

Town of Upton
Council on Aging
Upton Center, December 10, 2012

The Upton Council on Aging's regular monthly meeting was called to order at 9:00 A.M. Those in attendance were: Myra Bigelow, Betty Consigli, Jen DeLuca, Jamie Gardner, Maria Griffin, Judith Katz, Katie Kelley, Priscilla Lukes, Holly Whalen.

The minutes of the November 5, 2012 were accepted as amended.

Social Service Update: Holly reviewed busy days of this season. She and Jamie worked with many individuals over insurance open enrollment issues. The Bloomer Girls gave baskets for thanksgiving and Holly will work with the Salvation Army, UniBank, St. Gabriel's Church, The Police Union and the Bloomer Girls for holiday baskets and gifts.

Holly is processing about one application per day for SMOC assistance.

Salvation Army has a fund called the Good Neighbor Energy Fund that started December 1 for those not eligible for other programs. There is a \$350 limit and there are eligibility requirements.

Lottery and Bingo. The renewal license for the lottery has been issued to the Senior Center, not the Friends. This raises some questions as to whether the Staff/COA members could help run Bingo. The ethics commission has been called but no clear answers have yet been received. There is a new person willing to run the Bingo, but Jamie has not yet met with the person. The program is canceled until after the holidays.

Holiday Party on December 18 will be catered by Colella's. Betty, Judith, Myra, Maria and Priscilla all volunteered to help at the gathering. Food will be served from 1:00 to 1:30, followed by an hour of entertainment. Gifts cards, if available, along with raffle prizes, will be given out.

Out to Eat Volunteer – Grafton Inn – Maria

Build your Own Gingerbread house 9:30 to 11:30. Betty and Priscilla will join Jamie and Holly at each of the tables to help stay within the time limits.

Men's Club Supper Volunteer on December 21 – Betty

Budget: Jamie is again faced with preparing a level funded budget. If he sees a need for any increases in line items, it can only be for 2% and with a valid reason. There were no staff raises last year and the Personnel Board has yet to give final recommendations. The Governor has invoked the 9C law which allows him to cut monies from the existing budget. If the Governor makes significant cuts, we will see cuts for the COA. Eighty percent of the fuel assistance money has been received but the Center may not get the remaining 20%. The Formula Grant money may be cut. Even if it is given and cuts are made, that money would have to be returned. Jamie runs the center on a \$37,000 budget, minus salaries. Town employees who are union members get annual raises and COL increases. Staff at the Center could become union members if they chose to, exclusive of Jamie who is management.

Salvation Army Kettle Drive will use only three weekends of this holiday season. Jamie met huge resistance, and if the situation does not improve, is considering resigning from the Upton Service Unit.

Dates to remember:

December 14 – High school Chorus coming to Center

December 20 – Tri Valley Christmas Dinner.

Jamie is planning to offer two trips per month in the coming year as well as investigating Zumba and line dancing.

Other Holiday Updates; the Woman's Club donated \$1000 to the Salvation Army for heating assistance with a \$250 limit. Food baskets are expected from the Bloomer Girls and St. Gabriel Church. The Center will assist twenty five families with food assistance and fifteen families with gift assistance.

The next COA meeting is scheduled for January 7, 2013.

Respectfully submitted,

Katie Kelley,
Secretary