

Commission on Aging  
December 14, 2020 – Regular Meeting  
Zoom Meeting

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

**MEMBERS ABSENT:** Sandy Gaetano, Gerrie Transue.

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

**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 members in the Pledge of Allegiance.

**3. ADDITONS TO THE AGENDA**

No additions were requested.

J. Stawicki left the meeting .

**4. INTRODUCTION OF RUTH REINWALD, PROGRAM COORDINATOR**

Director Watts introduced new Program Coordinator Ruth Reinwald. R. Reinwald's background is in the arts and she hopes to bring some new programs to the center. Today is the first lesson for learning sign language.

**5. CITIZENS' COMMENT**

C. Russi said she enjoyed Director Watts' presentation to the Long-Term Recovery Program Committee last week. C. Russi said she would like to volunteer and feels there is a need to get the word out about the new Senior Center and suggested a raise in the fee for out of town citizens due to the overall lack of revenue.

**6. REVIEW AND APPROVAL OF NOVEMBER 9, 2020, MINUTES**

Minutes of the November 9, 2020, Regular Meeting were presented for review and approval.

**Motion by:** L. Pasternak

to approve the minutes of the November 9, 2020, meeting as read.

**Second by:** R. Avery.

**Vote:** Unanimous to approve.

**7. FINANCIAL REPORT**

**7.1 CoA**

R. Avery reported no change in the CoA budget of \$416.26, however, the cost of printing the Senior Resource Guide was \$300 and that will zero out the Printing and Publications line item.

**7.2 Senior Center**

Director Watts reported the following:

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2020 DEC 15 AM 8:43  
J. Stawicki

Transportation Itemization for November 2020

Daily Transportation	11/30/20	\$0.00
Trips	11/30/20	0.00
Combined Total		0.00
Year to Date Total		\$230.00

**8. CHAIR REPORT**

Chair Mlodzinski noted that the Town is offering Covid-19 tests on December 14, 21 and 28. This is a drive through test at the former Citizens Bank on Norwich Avenue.

There will be a (sports) field educational forum held on Monday, December 14 at 6 p.m. via Zoom. There will be an opportunity for people to ask questions following the presentation by Director of Public Works Jim Paggioli. The presentation is on the website for review prior to the meeting.

The AARP meetings are on hold for now. No news on the June installation luncheon.

The Town Diversity and Inclusion Committee has been meeting regularly.

The Long-Term Recovery Committee has had guests Recreation Director Tiffany Quinn, Social Services Director Val Geato and Senior Services Director Patty Watts to discuss how to best help to move ahead and serve those seeking their services. A main focus has been the mental health issue.

**9. DIRECTOR OF SENIOR SERVICES REPORT**

See attached.

**10. OLD BUSINESS**

**10.1 Senior Center Building Committee**

The committee has hired a third party to estimate the cost. When the estimate is completed, this amount will be presented to the Board of Selectmen and Board of Finance for a possible March or April referendum.

**10.2 Norton Park Committee**

N. Wasniewski stated the Norton Park Committee is involved in a fundraising project and have sold all the memorial benches that were offered. As this is a self-funded project, there is a need for monetary funds to do the work necessary to turn this land into a park. The committee is also pursuing grants. Recently a very successful Zoom power point public forum was held to inform the public of the background of the park area and the plan for the park.

**10.3 Senior Center Resource Guide**

A new cover to show more diversity was chosen for the Guide and two new pages were added to accommodate printing. Two hundred copies of a now 12 page guide were printed at a cost of \$300. Chair Mlodzinski thanked J. Stawicki, L. Pasternak, R. Avery and P. Watts for their help in putting the guide together. It is available on the Town website and Director Watts will update the Senior Center page with the guide.

10.4 Reopening of Senior Center

Director Watts said they are no longer projecting reopening dates. Colchester is now a red zone as most towns in Connecticut are. P. Watts said while the building is closed, this is looked at as a scaling up of services. Chatham Health Department will assess the situation regularly and will determine the reopening date. No timeline has been given for availability of the vaccine.

**11. COMMISSION MEMBERSHIP**

Members S. Gaetano, R. Avery and G. Transue have been re-appointed to another term.

R. Avery has been sworn in and S. Gaetano and G. Transue must do so before the next meeting to be able to vote.

**12. CITIZENS' COMMENTS**

C. Russi stated the Resource Guide looks great and thanked the Commission members for their hard work. C. Russi wished members a Happy Hanukah and Merry Christmas.

Chair Mlodzinski said continue to have faith, hope and soon joy with the coming of the vaccine.

**13. ADJOURNMENT**

**Motion by:** R. Avery  
to adjourn the meeting.

**Second by:** L. Pasternak

**Vote:** Unanimous to approve.

Chair Mlodzinski adjourned this meeting at 9:18 am with

Respectfully submitted,

Mary Jane Slade  
Clerk

## COA Meeting-December 14, 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.
- 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)

Regional Reopening Plan has been approved by the First Selectman and Director of Emergency Management. I conducted a staff training last Wednesday. If we can put it on the agenda next month, I can review it with all CoA members next month.

Colchester remains at a Red Alert status, as far as COVID-19. Once cases begin to trend in the right direction, CHD will be looking for a minimum of 4 weeks of stability before recommending that we reopen the senior center building to the public. The doors remain locked, with information to call in for assistance. A doorbell was also installed at the rear entrance, so we can know if anyone is waiting outdoors for us.

During the recent wind storms, three panes of glass blew out of the windows. One was repaired, but replacement glass had to be ordered for the other two. A piece of plexiglass has been fastened to the window temporarily.

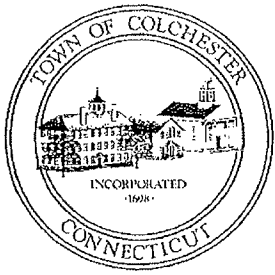
We will offer 2 shopping trips to meet the demand, if needed. To keep the numbers within safe limits for social distancing, the capacity is capped at 5 seated passengers, with 1 passenger in a wheelchair. We have kept these in place through December and will reassess for January, depending on COVID positivity rates.

We served 20 citizens through our 2 open enrollment events. This year Senior Resources assisted Medicare beneficiaries through telehealth type appointments. This seemed to work well, despite not having them onsite.

Last month, I reported that Chestelm was providing a free Thanksgiving Meal To-Go, unfortunately, they had to cancel this meal when members of their dining services department became ill, and it was deemed unwise to proceed. They will be providing another meal in the future and the people who were registered will be prioritized, if space is limited.

The Holiday Stocking Project has been an overwhelming success. We had a goal of collecting enough funding to provide 25 stockings, but through the generosity of the community will be delivering over 60 stockings. We will be making the deliveries on December 22<sup>nd</sup>. Stockings will contain grocery gift cards, useful items (masks, hand sanitizer, Kleenex, etc.) and fun seasonal items and treats, as well.

We have some fun upcoming seasonal programs scheduled: We offered a Special Black Friday Bingo, with gift card prizes, a Make and Take Holiday Ornament Craft through Zoom with Ruth and a Hanukkah



# *Town of Colchester, Connecticut*

95 Norwich Avenue, Colchester, Connecticut 06415

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Patricia A. Watts, Director of Senior Services/Municipal Agent

## **Transportation Itemization for November 2020**

<b>Item</b>	<b>Date</b>	<b>Amount</b>
Daily Transportation	11/31/2020	\$0.00    Total

Trips	11/31/2020	\$0.00    Total
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Combined Total	\$0.00
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Year to Date Total	\$230.00
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