

**TOWN OF DARIEN
COMMISSION ON AGING
REGULAR MEETING
APRIL 16, 2014**

ATTENDANCE: Joe Pankowski, Chair; Amy Squyres, Robin Wood, Ron Heinbaugh
(9:23 a.m.)

STAFF: Olive Hauser

CALL TO ORDER.

Mr. Pankowski called the meeting to order at 9:07 a.m. A quorum was not present.

SENIOR CENTER REPORT.

Mr. Pankowski said that Ms. Paris was not able to attend. The April Senior Center report is attached.

HUMAN SERVICES REPORT.

Ms. Hauser presented her report. See Attached.

There was a discussion about the increase in protective custody for seniors. Mr. Pankowski then gave a brief overview of conservatorship and related issues for the elderly.

Mr. Heinbaugh joined the meeting at 9:23 a.m.

Ms. Hauser spoke about the increase in guardianships in other states.

OLD BUSINESS.

Ms. Squyres said that At Home in Darien is also preparing to move into the new location. She said that there is a good core of volunteers and that the program is looking to expand the program to new clients. The Gallivant program has been reformatted and this has been a very positive change. There is now a large diversity in transportation choices. The discussion then moved to the history of the program and the owner of Howard Johnson's who actually started the Gallivant program by bringing seniors to his restaurant one night a week for a dinner special.

Ms. Woods reported that the Mather Center work is progressing. The kitchen is now enclosed and work is moving forward on the second floor. The costs figures are over budget, but this is due to asbestos removal and other construction surprises.

Mr. Pankowski said that when the Senior Center moves out of Edgerton property, there will be a question regarding the parcel. He said originally there was a charity that was willing to cover the cost of demolition. However, the support for the charity has dwindled. At the end of the day, the leadership in this area needs to come from the community. The original shuffle plan included having affordable senior housing on the parcel. However, until the Board of Education makes a definitive decision on the parcel, nothing can move forward. Discussion followed.

NEW BUSINESS.

There was no new business to discuss at this time.

ADJOURNMENT.

Mr. Pankowski adjourned the meeting at 9:45 a.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Sharon L. Soltes
Telesco Secretarial Services

Commission on Aging Report
Darien Senior Activities Center
April 16th, 2014

Respectfully Submitted: Beth Paris, Coordinator

April finds the Center members full of anticipation and suggestions for the move. As staff we continue to look at the upcoming calendar and continue to keep extra programming on the lighter side. Meetings are being held with Instructors to discuss flexibility in their schedules and room usage needs.

In the meantime membership is solid with 538 Darien Residents 221 Nonresidents. We are in the process of designing a new membership card that will be more concise and still have all pertinent info. The main phone number will be following us to Mather's Center –it had been changed over a year ago to 203 656-7490.

Members are concerned about how we will be notifying folks when the date and move are scheduled and the period of time we will be closed. We are working on a plan that includes newspaper notice, change in voice mail greeting; notice on the Webpage and Parks and Recreation site.

In the meantime we continue programming daily.

Monthly Caregiver Educational Support Group: 7

Caregiver Option Counseling: 5

Referrals to Human Services: 3

At Home in Darien Assist: 11

Program Days in April: 21

Highlighted Programs for April:

1st: Historical Series "Patrol Torpedo Boat 109" Art Gottlieb LCSW

2nd: Garden Club of Darien "Spring Flower Arranging

2nd & 16th & 23rd : Let's Talk with Alison Petro, MS Family Centers

4th AARP Chapter Meeting

4th Blue Notes Entertainment

7th Blood Pressure Screening

8th "Fun Facts" with Cookie Martini

9th Crafts w Kim Van Munching

9th Ct Pharmacy "When to take Your Medication for the Best Results"

10th Craft-Iris Paper Folding Workshop "Spring Cards"

15th Caregiver Educational Support Group Meeting

18th **CLOSED** for Good Friday

21st Walgreens Presented: Skin and Wound Care Information

22nd Darien Library: "Let's Play Ball"

24th BINGO Plus with Pam James

Ongoing Work in Progress

Program Planning Summer/Fall

Monthly Newsletter

Daily Statistic

Instructor Meetings regarding Scheduling

Organizing and Packing for the Move

Policy Manual updates

Building Issues: Dealing with storage and packing and keeping Center safe.

Meeting Attended: SWCAA Advisory Board; COA meeting (unable to attend due to PS vacation); Staff

Meeting 1x per week for organizational and move strategies

Commission on Aging
Darien Human Services Report
April 16,2014
Olive Hauser, Director

1. The Renter's Rebate program has been reinstated and opened to new applicants. The money has been returned through Gov. Malloy's budget and will be voted on in the middle of May.
2. The Energy Assistant Program (EAP) ended for oil customers on March 15th and will end for electric and gas customers on May 1st. Operation Fuel is also closed to anyone other than electric and gas customers as well. NEON made the energy program very difficult, whereas Operation Fuel applications went much more quickly and efficiently.
3. We had five Protective Services for the Elderly cases in the last quarter and continue to follow them into this quarter. This is very unusual but it may be the beginning of an unpleasant trend as the *Baby Boomers* grow older.
4. We have three seniors living in foreclosed or pre-foreclosed homes. Even with state EAP they are so low income that we had to help keep their homes heated this winter with additional funds. We continue to ask them to let us help them plan for an eventual move but all are unwilling to face the reality of their situation.
5. The final phase of *The Heights* will see all previous tenants returning and the last of the homes filled by mid-May.
6. The State Department of Social Services (DSS) is under a class action suit for not approving Medicaid applications in a timely manner. New staff is being hired to meet the demands of the suit. Hopefully we will begin to see an improvement in services.
7. New domestic violence (DVCC) legislation is being proposed which would insure that women or men leaving a family home would have access to financial assets. This is a huge issue and why people don't leave an abusive relationship. Other states are ahead of us and have already enacted this legislation.
8. The Darien Unit of the Salvation Army's base budget is \$4,000. Our kettle program brought in more than \$5,000. Our total budget is now \$9,000 to help seniors, singles and families alike.
9. With the exception of the RTM vote, our budget has passed through all meetings and votes without a significant issue. The final RTM vote will be in May.