

**COMMISSION ON AGING
REGULAR MEETING
August 6, 2008
STONINGTON HUMAN SERVICES BUILDING COMMUNITY ROOM**

Minutes

The regular meeting of the Commission on Aging was held on August 6, 2008 in the Human Services Building Community Room. Members present were: Maryann Bessette, Stacy Cassata, Betty Croteau, Robert Elmer, Karen Hawthorn, Lisa Ryan, Virginia Turek and Jennifer Young. Also attending: Carol Umphlett, Agent For The Elderly, Stonington Human Services. Unable to attend: Faith Claspell, Kathleen Crockford, Toni Potter and David Schmidt.

Guests Attending: Donna Gorman and June Strunk, Vice President PNC Board

Late Arrivals:

First Selectman Ed Haberek at 4:23 p.m.

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

Minutes of the July 2, 2008 meeting were presented. Motion by Robert Elmer to accept the minutes and place on file. Seconded by Virginia Turek. Motion carried.

Treasurer's Report was presented by Jennifer Young. Due to having no working budget during the month of July, there is no spending or intake reflected on the Treasurer's report with the exception of Reproduction & Printing: \$806.00 (posted on June 30) and Trip Consumables: \$600.00 paid and \$25.00 refund.

Carol Umphlett, Agent For The Elderly, Stonington Human Services, presented an activity report. Of the 207 households served (311 individuals), 42% were seniors (55 and older) and of those, 65% (87 individuals) were 70 and older. Senior program participation increased 35% in July 2008. 98 seniors participated in programs in July 2007 compared to 133 in July 2008.

The Renter's Rebate program has seen 195 applicants so far this year with a total grant amount of \$91, 155.59 (average grant \$467.00). The program ends on September 15th. Last year's total participation was 206 applicants and total grant amount of \$90,024.80 (437.00 average grant per person).

Carol Umphlett also presented an activity report on behalf of Alicia O'Neill, Human Services Program Coordinator. The Stonington Village Fair was held on August 2. Upcoming events: August 23: Basketball Hall of Fame; August

25 and August 26: AARP Safe Driving Course; September: The Big E and Yellow Dot; October 14 and October 15: AARP Safe Driving Course; October 4: Wrentham Village Outlets.

Carol also shared that she has received an email indicating that the Governor is reviewing Energy Assistance. She added that with no working budget in July, some Salvation Army funds have been used for fuel assistance requests.

First Selectman Ed Haberek stated that construction is going forward on the new Senior Center. The second floor is projected to be completed by the end of January 2009.

Ed has scheduled a meeting to be held on August 7, with Vicki Anderson, June Strunk, George Sylvestre, Beth Stewart and Bob Elmer. Programming procedures and naming of the new Senior Center will be discussed.

Ed has invited Bruce MacDonald, President, of the Board of the Pawcatuck Neighborhood Center to attend the September 3, Commission on Aging meeting.

OLD BUSINESS

The COA Sub-committee on Senior Transportation has been investigating opportunities for additional means of transportation for seniors in Stonington. As a member of that committee, Lisa Ryan shared information on an organization called The Independent Transportation Network (“iTN America”). The organization has developed a program (available for purchase) to help develop sustainable transportation in communities. Rather than depend on public monies and tax dollars to support their program, iTN America is a community-based non-profit service that relies on affordable fares from the people who use the service. Those fares are subsidized by private funds and donations from businesses, community organizations and healthcare providers. Lisa has discovered that Middletown has bought into the iTN America program and it is scheduled to begin in October. Lisa will contact Middletown officials to investigate further.

A family member of the Stonington resident suffering from dementia who was refused transportation to Westerly Adult Day Services (WADS) by the PNC shared that there has been no resolution to the issue. In July, Vicki Anderson had stated to the family that an aide would be hired to ride on the bus and that PNC would begin transporting the resident. However, since that time, the family was told that PNC would not transport but no other communication or explanation has been offered. June Strunk, Vice President of PNC Board, stated that the PNC Board decided that PNC is unable to transport the resident because of the liability involved without an aide on board the bus. At this time

PNC is unable to afford the salary for an aide. June also stated that PNC is exploring the possibility of applying for grant money to hire an aide as well looking into programs sponsored by Medicare and Medicaid that will help with transportation. June stated that when PNC is able to hire an aide, the resident's request for transportation would be reconsidered. The resident's family pointed out that there has been no communication with the family regarding this decision by the PNC. The family reiterated that they would like the resident to be given a "fair chance" to see if using the PNC bus would work out. June invited the family to attend the next PNC Board meeting (August 19 at 6:00 p.m.) to discuss the issue further but also stated that PNC will not transport the resident at this time.

NEW BUSINESS

As a result of discussions on the need for developing transportation for the elderly and disabled, another area of concern has arisen: what kind of transportation will be available for the elderly and disabled in the event of an emergency/evacuation? Carol Umphlett inquired about arranging a presentation on emergency management. Ed Haberek stated that he will contact John Phetteplace, Director of Emergency Management and invite him for a presentation.

Motion to adjourn by Virginia Turek . Seconded by Lisa Ryan. Motion carried.

Meeting adjourned at 5:13 p.m.

NEXT MEETING – Wednesday, September 3, 2008.

Respectfully submitted,

Karen Hawthorn, Secretary