

## DARIEN SOCIAL SERVICES COMMISSION

### Minutes of Meeting of February 10th, 2012

**Present:** Olive Hauser, Jennifer Geddes, Inta Adams. Melisse Reardon, Holly Hawes, Ali Ramsteck, Polly Lowman, Nancy Herling, Rachel Martin, Beverly Kelsey

**Guests:** Frank Kemp, Sarah Seeley from the RTM

**Minutes:** Minutes of the meeting of January 13<sup>th</sup> were approved as presented.

#### **Agenda Items Covered:**

**1. Charter Review:**

RTM members Frank Kemp and Sarah Seeley explained the Charter Review process underway: The objective is to update our Town Charter to accurately reflect current practices.

Olive pointed out that DSSC is the only commission with term limits and mentioned issues relating to how we handle the budget process, which, in practice, differs from the process called for in the Charter.

Frank and Sarah stated that recommended changes will be published in a town notice, a public hearing will be held, and after sixty days, a vote on said changes is taken by the RTM.

**2. Welcome to new commission member Rachel Martin:**

Rachel comes to the commission with a fourteen year background in marketing.

**3. Performance Measures 2012:**

Olive distributed the updated performance measures for 2012 which was reviewed and presented to the Board of Selectmen prior to the representation of our 2012 budget request.

**4. Budget Update:**

Karl presented his recommendations for our DSS budget to the Selectmen at a meeting that Olive attended. All the items the department requested remained with a few reductions we can live with. The additional 4.5 hours a week for Ali remained untouched.

Olive pointed out that the category previously termed "emergency assistance" has been changed to "Essential Needs" to more accurately represent their use.

- 5. Home Goods Closet:**  
Olive mentioned that we hope to expand the number of people who use the Home Goods Closet. It is currently accessed primarily by families and less by seniors.
- 6. Taxi Voucher Program:**  
The Taxi Voucher program will end as of July 1, 2012 due to its underutilization. Aging in Place + Gallivant is providing more options for transportation by volunteer drivers, a new car and an additional paid driver. We'll direct the present Taxi voucher users to AIP + Gallivant.
- 7. Update on the Allen O'Neill project:**  
It was reported that the Housing Authority has been making progress on the relocation of residents affected by the construction, with consideration being given to families with Darien school children to remain on site.
- 8. Update on Energy Assistance:**  
Although there continues to be a shortfall in Energy Assistance funds received by qualified clients from last year to the current; some additional funds have been added to the program.
- 9. Report on the Commission on Aging:**  
Jennifer Geddes reported that a proposal has been made to raise the income guidelines for assistance to seniors and to increase the benefit received by veterans. Jennifer will keep us updated throughout the process.
- 10. Other Business:**  
There being no other business , the meeting was adorned .

Respectfully Submitted:

Beverly Kelsey