

**Colchester Commission on Aging
Meeting Minutes**

August 12, 2013

NANCY A. BRAY
TOWN CLERK



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I. Call to order

The meeting was called to order by Chair Rose Levine at 8:40 AM at Colchester Town Hall.

Members Present: Chair Rose Levine, Marilyn Finnegan, Jean Stawicki, Gary Sidell, Rob Gustafson, Joe Menhart

Members Absent: Betty Ann Oppelt, Goldie Liverant

Others Present: Senior Center Director Patty Watts, First Selectman Gregg Schuster, BOS Liaison Rosemary Coyle, Mary Tomasi, Civics Student

II. Minutes: Approval of the July Minutes was postponed to the next meeting due to their current unavailability. Clerk Michelle Komoroski was not able to attend today.

III. Financial Report: Marilyn Finnegan reported that the daily transportation for July was \$218, trips \$132: Total-\$350. Year to date in July was \$3617.00. Discussion followed on why this report was done each month. Apparently it was a request from the DOT grant to keep these records and report monthly expenditures. Patty Watts reported that the DOT Grant has been renewed for \$33,000 for new fiscal year. Discussion followed on the use of the fund established at the center under the term of Director Kathy Russi. She had hoped the fund would assist w/the building of a new Senior Center. This fund will now be the operating budget for the center under Director Patty Watts. Our Commission Clerk is paid out of this fund at \$60 per month. Patty reports that no taxpayer money will be designated for center operations due to this fund, which was acquired from donations and fundraisers. Patty has begun to book some reasonably priced entertainment, an activity not seen on the calendar for a while. She hopes to also have revenue producing activities as well.

IV. Chairman's Report: Rose Levine reported on the great success of the retirement party for Priscilla Clesowich. The Commission presented her with a Gift Certificate for a hand-made personalized quilt.

A list of dates for presentations and important meetings prior to the Special Town Meeting and Referendum for the Combined Building Project was distributed. Members were encouraged to attend some of these meetings, and to speak or write about the project to educate voters who seem to need a better explanation of the worth and

financial benefits of a combined project. Discussion followed on the separation of the Senior Center space from the school and youth center. A locked door was mentioned by Liaison Rosemary Coyle Flyers and Fact sheets are being developed. Gary Sidell offered to speak at Northwoods, a target location for 55 and older folks who have not attended senior programs

- V. Senior Center Director's Report:** Patty Watts reported that a full house of 78 people attended the retirement party. That day actually saw traffic of over 100 people in and out of the center. The meal from TVCCA was a delicious surprise for all. It actually peaked more interest in the meal program at the center. Patty heard from one Senior that she thought the meals at the center were made from leftover foods from the Food Bank! Meal participation is now improving, and attendance has been increasing at a steady rate. Donna is tracking new inquiries. Applications for Program Coordinator produced four strong candidates to be interviewed. The façade project is coming along. Door and shutters done. Bacon Board of Trustees was asked to paint the sign but they have no budget. The space in the center has been mostly de-cluttered and will be re-configured for better use of space. The sign in desk has been moved and will be manned with a greeter. New attendees will be welcomed and oriented to the programs. The main hallway is also being turned into a better space to get information and a photographer will begin work on a photo gallery there. Commission members expressed their willingness to volunteer with any projects.
- VI. Guest: First Selectman Gregg Schuster:** Mr. Schuster asked the Commission to put aside the center for the moment and understand that some seniors in the town will never use it. We must not forget that our focus is not just the center but the whole Senior population. He charged the Commission to do outreach and impart and receive information about this population. He reported that some seniors impacted by the economy are moving away from Colchester and Connecticut. He would like us to invite Val Gaeto and Cheryl Hansen to meet about Town Prescription Card and Elderly Tax Relief Program which are not used to their potential. These two department heads work with Seniors as well and can tell us how many are using the Food Bank, and what their other needs are. Chair Levine responded that one of the goals of the Commission is to partner more with town departments and have scheduled their next meeting with the housing authority. Senior at Risk is a huge priority. TRIAD will begin to meet again when new resident trooper is announced. First Selectman Schuster reported that transfers of troopers have not been announced as yet.
- VII. Old Business:** Gary Sidell asked about the Resource Guide project and offered assistance. Chair Levine is hoping to have this published on-line and in print in September. Jean Stawicki offered to send Proposed Charter Changes to Liaison Rosemary Coyle for review

VIII. Adjourned 10:15 AM

IX. Respectfully submitted by: Rose M. Levine