

**COMMISSION ON AGING
REGULAR MEETING
February 4, 2009
STONINGTON HUMAN SERVICES BUILDING COMMUNITY ROOM**

The regular meeting of the Commission on Aging was held on February 4, 2009 in the Human Services Building Community Room. Members present were: Maryann Bessette, Stacy Cassata, Betty Croteau, Robert Elmer, Karen Hawthorn, Lisa Ryan, Billie Ward and Jennifer Young. Also attending: Beth Stewart, Director Stonington Human Services. Unable to attend were: Kathleen Crockford, David Schmidt and Virginia Turek.

Late Arrivals: Toni Potter: 4:12

Guests Attending: June Strunk, Vice President PNC Board

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

Minutes of the January 7, 2009 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: \$4,320.00; Reproduction & Printing: \$620.18; Program Expenses: \$1,547.68 for a budget total of \$6,487.86. There is \$299.48 in the Postage Due Account and \$661.06 in the Post Office Account.

Beth Stewart, Director of Stonington Human Services, presented an activity report on behalf of Carol Umphlett, Agent For The Elderly, Stonington Human Services. In January, 327 Energy Assistance contacts were made, of these 96 were seniors (29%). 14 ConnPACE contacts were made – all seniors. 55 medical contacts were made – 27 seniors (49%).

Lisa Ryan, legislative liaison for the Stonington COA, distributed the following information: 1) a session bulletin for the State of Connecticut Long-Term Care Advisory Council. The bulletin gives an overview of the Council's 2009 Legislative priorities. 2) A list of proposed House and State bills that pertain to the elderly. 3) A 2009 General Assembly Deadline Chart for bill proposals. This chart shows the timeline and process for a proposed bill. 4) 2009 Connecticut General Assembly Committee Assignments. 5) Connecticut Association of Area Agencies on Aging Legislative Update. 6) Action Alert from Connecticut Association of Area Agencies on Aging. Alert urges the public to call or email members of the Human Services Sub-Committee of

Appropriations to urge them to renew the \$1m. in state funding from the Tobacco and Health Trust Fund for the CHOICES program. CHOICES provides health insurance counseling, information and assistance and connects older adults, those with disabilities, and caregivers to federal benefits for which they are eligible. This service helps people to understand and plan for their long-term care needs.

Jennifer Young announced that there are still appointment spots left for free AARP tax preparation at the COMO. The service begins on February 5 and will be offered every other Thursday at noon.

June Strunk, Vice President of Pawcatuck Neighborhood Center Board and Liaison to Commission on Aging, reported that the Pawcatuck Neighborhood Center transported 52 seniors in December. The PNC provided a total of 411 one way rides in December for a variety of purposes (medical appointments, pharmacy, grocery shopping, lunch). 17 Stonington seniors were served by the PNC Emergency Food Pantry, 500 Christmas meals were provided, 25% were for area seniors. June also added that the new addition, (The Robert A. Granato Senior Annex), is now being heated.

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). Beth was very pleased to announce that the regional partnership for transportation with Stonington, Groton, East Lyme, Waterford and New London is now official. The towns will pool state grant funding to contract with ECTC (Eastern Connecticut Transportation Council) to provide medical transportation for seniors aged 60+ and the disabled). The program is called "Dial-A-Ride Medical Transportation. For more information on this transportation or other services, call Stonington Human Services 860-535-5015 or ECTC at 860-439-0062.

Jennifer Young announced that the Golden Agers have decided to disband. Jennifer stated that there were no seniors willing to take responsible positions for the club (officer's roles).

NEW BUSINESS

Jennifer Young called attention to a program called Service on the Sound. The service is offered through St. Andrew Presbyterian Church and St. Luke Lutheran Church who are partnering with Group Workcamp Foundation, Inc. The workcamp brings 400 youths and adults to Southeastern Connecticut to

volunteer their time, energy and resources to work on approximately 80 homes free of charge. Free material and labor are provided for minor home repairs, painting, deck replacement and wheelchair ramp installation. Applications can be made at www.serviceonthesound.org. Application deadline is February 28, 2009. For more information or to volunteer call Service on the Sound at 860-446-1058.

Stonington COA Secretary, Karen Hawthorn, announced that she will be at an Alzheimer's Training course on April 1, 2009 and will therefore be unable to attend the meeting. Vice-Chair, Stacy Cassata offered to be Secretary Pro-tem for that meeting.

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

Meeting adjourned at 5:00 p.m.

NEXT MEETING – Wednesday, March 4, 2009 at 4:00 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

**Karen Hawthorn
Secretary**