

Commission on Aging  
November 9, 2020 – Regular Meeting  
Zoom Meeting

**MEMBERS PRESENT:** Chair Marjorie Mlodzinski, Vice Chair Nan Wasniewski, Roberta Avery, Linda Pasternak, Jean Stawicki, Gerrie Transue.

**MEMBERS ABSENT:** Sandy Gaetano.

**OTHERS PRESENT:** Board of Selectmen Liaison Rosemary Coyle, Board of Education Liaison Mary Tomasi, Senior Center Director Patty Watts, Cathy Russi

## 1. CALL TO ORDER

Chair Marjorie Mlodzinski called this Regular Meeting to order at 8:30 am.

## 2. PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

Chair Mlodzinski led the committee members in the Pledge of Allegiance.

## 3. ADDITIONS TO THE AGENDA

No additions were requested. Chair Mlodzinski requested moving Item 9.1 up in the agenda as N. Wasniewski needed to leave early.

**Motion by:** G. Transue

to move Item 9.1 Norton Park Committee Report to become Item 3.1.

**Second by:** R. Avery.

**Vote:** Unanimous to approve.

### 3.1 Norton Park Committee

N. Wasniewski said the Committee is planning a Zoom Public Forum for November 23, 2020, at 6:00 pm sponsored by the Library as one of their monthly programs. A power point presentation will be made with the goals, purpose and fundraising activities for the proposed park. The Town website and the Library website will have the Zoom information.

## 4. CITIZENS' COMMENTS

C. Russi stated her support for the new Senior Center and asked several questions about the number of non-resident members of the Center, trip/ride count and the proposed March date of the referendum.

## 5. REVIEW AND APPROVAL OF OCTOBER 13, 2020, MINUTES

The October 13, 2020 minutes were presented for approval.

**Motion by:** L. Pasternak

to approve the minutes as read.

**Second by:** G. Transue.

**Vote:** Abstaining: G. Transue, R. Avery (absent from meeting).

In favor: All others present. Approved.

## 6. FINANCIAL REPORT

### 6.1 CoA

Treasurer R. Avery noted that the amounts were the same - \$416.26 in the CoA budget and \$300 in the Printing & Publications line item.

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MAYOR MLODZINSKI  
CLERK

6.2 Senior Center

Director Watts presented the following report:

TRANSPORTATION ITEMIZATION FOR OCTOBER 2020

Daily Transportation	10/31/20	\$190.00	Total
Trips	10/31/20	0.00	Total
Combined Total		\$190.00	
Year to Date		<u>\$230.00</u>	

An error in reporting in July added \$40 to the year to date total.

**7. CHAIR REPORT**

Chair Mlodzinski noted a very successful AARP debate for the recent election. R. Avery is a member of the local chapter of AARP and of the new Inclusion and Diversity Committee. R. Avery said the committee is asking other committee members to speak at the Inclusion and Diversity meetings. P. Watts is scheduled for the December 22, meeting to discuss the Senior Center.

Chair Mlodzinski said the Town has had several Covid-19 testing dates and that testing is available every day at Dodd Stadium in Norwich.

The Long-Term Recovery Committee has identified needs of the community regarding the pandemic. The Board of Selectmen have recently accepted their report and revised the committee's charge to include implementation of recommendations. The Committee is helping with a "Restaurant Week" planned in early December to offer support to the local restaurants.

N. Wasniewski and M. Tomasi left at the end of this discussion.

**8. DIRECTOR OF SENIOR SERVICES REPORT**

See attached report.

**9. OLD BUSINESS**

9.1 Senior Center Building Committee

Chair Mlodzinski said eight proposals have been received for Project Manager. The interviews will be done on Thursday for the final three. Cost estimates have been submitted for review. The next step would be to present the proposal to the Board of Selectmen and they will then send their recommendation to the Board of Finance.

9.2 Norton Park Committee

Presented as Item 3.1.

9.3. Senior Center Resource Guide

The Senior Center Resource Guide was sent to each commission member for final review.

Very minor changes are needed, pages were reduced from 16 to 11. A price quote will be the next step for printing this month.

**Motion by:** R. Avery

to spend up to \$300 to print the revised Senior Center Resource Guide.

**Second by:** L. Pasternak.

**Vote:** Unanimous to approve by those present.

9.4 Re-Opening of Senior Center

Director Watts stated in her report that the re-opening will be further delayed and at this time they are in a holding pattern, working with Chatham Health, until numbers drop and there is a leveling off for at least four weeks.

**10. NEW BUSINESS**

10.1 2021 Meeting Dates

A schedule of Commission on Aging meeting dates for 2021 must be submitted to the Town and State in a timely manner.

**Motion by:** L. Pasternak

to approve the meeting dates for 2021, as presented.

**Second by:** R. Avery.

**Vote:** Unanimous to approve.

**11. COMMISSION MEMBERSHIP**

At this time, the committee is at full membership with seven members, however, there are two vacant alternate positions.

**12. CITIZENS' COMMENTS**

C. Russi thanked the Commission members for their work and mentioned a possible holiday box donation for one of the local apartment complexes.

**13. ADJOURNMENT**

**Motion by:** R. Avery

to adjourn this meeting.

**Second by:** L. Pasternak.

**Vote:** Unanimous to approve.

Chair Mlodzinski adjourned this meeting at 9:19 am.

Respectfully submitted,

Mary Jane Slade  
Clerk



## COA Meeting-November 9, 2020

Though our building is still not open to the public, we continue to provide the following services:

- Transportation for in-town, medical rides and monthly shopping trips (masked and socially distanced)
- Meals: MOW deliveries (Tuesday-Friday) and Community Café (5 frozen meals delivered every Tuesday)
- Wellness Check outreach calls-these are now happening once per month, unless otherwise requested
- Virtual Programming with at least 1 in-person safely distanced special event per month (November has 3).
- Weekly communications through email blasts and robo-calls to all members
- Management of the office: volume of phone calls have remained steady, paying bills, grant reports, management of social media, etc.
- Building is closed, but people can call in to make an appointment for any one-on-one assistance which cannot be handled by phone. (masked and socially distanced)

We are in the approval stages of the Regional Reopening Plan, which was developed cooperatively between Chatham Health District senior centers. It is in final draft form. Russ Melmed, CHD Director has approved it and now it has been sent to Mary Bylone, First Selectman and Sean Shoemaker, Emergency Services Director to gain their approval. Final step will be to share it with our members (including the CoA) as it's meant to be a public document. Our hope is that it will help to set appropriate expectations for the reopening.

Due to increased numbers of positive COVID tests in town and the outbreak of COVID-19 at Harrington Court, the Chatham Health District advised us to push back our reopening plan, which had been scheduled for July 1<sup>st</sup>, September 1<sup>st</sup>, October 13<sup>th</sup>, and then November 2<sup>nd</sup>, but Colchester remains at an Orange Alert level and it was not advisable. We will not be projecting a new date moving forward but instead will wait for the case levels to drop and then look for a leveling off for at least 4 weeks. This will also give us adequate time to complete our self-certification for the State and make sure we are ready for a safe reopening.

I had a "Reopening our Senior Center Q & A" session via Zoom on November 3<sup>rd</sup>, which had 10 attendees. We decided to hold these once monthly until we can reopen safely.

We've reintroduced the monthly shopping trips, due to requests from citizens. To keep the numbers within safe limits for social distancing, the capacity is capped at 5 seated passengers, with 1 passenger in a wheelchair. We will offer 2 shopping trips to meet the demand, if needed.

There are 2 Open Enrollment for Medicare events with Senior Resources. Appointments will be held via Zoom with Senior Resources providing equipment for the dates and technical assistance provided by CSC staff. Appointments are available Friday, November 13<sup>th</sup> and Friday, December 4<sup>th</sup>.

We've hired a new Program Coordinator. Ruth Reinwald joins our staff effective today. She has over 10 years in Therapeutic Recreation, program planning and supervision. She has worked primarily in a SNF setting, but is eager to work at a senior center. She is creative, has a friendly personality and I believe will be very well-liked by our staff and members. During her interview, she demonstrated her great program ideas and I was very impressed by her. It is wonderful to be fully staffed once again. We are having a Zoom based program so members can meet her on Monday, November 16<sup>th</sup> at 1:30 p.m. Please join us, if you're able. I'll have her join the CoA Zoom next month, as well, so you can meet and get to know her better.

Chestelm is generously providing a Thanksgiving meal packaged To-Go for our members on November 19<sup>th</sup>. Pre-registration is required.

The Colchester Rotary Club has gifted us with 1,500 surgical masks which are available for seniors who could benefit from them. We are distributing them through the Food Bank or for folks to pick up at the senior center (we meet them outside in the parking lot).

The Annual Holiday Fair and Open House has been cancelled for this year due to COVID-19. The Holiday Box Program collaboration with JJIS has been cancelled this year, as well. We are going to take a collection for needy seniors this year for a Holiday Stocking Project, where we will put stockings together with grocery gift cards and useful items to be delivered to people who would've normally receive a Holiday Box.

Our membership rates have picked up in recent weeks-many seem to be driven by a need for transportation, medical transportation in particular or new residents to Colchester. It's always helpful to have folks get plugged in at the senior center when they're new to town.

Winter Emergency Meal Packs went out last week to our Meals on Wheels clientele. These are the shelf-stable meals that are provided in the event that TVCCA cannot deliver meals to the senior center due to inclement weather.

**Attendance & Meals Served:**

- Meals delivered in September: Community Café: 222 MOW: 364
- Monthly transports in September: 570
- Monthly attendance in September: 866
- Total Membership: 1,297