

**TOWN OF DARIEN
COMMISSION ON AGING
REGULAR MEETING
MARCH 18, 2015**

ATTENDANCE: Joe Pankowski, Chair; Jennifer Geddes, Arden Anderson-Broecking, Ray Slavin, Robin Woods, Mary McCarthy

STAFF: Beth Paris, Human Services

OTHERS: Jan Raymond, Darien Housing Authority Chairman

CALL TO ORDER.

Mr. Pankowski called the meeting to order at 9:03 a.m. A quorum was present.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

**** MS. ANDERSON-BROECKING MOVED THE MINUTES OF JANUARY 21, 2015**

**** MS. MCCARTHY SECONDED.**

**** THE MOTION TO APPROVE THE MINUTES OF JANUARY 21, 2015 AS SUBMITTED PASSED UNANIMOUSLY.**

SENIOR CENTER REPORT.

Ms. Paris said that the bad weather was a challenge, but whenever the Center was open, there were over 100 people at the Center. She gave a brief overview of the recent programs. Currently, there are 1,080 members up from six years ago when it was at 220. The final count is not done until the end of the month. There are 52 regular programs a week and many of them are done by volunteers. She said that at a recent Statewide meeting, she was told that the Mather Center offers the most programs in the State.

Ms. Paris said that working with Human Services had been a strong benefits for the seniors. She said that in the past month, there have been a number of calls from all over the country from concerned family members about their elderly Darien relatives. Ms. Paris said that with each of those calls, she was able to provide information, reassure the caller and then pass along the information to Human Services.

Ms. Paris submitted the reports for February and January. (See attached)

HUMAN SERVICES REPORT.

Ms. Hauser was not able to attend the meeting.

DISCUSSION OF POSSIBLE PLANS FOR OLD TOWN HALL HOMES WITH MS. JAN RAYMOND, CHAIRMAN OF THE DARIEN HOUSING AUTHORITY.

Ms. Jan Raymond, the Darien Housing Authority chairman, spoke about the plans for Old Town Homes. She said that the Heights had been completed for a few years. The Authority has now had the chance to evaluate the project. An RFP has been released for the Town Houses, and there is a potential proposal for 55 units in one building after the current site is demolished. There will be a common space and an elevator. With the multiple buildings and the laundry and common areas in separate buildings, the residents do not have enough contact with others.

A resident participation plan is underway. This will insure the fact that the tenants will have input into the plan, and know what they need.

The Housing Authority meets every month, but experienced a change of schedule over the past few months due to the weather. The Authority values input from all of their groups. She listed the various amenities, including the fact that people will be able to access the laundry facilities without going outside. If the tenants wish to have their laundry facilities in their apartments, there is an option of renting them for a very low cost.

Ms. Raymond said that currently, the Authority is not asking Planning and Zoning for permission for anything, but simply presenting a preliminary plan for their input.

Every tenant that is currently in residence in the 30 units will be relocated at the cost of the Authority. Any difference between the resident's current rent and the rent for the relocation will be provided by the Authority. She said that the law requires the residents who are relocated to be moved back into the new facility within a year.

Ms. Anderson-Broecking said that many of issues have been handled promptly. The biggest problem is tenant apathy. She said that she was concerned about the fact that there were 30 people whose lives will be affected by this. The new plan sounds very good, particularly the fact that there will be an elevator.

Ms. Raymond said that the current buildings were constructed in 1988 and obviously to code, but had metal outside stairs. In the new design, there will be no efficiency apartments. All of them will be one bedrooms. Attention is also being given to air quality and light. Ms. Raymond said that she was optimistic that when the Planning and Zoning reviews this plan, they will be pleased.

Mr. Pankowski asked about the increase in the number of units from 30 to 55. Ms. Raymond said that these will be age restriction of 62 years and up with the exception of disabled residents who will have no age restriction.

The discussion then moved to the zoning heights and potential variances that might be needed.

Ms. Raymond said that the development will have a larger range of incomes than the current facility does at this time. The Authority has already contacted an advocacy group, HERC, which works with seniors who have to relocate. The group can arrange to come in and pack up the apartment and put the items into storage. The group compiles a list of what the tenant requires, such as a first floor apartment, access to a public transportation line or other issues.

**** MR. PANKOWSKI MOVED THAT THE COMMISSION ASK THE TOWN TO REASONABLE MAXIMIZE THE NUMBER OF UNITS AT THE DEVELOPMENT.**

**** MR. SLAVIN SECONDED.**

**** THE MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY.**

Ms. Raymond said the meetings are on the fourth Tuesday of the month at 6:30 p.m. at the Heights Community Room and all are welcomed. This month, the meeting will be on the 31st.

OLD BUSINESS.

There was no old business to discuss at this time.

NEW BUSINESS.

There was no new business to discuss at this time.

ADJOURNMENT.

**** MS. ANDERSON-BROECKING MOVED TO ADJOURN**

**** MR. SLAVIN SECONDED.**

**** THE MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY.**

The meeting adjourned at 9:40 a.m.

Respectfully submitted

S. L. Soltes
Telesco Secretarial Services

Town of Darien
Commission on Aging
Regular Meeting
March 18, 2015

Commission on Aging Report

Darien Senior Programs

February 18, 2015

Respectfully Submitted: Beth Paris, Director

Membership updates, renewals and new continue to be taken. Once again a very full calendar of offerings. Finalizing plans with At Home in Darien for a collaborative program to be presented on March 10th Living Vivally, Dynamically and Happily at Home featuring Dorothy Baker, Ph.D., R.N. Yale University School of Medicine. Open to Darien Residents only. Complimentary lunch and Learn. Also hosting Strategic planning session on March 5th for the At Home Darien Board and founders- all day session form 8:00am – 2:30 pm.

Health and Wellness Presentations: Ask the Nurse with *Ridgefield Visiting Nurse* (cancelled due to snow) Talking to Your Doctor Presented by **Visiting Nurse and Hospice of Fairfield County**: Talk to your Doctor-well attended. **Waveny LifeCare Network** information session on their Supportive service and local resources. **Stamford Hospital** : complimentary lunch and learn; Advance Directives & End of Life Issues.(canceled by speaker due to frigid temps and snow) **Ct Pharmacy** will be doing a Valentine Program on Heart Health.

Human Services will now have a full page of the Newsletter for ongoing announcements and pertinent information for the Senior Members.

Budget Presentation on February 4th to Board of Selectmen went well. Most of the facility management is going over to Public Works we are looking to have Program Specialist become a full time position.

Looking at current camera system for effectiveness and possible improvement. Staff is using the system more and more both day and evening... helpful tool.

Program Days: 16 (Closed for 2 Snow Days and Presidents Day) 1 Delayed opening

Monthly caregiver Educational Support Group: 8

At Home in Darien Referral: 5

Caregiver Options Counseling: 6

Human Services Referrals: 7

Mather Evening Use: 3

Human Services Referral: 8

EMS calls: 1

Highlighted Programs:

2nd : Blood Pressure

2nd Ask the Nurse: Complimentary Lunch and Learn with Ridgefield VNA

3rd: Trench Warfare with Art Gottlieb LCSW

4th: Garden Club of Darien "Pleasure through Plants"

4th Visiting Nurse & Hospice of Fairfield County "Talking to Your Doctor" Complimentary Lunch & Learn

10th Waveny Life Care Network Presentation

11th Entertainment with "TAVA" Belly Dancer

11th Iris Paper Folding-Theme St Patrick's Day

Highlighted Programs Continued

12th BINGO plus with Pam James

16th CLOSED for Presidents Day

17th Stamford Hospital "Advance Directives & End Of Life Issues" Complimentary Lunch

18th Ct Pharmacy presents "Heart Health"

24th Darien Library TBA

Ongoing Works in Progress

Late Spring Summer Program Planning

Budget Review

Monthly Newsletter

Daily Statistics

At Home in Darien Program

Building Issues: Paved Pathway to the Kitchen Door has upheaved...Can only partially open door.

Cleaning service remains in adequate to use. 3 Toilets have required escutcheon tightening...

Meetings Attended: Budget Session with BOS 2/4; SWCAA Meeting 2/11; 2/19 COA Meeting;

Represented SWCAA in a grant review of Edlerhouse in Norwalk project site evaluations; Grant Review

SWCAA Stratford Senior Services 2/25; 2/26 Office Visit Brightview Rep

Darien Senior Program

Quarterly Report: January 2015- March 2015

April 7, 2015

Respectfully Submitted: Beth Paris, Director

January Highlights:

Membership Renewal, updates and new membership along with a program survey were implemented. Membership drive will end in March and statistics will be tallied then for 2015. New membership is taken year round. Additional volunteer on Welcome Desk helping with this task...also taking updates by phone.

Collaborated with **At Home in Darien** to offer one program of a series with the Senior Program annual in the spring-this year's title "Living Vivally, Dynamically and Happily at Home.

Human Services started weekly office hours and meet and greets with Senior Membership-there is an opportunity for staff to meet on a one to one with members. One of the goals is for folks to understand the many resources available to them through Human Services.

Health and Wellness Presentations: Ct Pharmacy-Sleep Apnea; Synergy Home Care- Healthy Cooking & Baking; Stamford Hospital Complimentary Lunch And Learn- Fall Prevention

Program Days: 20

Monthly Caregiver Educational Support Group: 7

Caregiver Options: 8

Human Services Referrals: 7

At Home in Darien Referrals: 3

Mather Evening Use: 10

EMS calls: 1

February Highlights:

Finalized program with At Home in Darien –Speaker Dorothy Baker, Ph.D., RN Yale University School of Medicine. Open to Darien Residents Lecture at 11:00 Complimentary Lunch 12:00- March 10th... Also Membership Renewal update & program survey continue.

Weather was a factor this month impacting programs planned- not only the snow but extreme cold has impacted attendance. We will be rescheduling all programs that had to be cancelled... Luckily the Belly Dancer did not disappoint and even considering the cold 72 folks came out for a Moroccan Feast and a great entertainment.

Looking at our camera system for effectiveness and possible expansion. Staff is using the system more and more both day and evening...

Program Days: 16 2- Delayed Opening 2- Days Closed for Snow 1- Day Closed President's Day
Monthly Caregiver Educational Support: 8
Human Services Referral: 7
At Home in Darien Referral: 5
Caregiver Options: 3
Mather Evening Use: 3
EMS Calls: 1

March Highlights

Finished Update and Renewal of Membership will continue to take New Memberships through- out the year. We collaborated this Month with the Darien Youth Asset Team on an very intergenerational BINGO Program 25 Teens and 36 Seniors attended...Teens and Senior Program provided prizes and snacks. It was a wonderful interchange. Also collaborated on the 1st Annual Spring At Home in Darien and Darien Senior Programs Luncheon 82 Darien Residents participated in a presentation Living Vitality, Dynamically and happily at Home.

Three other Lunch and Learns were held: **Ridgefield VNA-“Myths and Facts About Hearing Loss”** Visiting **Nurse & Hospice of Fairfield County- :“What is Memory”** (also Memory Screens offered by appointment only) **Stamford Hospital : Colorectal Health**

New Classes: Wednesday Craft Classes themed and changing weekly 4 different volunteer instructors are coordinating projects and advertising in advance a month a time; Computer class: Your Personal Computer offered in a 3 week series; Ask the Banker a monthly program by appointment.

Program Days: 21 1 day Closed due to Snow 2 Delayed Openings
Monthly Caregiver Educational Support Group: 8
Human Services Referral: 10
At Home in Darien Referrals: 5
Caregiver Options: 3
Mather Evening Use:
EMS Calls: 0