

**COMMISSION ON AGING  
REGULAR MEETING  
November 5, 2008  
STONINGTON HUMAN SERVICES BUILDING COMMUNITY ROOM**

The regular meeting of the Commission on Aging was held on November 5, 2008 in the Human Services Building Community Room. Members present were: Maryann Bessette, Stacy Cassata, Faith Claspell, Betty Croteau, Karen Hawthorn, Lisa Ryan, Virginia Turek, Jennifer Young. Also attending: Beth Stewart, Director Stonington Human Services, Carol Umphlett, Agent For the Elderly Stonington Human Services. Unable to attend were: Kathleen Crockford, Robert Elmer, David Schmidt.

Late Arrivals: Toni Potter 4:07 p.m.; First Selectman Ed Haberek 4:20

Guests Attending: John Phetteplace, Planning Director, Town of Stonington Emergency Management; George Brennan, Tactical Operations Director, Town of Stonington Emergency Management and June Strunk, Vice President PNC Board

The Stonington Commission on Aging heard a presentation on behalf of Beth Stewart, Director of Stonington Human Services, John Phetteplace, Planning Director for Town of Stonington Emergency Management and George Brennan, Tactical Operations Director Town of Stonington Emergency Management. The presentation was about the plans set in place for the elderly and disabled in the event of an emergency evacuation. Beth Stewart stated that the Town of Stonington is contracted with the Red Cross and the Salvation Army who would work together with Stonington Emergency Management and Stonington Human Services in the event of a disaster. The Red Cross is the shelter provider. Beth also stated that there is a Special Needs Registry for those who are homebound and alone and who have no one to assist with evacuation. The Special Needs Registry has been well advertised and is also available on the Town of Stonington website. George Brennan stated that Emergency Management emphasizes to individuals and their families to make provisions for special needs (supplies and medications) before their loved one is evacuated. John Phetteplace distributed a book entitled "Are You Ready?". The book gives information on emergency preparedness and is actually used a part of the training for the Citizen Corp. The Citizen Corp is a "neighbors helping neighbors" program which is part of the USA Freedom Corp which was created after the tragic events that occurred on September 11. Citizen Corp coordinates volunteers who assist first responders. John stated that Groton has a Citizen Corp and is willing to help the Town of Stonington train a Citizen Corp. George pointed out that people will want to return to their homes as soon as possible after an emergency/storm - even in bad conditions - and that Citizen Corp could help with this. George stressed the importance of being

prepared for major snow and ice storms as well as hurricanes. He stated that FEMA (Federal Emergency Management Agency) teaches that the public should be prepared for emergencies/disasters and be able to be self-sufficient for 72 hours at a minimum.

Minutes of the October 1, 2008 meeting were presented and June Strunk pointed out an omission regarding the Good Neighbor Award and Jennifer Young's comments about the September 27 Stonington Community Center fund raiser. Motion to amend the minutes to reflect the omissions by Lisa Ryan. Seconded by Maryann Bessette. Motion carried.

Treasurer's Report was presented by Jennifer Young. The following amounts are available for use: Postage: \$4,320.00; Reproduction & Printing: \$1,100; Program Expenses: \$1,628.01 for a budget total of \$7,048.01. There is \$470.00 in the Postage Due Account and \$1,297.44 in the Post Office Account.

Carol Umphlett, Agent For The Elderly, Stonington Human Services, presented an activity report. She reported that the tracking system is being upgraded, therefore these numbers are an unofficial report for now: Energy Assistance: approximately 200 applications have been taken. She also stated that changes in the energy assistance program will make it possible for individuals with slightly higher incomes to receive fuel assistance through the Operation Fuel Program. There is still an asset test to determine eligibility for this program.

Carol Umphlett presented an activity report on behalf of Alicia O'Neill, Human Services Program Coordinator. In September, 10 individuals assisted with the Gray Matters folding; 17 attended the Big E on September 20; 22 participated in the Yellow Dot Program on September 24; 9 attended the Wrentham Shopping Trip on October 4; 4 attended the Fall Prevention Workshop on October 9; 20 participated in the AARP Safe Driving Course on October 14; 20 participated in the AARP Safe Driving Course on October 15. Upcoming events: November 15: New York City Bus Trip; December 3: Yellow Dot at Stonington Human Services; December 12: 5<sup>th</sup> Annual Holiday Party.

Carol Umphlett presented correspondence from the Town of Stonington regarding the 2009 scheduling of the Commission on Aging's regular meeting schedule. Cynthia Ladwig, Town Clerk must receive the schedule by the end of November. Stacy Cassata made a motion to keep the meetings on the first Wednesday of the month. Seconded by Lisa Ryan. Motion carried.

Carol also distributed a flier announcing a workshop by Connecticut Conference of Municipalities. The workshop is entitled "Effective Meetings and parliamentary Procedure" and will be held on November 18, 2008 at 8:30 a.m. in the Grown Town Hall Annex.

First Selectman, Ed Haberek, reported that the building of the Senior Center is moving ahead. The construction company has picked up the pace and Ed anticipates a completion date in early February. He stated that he has received preliminary projections for utility costs for the new senior center and he is to review costs with Connecticut Light and Power.

Ed stated that there will be a Selectmen's meeting at 6:30 p.m. on November 12 at Wequetequock Firehouse. Bruce MacDonald will speak about the naming of the new senior center.

Lisa Ryan requested clarification from Ed Haberek regarding an advertisement in the November 5, 2008 edition of The Day. The ad was to notify the public of the Town of Stonington's request to use \$45,000 generated by a Department of Economic and Community Development Grant for additional improvements to the Stonington Senior Center. Ed stated that the money was granted years ago but had finally gotten all required signatures and would be used for the senior center kitchen. Lisa inquired about provisions for the operational cost of the new senior center and asked whether additional staff would be hired. Ed stated that at this time he is investigating sources of funding for operational costs and that there is no funding and no plans to hire additional staff for the new senior center at this time. The staff at the Pawcatuck Neighborhood Center will be operating the new senior center.

### **OLD BUSINESS**

Beth Stewart spoke on behalf of the Stonington Commission on Aging Transportation Sub-Committee (Sub-Committee members: Beth Stewart, Lisa Ryan, Stacy Cassata and June Strunk). The sub-committee has worked to bring a regional partnership for transportation with Groton, East Lyme, Waterford and New London where all will pool state grant funding to contract with ECTC (Eastern Connecticut Transportation Council) to provide medical transportation for seniors and the disabled. Stonington has received a grant for \$37,911. That total will be matched 100% with existing town funds paid to the COMO (Stonington Community Center) and the PNC (Pawcatuck Neighborhood Center) transportation programs. There will be no cost to the Town of Stonington for this grant. This grant will be for medical transportation needs that cannot be provided by the COMO or PNC .

## **NEW BUSINESS**

**Maryann Bessette made an announcement on behalf of the Stonington Commission on Aging Nominating Committee. The nominating committee submitted the slate of officers selected for 2009: Chair: Robert Elmer; Vice Chair: Stacy Cassata; Treasurer: Jennifer Young; Secretary: Karen Hawthorn. Motion to accept nominations made by Lisa Ryan. Seconded by Faith Claspell. Motion carried.**

**Ed Haberek stated that there are several applications for the opening on the Commission on Aging. Although the Board of Selectmen have the authority to appoint new members to the Commission, out of courtesy, Ed asked if the nominating committee would like to be informed of the applicants or whether they preferred it to be discussed the Commission Chair. The nominating committee preferred that those discussions be referred to the Commission Chair.**

**Toni Potter distributed a flier for a Veterans Benefits Seminar to be presented by Attorney, Wade Jensen on Wednesday, November 12, at 6:00 p.m. at Academy Point in Mystic.**

**June Strunk announced that the Pawcatuck Neighborhood Center board has officially voted to make her the PNC liaison to the Commission on Aging. She stated that she would like to report on elder activities sponsored by the PNC at COA meetings.**

**Motion to adjourn made by Maryann Bessette. Seconded by Betty Croteau.**

**Meeting adjourned at 5:08 p.m.**

**NEXT MEETING – Wednesday, December 3, 2008.**

**Respectfully submitted,**

**Karen Hawthorn  
Secretary**