



TOWN OF COLCHESTER

Commission on Aging
95 Norwich Ave., Colchester, Connecticut 06415
(860) 537-3911

Where Tradition Meets Tomorrow
Colchester Commission on Aging
Regular Meeting Minutes

Monday, July 13, 2009 – Colchester Senior Center

NANCY A BRAY
TOWN CLERK

Nancy A. Bray

RECEIVED
COLCHESTER, CT
2009 JUL 16 PM 12:16

Members Present: Chairman Jean Stawicki, Vice-Chair Clara Erickson, Bernie Erickson, Sue Maikshilo, Betty Ann Oppelt, Barbara Warden, Theresa Hendricksen

Members Absent: Bill Wagner

Others Present: Patti White, Rosemary Coyle, Norm Dupuis

- 1. Call Meeting to Order:** The meeting was called to order at 1:03 p.m.
- 2. Minutes:** Sue Maikshilo motioned to approve the regular meeting minutes of 6/8/09. Clara Erickson seconded. All other members present voted in favor. MOTION CARRIED.
- 3. Financial Report:** Bernie Erickson reported that the senior center collected \$417.05 in June from bus transportation. Of that, \$212.00 was from out of town trips. Clara Erickson motioned to approve the Financial Report. Sue Maikshilo seconded. All other members present voted in favor. MOTION CARRIED.
- 4. Chairman's Report:** No items were reported.
- 5. Senior Center Director's Report:** Patti White thanked everyone for their patience during the renovations in the library/computer room which is finally taking shape. The renovations on the Veteran's room will begin on July 20th. They will be cleaning, painting and installing new blinds that were purchased in part with guild funds.

The grant that was applied for from the Older American monies for an early memory loss program and recreational therapy coordinator position and aide was awarded for \$10,000. They are hoping to start in the fall with two days a week. This will partially fund the program. Patti will try to coordinate with Easter Seals and the Brookdale Foundation for the balance. It will be called the Making Memories Program.

The Senior Center has received funds from KBE for outdoor furniture as reported in the newspaper. It has not been purchased yet.

Donna is continuing Renter's Rebate applications through September 15th and will begin taking applications for the energy assistance program on October 1st.

Patti also reported that the summer Bingo is going smashingly. There has been up to 28 people in attendance with a \$20.00 limit per game that you can win.

Rosemary said that she will remind the First Selectman to advertise the positions for the new Senior Center Study Group as the Board of Selectmen did approve the request to form the group. (See attached memo from the First Selectman.)

Sue Maikshilo motioned to approve the Senior Center Director's report. Theresa Hendricksen seconded. All other members present voted in favor. MOTION CARRIED.

6. Old Business:

- A. Recommend Commission on Aging member to Board of Selectmen's Senior Center Building Study Group:** Theresa Hendricksen volunteered to serve on the Senior Center Study Group. Sue Maikshilo motioned to recommend Theresa Hendricksen to the Board of Selectmen as the Commission on Aging representative for the Senior Center Study Group. BettyAnn Oppelt seconded. All other members present voted in favor. MOTION CARRIED.
- B. Make any other recommendations to the Board of Selectmen:** There were no other recommendations.

7. New Business:

- A. Review of possible projects to pursue toward meeting charge of helping Colchester Seniors:** Jean Stawicki asked everyone to read through the list she put together with ideas for possible projects for the Commission to work on (see attached). She said that the list is not meant to be inclusive but was a place to start.

Patti stated that she does review legislation and deals with state government on issues that are important to seniors through her involvement with the CT Association of Senior Center Personnel. Some examples are ConnPace and DOT matching grants. The legislative session for the current year is almost over but they could invite the representatives to a COA meeting. Patti reported that they are at risk of losing the grant money for DOT funding which provides transportation for out of town medical visits and special initiatives. The center is in the fourth year of a 5 year grant. If it is not funded by the state, the money will run out as of July 1, 2009. Luckily, they can keep carry over money from previous years and continue to use it until it is gone.

Other towns have had to stop this transportation. This service is free to citizens however they are allowed to accept donations which help to offset costs to run the program.

Bernie questioned whether a letter had been sent to Rob Gustafson regarding adequate housing for seniors. Jean said that had not been done. Sue added that there's a large population of handicapped people in the elderly housing units which creates a shortage of space for elderly citizens. Theresa asked whether it's a question of space, location or money. Patti said it's all three reasons. DECD subsidizes the two complexes that are run by the Colchester Housing Authority. They pay 30 percent of their gross income for rent. The others are individually owned and subsidized through other programs. Rosemary added that the town planner just got a grant to study the needs of individuals with different levels of income. The question is whether the Commission On Aging could help with the issue of the lack of affordable housing for seniors. Jean questioned if there are services that could help people on the waiting list.

Patti suggested that the Commission take a look at the actual working budget for the senior center. There is an amount of money from donations that is not appropriated for anything. A small portion of it is earmarked for a new senior center. Clara thought it could go toward the transportation if it does not get passed by the state. There was discussion on where the interest goes and Patti thought it went to the town. Clara motioned to ask Maggie Cosgrove (the town's Chief Financial Officer) to come to a meeting to explain the money situation. BettyAnn seconded. All other members present voted in favor. MOTION CARRIED.

Bernie motioned to ask Representative Linda Orange to a meeting to explain what's going on with aging in the legislation. Clara seconded. All other members present voted in favor. MOTION CARRIED.

Jean said that Eileen Daly is in charge of the Finance of the State Senate and that they could ask her to come to a separate meeting. She suggested having questions prepared for Linda Orange so that she will know what they are interested in. Patti volunteered to contact Maggie for the August meeting and Linda Orange for the September meeting.

One other issue that Patti brought up is that of ConnPace. This is a program that covers prescriptions on a formulary. It is changing so that ongoing medications will be grandfathered in through December. New medications will not be covered. The formulary that lists covered medications will change in January.

Clara suggested having a volunteer find out why people stop coming to the center, maybe with a visit or a call. There are confidentiality issues, but Donna does check in with people who have not been in for a time as well as making wellness calls to people who have signed up for this service. Jean added that they may be getting in the way of the senior centers duties.

Sue stated that the programs at the Senior Center are wonderful and are so full that new programs wouldn't fit in the schedule. Patti said there is always room for improvement and if there were more staff they could do more things like the early memory loss program. Sue asked about space and Patti said that would definitely be an issue. Also, Donna is doing both administrative assistant and case manager duties and she could really use some assistance herself.

Jean asserted that the Commission should keep thinking of these issues and commented on the great brainstorming for new ideas at the meeting. She would really like for the Commission to find a project to be proactive for seniors in the community.

B. Any other New Business: No items were reported.

8. Adjournment: Bernie Erickson motioned to adjourn the meeting at 2:03 p.m. Sue Maikshilo seconded. All other members present voted in favor. **MOTION CARRIED.**

Respectfully submitted,



Michelle Komoroski

127 Norwich Avenue
Colchester, CT 06415
(860) 537-7220

Town of Colchester

Linda M. Hodge

First Selectman

MEMORANDUM

To: ✓ Patti White, Senior Center Director
Adam Turner, Town Planner
Jean Stawicki, Chair Commission on Aging

CC: Linda Hodge, First Selectman
Rosemary Coyle, Selectman
Nancy Bray, Town Clerk
Leann Hill, Assistant Town Clerk

From : Mike Caplet, Executive Assistant to the First Selectman 

Date: June 19, 2009

Re: Senior Center Study Group

The Board of Selectmen addressed this at last night's regular Board of Selectmen Meeting per the excerpt below from the draft minutes yet to be posted:

Discussion and Possible Action on Senior Center Study Group – Proposed Composition: Commission on Aging Rep., At-Large Senior Center Rep., AARP Rep., (2)Community At-Large Reps., Parent Rep., Youth Services Rep., Parks & Recreation Commission Rep., CBA Rep., Town Planner, and Senior Center Director: R. Coyle moved to approve the creation of a temporary study group to be named "Senior Center Study Group", to be composed of a Commission on Aging Representative, At-Large Senior Center Representative, AARP Representative, (2)Community At-Large Representatives, Parent Representative, Youth Services Representative, Parks & Recreation Commission Representative, CBA Representative, Town Planner, and Senior Center Director, seconded by G. Cordova. Unanimously approved. MOTION CARRIED.

Attachment

Possible projects for Commission on Aging

7/9/09

1. Monitoring legislation at the State level in Hartford and advocating on behalf of seniors;
2. Working with the Colchester Senior Center to assemble, publish and distribute additional informational handouts which would list contacts and programs which are available to and of general interest to seniors;
3. Increasing the presence of the Commission by sending liaisons to functions held at senior residences;
4. Investigating possible community/senior liaisons to increase the benefits to both sectors;
5. Working with Mr. Robert Gustafson, the manager of the Town of Colchester Housing Authority housing complexes, to address issues and needs raised by seniors who have applied for housing because they are at risk in their homes and are not likely to be granted housing because of the length of the waiting list. Mr. Gustafson reports that there are currently 53 people on the waiting list for a total of 70 units which are all currently filled;
6. Evaluate Senior Center programs against guidelines of Accreditation process;
7. Propose possible new Senior Center programs;
8. Facilitate Senior Center facelift; and
9. Any other projects that would benefit Colchester seniors.