

**TOWN OF DARIEN
COMMISSION ON AGING
REGULAR MEETING
JANUARY 15, 2014.**

ATTENDANCE: Joe Pankowski, Chair; Jennifer Geddes, Ron Heinbaugh, Tom Valentino, Robin Woods, Amy Squyres

STAFF: Olive Hauser, Human Resources; Beth Paris, Senior Center.

CALL TO ORDER.

Mr. Pankowski called the meeting at 9:00 a.m. A quorum was present.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES.

December 18, 2013 Meeting.

**** MS. GEDDES MOVED THE DECEMBER 18, 2013 MEETING**

**** MR. VALENTINO SECONDED.**

**** THE MOTION PASSED TO APPROVE THE DECEMBER 18, 2013 AS SUBMITTED PASSED UNANIMOUSLY.**

HUMAN SERVICES REPORT.

Ms. Hauser said that her office was very busy. The new Senior Resource Directory available. She then reviewed her report with the Commissioners.

SENIOR CENTER REPORT.

Ms. Paris presented her report. (See attached)

Discussion followed about the use of space in the Mather Community Center.

NEW BUSINESS.

Ms. Woods said that there was Building Committee meeting yesterday. The sky light is going in. She then listed the various changes, including the removal of a glass wall and installation of two steel beams in the work area.

Mr. Pankowski announced that new Town email addresses for Commission members would be created that would be part of "darien.gov" rather than having emails sent to personal email accounts.

OLD BUSINESS.

Ms. Squyres said that she had spoken to a former First Selectwoman about the snow shoveling for the seniors. The program is being expanded. Ms. Geddes said that the ordinance states that the walks must be cleared within 24 hour after it stops snowing. A lengthy discussion followed about the best way to handle these issues.

Mr. Pankowski said that he would not be in town for the February meeting and requested that Ms. Geddes chair the meeting.

ADJOURNMENT.

**** MS. WOODS MOVED TO ADJOURN.
** MS. GEDDES SECONDED.
** THE MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY**

The meeting adjourned at 10:00 a.m.

Respectfully submitted

Sharon L. Soltes
Telesco Secretarial Services

Darien Human Services Report
Olive Hauser, Director
Commission on Aging Meeting
1-15-14

The Heights, the redevelopment of the Allen O'Neill property is a little more than half full with fifty-eight homes occupied. We have been told that the tenants chosen for the remaining homes will receive notification this month. The initial move by returning and new residents had a few bumps but overall everything went very smoothly, from our perspective. The homes, the community building and surrounding grounds are very attractive. The interior of the homes are also very attractive and well designed. The community building is now home to The Heights and the Housing Authority staff. Nicole Jefferson has replaced Ford Gardner as property manager, Patti Santorella continues on as Nicole's assistant, as does Joe Strada as head of maintenance. The community building also offers several amenities to the residents such as a computer room, a lounge area and a workout room. We have heard that a playground will be built this summer.

Applications for the state and federally funded **Energy Assistance Program (EAP)** continue to be taken. In addition we are also taking applications for Operation Fuel as well as approving grants through other funds for individuals and families who don't meet EAP or Operation Fuel guidelines. Requests for emergency oil deliveries are coming in as the initial energy grants are used and the weather turns colder.

We have had a good deal of trouble getting applications certified through **NEON**. There is much confusion in the organization in general and it has certainly impacted the processing of energy applications. We have had to keep a constant eye on our applications and continuously call and advocate for many of our clients. This is both frustrating and time consuming. This is the second year that we have physically entered all the information into NEON's software for them. They only need to review the applications and grant or deny them.

The application process for **Operation Fuel** through their online portal has gone remarkably well. Operation Fuel is both quick to certify and quick to return an e-mail or a call. We are very excited to be able to use the monies allotted to us unlike previous years. In the past clients had to apply for Operation Fuel grants by going to NEON's office in Norwalk. It was very difficult to get an appointment and transportation was an issue for some.

The **Thanksgiving and Christmas programs** were very successful again this year. Our Christmas donors were very generous and although most donations came in during the last two weeks of the program, we were able to pull it all together and in the end it all worked out very well. The Human Services Commission, the Commission on Aging and Atria donated nineteen special baskets of gifts and treats for Darien Seniors. This was a 100% increase over last year:

Darien Senior Activities Center

Commission on Aging Report

January 15, 2014

Respectfully Submitted: Beth Paris, Coordinator

Membership renewal and new membership is underway. We will also be asking folks to fill out a brief programming survey. We continue to enjoy increases in membership and program participation. There is a lot of interest in the anticipation of opening the new building and we are curtailing some of our program scheduling toward that end. We offer 10-12 regular scheduled programs daily and will continue to.

Health & Wellness: Presentation by Nutrition Life Style Specialist Barbara Schmidt, MS, RDCD-N; Memory Games with Ct Pharmacy; Lunch & Learn with Stamford Hospital GI Issues in Aging; Medication Management with Walgreen's Pharmacy Manager Ashi;

New Year's Celebration with Ct Entertainment was well attended with over 50 participants; Historical Series w Art Gottlieb LCSW 42 folks attended; Cookie Martini had a great time presenting New Year New You to great group. Darien Library will present Romantic Music through the Ages at the end of January.

Monthly Caregiver Educational Support Program: 7

Caregiver Options Counseling: 8

Referrals to Human Services: 5

At Home in Darien Assists: 14

Highlighted Programs for January:

- 1st CLOSED
- 3rd AARP Chapter Meeting
- 6th Blood Pressure Screening
- 6th Lifestyle Nutritionist, Barbra Schmidt
- 7th Historical Lecture "Benito Mussolini"
- 8th Garden Club of Darien Flower Arranging Class
- 9th Ct Pharmacy " Exercise for a Healthy Brain"
- 10th Ask a Lawyer
- 13th Walgreen's Pharmacist Presents' Medication Management"
- 14th Cookie Martini presents "Fun Tips to Improve Your Life"
- 16th BINGO PLUS w Pam James
- 20th CLOSED Martin Luther King Observance
- 21st Stamford Hospital complimentary lunch and Lecture" GI issues and Aging"
- 23rd BINGO Plus
- 28th Darien Library Presents: Romantic Music Throughout the Ages

Ongoing Work in Progress:

Program Planning

Parks and Recreation/Senior Center Staff Meetings

Budget work 2014-2015

Monthly Newsletters

Daily Statistics

Strategies for Moving

Policy Manual review

Membership Renewal

Building Issues: Hot Water heater for kitchen has been replaced by a rental. Arrangements have been made for personnel from PW to check Boiler on a daily basis. Roof leaks will be checked again when weather permits.

Meetings: SWCAA Advisory Board; Senior Center SWCAA Advisory Board: Weekly Meeting P&R; COA Meeting; Information Session at Atria in Darien for residents.