

**COMMISSION ON AGING  
REGULAR MEETING  
April 2, 2008  
STONINGTON HUMAN SERVICES BUILDING COMMUNITY ROOM**

**Minutes**

The regular meeting of the Commission on Aging was held on April 2, 2008 in the Human Services Building Community Room. Members present were: Maryann Bessette, Stacy Cassata, Faith Claspell, Kathleen Crockford, Betty Croteau, Robert Elmer, Karen Hawthorn, Lisa Ryan, David Schmidt, Virginia Turek and Jennifer Young. Also attending: Beth Stewart, Director of Stonington Human Services. Unable to attend: Toni Potter

**Late Arrivals:**

**First Selectman Ed Haberek 4:15 p.m.**

**Alicia O'Neill, Human Services Program Coordinator 4:18 p.m.**

The meeting was called to order by Robert Elmer at 4:00 p.m.

Minutes of the March 5, 2008 meeting were presented. Motion by Stacy Cassata to accept the minutes and place on file. Seconded by Maryann Bessette. Motion carried.

Treasurer's Report was presented by Jennifer Young. The following amounts are available for use: postage: \$3,746.50; reproduction and printing: \$806.35; and program expenses \$1,263.43 for a budget total of \$5,816.28. There is \$1,606.68 in the post office account and \$209.54 in the postage due account. Motion by Virginia Turek to accept the report and place on file. Seconded by Stacy Cassata. Motion carried.

Beth Stewart, Director of Stonington Human Services, presented an activity report on behalf of Carol Umphlett. For the Fiscal Year 2007-2008 (July to March) a total of 2,971 unduplicated clients were served. 725 clients were age 55 and older (24%). For the same period of Fiscal Year 2006-2007 (July to March) 2,478 individuals were served. 583 clients were age 55 and older (24%). The increase in the number served in Fiscal Year 2007-2008 was 493 or a 19% increase in overall identifiable clients.

Beth Stewart also reported on the number of those served in the Energy Assistance program. 364 unduplicated clients have been served in the Energy Assistance program reflecting a 38% increase over last year's total of 263. During the 2006-2007 Fiscal Year, 184 out of 625 clients (29%) were age 55 and

older. During the 2007-2008 Fiscal Year 229 out of 799 clients (27%) were age 55 and older.

Beth Stewart distributed an activity report on behalf of Alicia O'Neill, Human Services Program Coordinator. During the month's workshops and intergenerational events a total of 99 were served. Upcoming events: April 30: Yellow Dot at Stonington Arms; May 21: Living Wills Workshop; May 31: Bronx Zoo New York, NY; June 18: Appts. Made at 5/21 workshop to have living wills done; June 21: Quincy Market.

Lisa Ryan reported on senior legislative issues. She noted that legislative sessions that began on February 6 have been very active with proposing bills supporting changes in nursing home regulations. The proposed bills would require changes in reporting and staffing in nursing homes. She also reported that the State has been focusing on re-shifting Medicaid dollars in order to pay for long term care services in the community rather than in an institution. Many of the proposed bills in session reflect this shift. Several bills are attempting to lower the age requirement to 60 in order to be eligible for the Connecticut Home Care Program for the Elderly.

Lisa also reported that one other proposed bill of interest is House Bill #5574: The Income Limits and State Reimbursement Limits and State Reimbursement for the Elderly Property Tax Freeze Program. This bill would require the State to reimburse towns for lost tax revenues and to raise eligibility limits for the local property tax freeze program for the elderly.

Lisa stated that a roundtable presented by Senior Resources' Direct Care Workforce Shortage Team will be held on 4/29/08. It is called: "Scarce Care: Can We Overcome the Direct Care Workforce Shortage?"

Ed Habarek reported that 36 bids have come in for the building of the Stonington Senior Center. Acceptance of a bid will be announced on Friday.

Ed also stated that he has received an informational booklet from the Connecticut Commission on Aging regarding the review of property tax relief/abatement for older adults. Ed continues to review other municipalities' policies to try to determine how adopting property tax abatement could affect the budget.

### **OLD BUSINESS**

Lisa Ryan reported information she had gathered about the Montville tele-care program for homebound seniors (Reverse 911). Montville found that the regular Reverse 911 program required seniors to remember a "PIN Number" to use the system. Montville did not feel that this was a good feature and chose

to use The Guardian Angel Program. Ed Habarek stated that he would investigate both the compatibility of this program with the program now in place and the cost of an upgrade.

Stacy Cassata and Lisa Ryan volunteered in February to form a COA sub-committee for senior transportation. Stacy Cassata reported that she had investigated the use of the First Student Bus during “off times” when students are not being transported. The bus would be available for use. The only barrier is the financial aspect associated with staffing for the coordination of the program. Beth Stewart stated that this should be discussed with PNC. Ed Habarek stated that he will investigate the availability of transportation funds that could be used for this purpose.

### **NEW BUSINESS**

Although the date for the groundbreaking ceremony for the Stonington Senior Center has not yet been set, Ed Habarek stated that he will have Joanne from his office compile a list of prior Commission On Aging members for the groundbreaking ceremony invitation list.

Motion to adjourn by Virginia Turek. Seconded by Maryann Bessette. Motion carried.

Meeting adjourned at 5:12

NEXT MEETING – Wednesday, May 7, 2008.

Respectfully submitted,

Karen Hawthorn, Secretary