

Commission on Aging
February 8, 2021 – Regular Meeting
Zoom Meeting

MEMBERS PRESENT: Chair Marjorie Mlodzinski, Vice Chair Nan Wasniewski, Treasurer Roberta Avery, Secretary Gerrie Transue, Linda Pasternak.

MEMBERS ABSENT: Sandy Gaetano.

OTHERS PRESENT: Board of Selectmen(BOS) Liaison Rosemary Coyle, Board of Education (BOE) Liaison Mary Tomasi, Senior Center Director Patty Watts, Cathy Russi, Nola Weston, Roseanne Tousignant, Donna Paty.

1. CALL TO ORDER

Chair Marjorie Mlodzinski called this Regular Meeting to order at 8:31 am.

2. PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

Chair Mlodzinski led the commission in the pledge of allegiance.

3. ADDITIONS TO THE AGENDA

No additions were requested.

4. CITIZENS' COMMENTS

Chair Mlodzinski welcomed those attending the meeting.

C. Russi stated that moving forward, it would be important to get all the information about the new senior center out to the public, suggesting photos of the activities being held now to show how the center continues to serve.

5. REVIEW AND APPROVAL OF JANUARY 11, 2020 MINUTES

Motion by: N. Wasniewski

to approve the minutes with a correction to 9.1 to read, "M. Mlodzinski stated there was a join Board of Finance, Board of Selectmen, public presentation of the proposed senior center on January 21, 2021 . . . "

Second by: L. Pasternak.

Vote: Unanimous to approve as corrected by those present.

6. FINANCIAL REPORTS

6.1. CoA

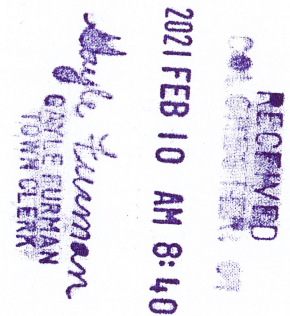
Treasurer R. Avery reported that the Printing & Publications line item is zero. The Commission received a \$100 donation bringing the account to \$516.26.

6.2. Senior Center

Director Watts noted that there were no deposits for this month. The Transportation Report is attached.

7. CHAIR REPORT

Chair Mlodzinski noted the Long-Term Recovery Committee has chosen mental health issues as a focus to find resources to help the community. The members would also like to find a way to assist with wellness calls through the Senior Center.



Free Covid-19 testing is available at the former Citizens Bank parking lot on February 17, 2021, from 11:00am - 2:00pm.

AARP is not meeting until April or later. AARP has stepped up their programs even for non-members.

R. Avery is a member of the Town Diversity and Inclusion Committee. They are working on a committee charge and deciding if this will become a full town committee.

Chatham Health held a Covid-19 vaccination clinic at the Senior Center on January 27, 2021. Every staff member from the health district was on hand as well as Senior Center staff. Every room was utilized, 124 vaccinations were given with a second dose clinic to be held on February 24, 2021. Chatham Health District is also doing contact tracing with the state. Due to the overwhelming amount of work Covid entails, along with all the other aspects of the health district, Chatham will be asking for more money in this year's budget. P. Watts commended Chatham on the smooth process of the clinic. CVS stores will be administering Covid vaccinations this week.

M. Tomasi stated the Board of Education has had their first Diversity and Inclusion Committee meeting with Joanne Rose as chair. The Board is busy with the budget. Contact tracing at the schools for the virus has shown very little in school transmission. There will be a Latino and Black Culture class added to the curriculum. K-5 students are full time and middle school and high school students are on a hybrid school day. The Historical Society has sold out of their recent printing of a new Colchester book on the history of the town.

8. DIRECTOR OF SENIOR SERVICES REPORT

See attached.

9. OLD BUSINESS

9.1. Senior Center Building Committee

M. Mlodzinski reported on the recent joint meeting with the Board of Finance and the Board of Selectmen regarding the new Senior Center project. The focus now will be on outreach to the public for information about the center and Chair Mlodzinski hopes that the CoA members can be involved, with a newsletter, fact sheet, etc. Suggestions were given for getting the information out to the community about the project and the referendum date in late June.

9.2. Norton Park Committee

N. Wasniewski stated fundraising is ongoing, a letter will be sent to neighbors within a two mile radius explaining the project and its benefits. The adjacent house to the property is slated for demolition and the property will become part of the park. A public forum is planned for March 26, 2021 through the library.

9.3. Reopening of Senior Center

Director Watts said the reopening is on hold until further notice. The numbers of infections must come down for a four week timeframe before the Chatham Health Department will allow the reopening. At this time, Colchester is still in the red zone. The Senior Center is continuing to serve the community in many ways even though closed to the public.

9.4. Programs for 2021

Chair Mlodzinski has spoken with K. Sortwell from the Alzheimers' Association and with Jill Lavasseur from Bacon Academy. Last year the students planned a program about "Food, Stuff, Energy & Water", and a program with K. Sortwell was also planned, however, due to the virus the programs were put on hold. M. Mlodzinski will coordinate with Senior Center Program Coordinator Ruth Reinwald for possible dates to hold these programs.

10. NEW BUSINESS

10.1. CoA Public Outreach/Education for New Senior Center

Chair Mlodzinski would like to see Commission members help with the outreach to citizens for the new center. Each member of this commission has a group or two that they belong to and could reach out to those citizens.

10.2. Review Committee for Senior Center's Policies and Procedures Manual

Director Watts noted that existing policies should be reviewed prior to the new Senior Center opening. Several members offered to be on the committee.

11. COMMISSION MEMBERSHIP

At this time, there is one regular member vacancy and two alternate vacancies.

12. CITIZEN'S COMMENTS

C. Russi thanked the commission for their work to get the word out about the senior center, to remember to include nursing homes and churches and intergenerational groups. C. Russi is willing to help with wellness calls.

13. ADJOURNMENT

Motion by: R. Avery
to adjourn the meeting.

Second by: L. Pasternak.

Vote: Unanimous to approve.

Chair Mlodzinski adjourned this meeting at 9:28 am.

Respectfully submitted,

Mary Jane Slade
Clerk

COA Meeting-February 8, 2021

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)

In partnership with Chatham Health District, the Colchester Senior Center hosted a successful COVID-19 Vaccination Clinic for those 75 and over. We were the first senior center to host in the district and the day ran very smoothly. 124 people received vaccines in January 27th, with a 2nd Dose Clinic scheduled for February 24th. We were proud to be able to provide this vital community service. The need is great. When we advertised to opportunity to our members, we received nearly 600 calls and filled the appointments in the first hour.

Membership is growing steadily, with many people interested in being connected to the information provided throughout the pandemic, especially related to COVID vaccine distribution, Economic Impact Payments and AARP Tax Aide services.

Colchester remains at a Red Alert status, as far as COVID-19, although for 2 reporting periods there has been a decline in rates of positive cases. 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, but people may call in or ring the doorbell for assistance. We are serving people by appointment only. Town Hall is also closed to the public, except by appointment through the end of the month of February 2021, as well.

AARP's Tax Aide program will begin by appointment, effective February 19th. There are many new rules from AARP to insure the safety of volunteers and recipients including the ability to wait while documents are scanned, or drop off documents. Face-to-face interactions will be limited to no more than 15 minutes. Because we are closed to the public, we can spread the program out throughout the building. There will be appointments of Fridays and Wednesdays, however capacity is still substantially less than previous years. We have an extensive wait list and are now referring people to VITA services through TVCCA.

Throughout the month of February, we are holding our annual fundraiser for the American Heart Association and we observed Go Red for Women on Friday, February 5th for a Zoom based group photo.

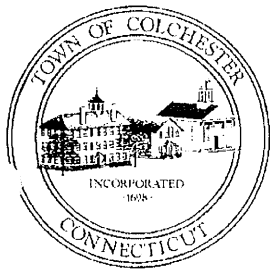
We were awarded a \$2,500 grant through the State Department of Aging and Disability Services. This will help defray cost of items required to serve our members during the pandemic.

We are looking forward to working with the SCBC to start the Community Outreach part of the new senior center project—sharing the design of the building and how that would positively impact our programs and services.

CSC will be closed on Monday, February 15th in observation of Presidents' Day.

Attendance & Meals Served:

- Meals delivered in December: Community Café: 232 MOW: 451
- Monthly transports in December: 559
- Monthly attendance in December: 1024
- Total Membership: 1336



Town of Colchester, Connecticut

95 Norwich Avenue, Colchester, Connecticut 06415

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

Transportation Itemization for January 2021

Item	Date	Amount
Daily Transportation	1/03/2021	\$0.00 Total
Trips	1/03/2021	\$0.00 Total
Combined Total		\$0.00
Year to Date Total		\$383.50