is due March 1st. Awards for this grant are in the \$300-\$500 range. The suggestion was made that the COA request funding for something for the senior center. Bob Elmer encouraged all present to bring ideas to the next meeting.

Lisa Ryan provided copies to all present of "Livable Communities: An Evaluation Guide." She came across this guide while attending a November 15th transportation forum that involved Senior Resources, AARP, and the CT Transportation Coalition. She noted that this guide provides great ideas for surveys

and how to fix things within a community to make it more “livable.”

First Selectman Haberek noted that he has requested the SEAT bus company make an additional stop in Pawcatuck to help with the shortage of transportation available in the area.

Carol Umphlett encouraged David Schmidt to continue sharing information he learns at AARP meetings with the COA. Carol noted the how this information has been helpful in the past.

Faith Claspell reminded Stacy Cassata, Bob Elmer, Lisa Ryan, and Jenn Young that their terms expire on December 31st and should they desire to remain on the Commission, a letter requesting reappointment must be sent to the First Selectman’s office. There is one vacancy on the Commission presently.

Motion by Betty Croteau to adjourn. Seconded by Lisa Ryan. Motion carried.

Meeting adjourned 5:10 p.m.

NEXT MEETING – Wednesday, January 2, 2008.

Respectfully submitted,

Faith Claspell, Secretary