

**TOWN OF DARIEN
COMMISSION ON AGING
REGULAR MEETING
SEPTEMBER 17, 2014**

ATTENDANCE: Joe Pankowski, Chair; Mary McCarthy, Amy Squyres, Gerri Genovese, Arden Anderson-Broecking, Ray Slavin, Ron Heinbaugh (9:09 a.m.)

STAFF: Olive Hauser, Human Services Director; Beth Paris, Senior Center Director (9:09 a.m.)

OTHERS: First Selectmen Jamie Stevenson

CALL TO ORDER.

Mr. Pankowski called the meeting to order at 9:05 a.m. A quorum was present.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES.

June 18, 2014 and July 16, 2014 Minutes

**** MR. SLAVIN MOVED THE MINUTES OF JUNE 18, 2014 AND JULY 16, 2014**

**** MS. SQUYRES SECONDED.**

**** THE MOTION TO APPROVE THE MINUTES OF JUNE 18, 2014 AND JULY 16, 2014 AS APPROVED PASSED UNANIMOUSLY.**

Mr. Pankowski introduced Ms. Arden Anderson Broecking as a new member of the Commission and said that Mr. Valentino had moved out of Darien during the summer.

HUMAN SERVICES REPORT.

Ms. Hauser presented her report. (See attached)

Ms. Paris and Mr. Heinbaugh joined the meeting at 9:09 a.m.

SENIOR CENTER REPORT.

Ms. Paris said that Ms. Hauser is heading up a wellness resource center in the Senior Center. On page 7 of the newsletter, the upper half will have information from Human Services and the lower half will contain information from the Department of Health.

Ms. Paris said that it was making a major difference being in the same building as Ms. Hauser. She then presented her report (See attached).

Most of the classes that came over from Edgerton have doubled or tripled in attendance. She said that the participants are seeing the Center not only as a welcoming place, but one that is focused on health and wellness. There has been a trend of participants in their mid-sixties coming in for the exercise desk. Anyone aged 55 and above can buy their lunch at the Center. New note pads with updated address have been received and the program listing is being updated to answer questions about the various classes.

Ms. Paris then displayed a copy of the safety plan for the wood shop, which includes a waiver form. This will be reviewed by the Town Attorney. First Selectman Stevenson suggested that there be signs posted on the various equipment.

Ms. Paris said that the paintings are being hung for the Open House event. She said that the Center would like to have showing of various Darien senior artists. Parks and Recreation has started using the downstairs classroom.

The elevator has been upgraded a few times and there are more upgrades planned.

NEW BUSINESS.

Mr. Pankowski said that one issue that needs to be discussed is the proposed CL&P rate hike. The current rate for all customers is \$16.00 regardless of how much energy is run. The proposed hike would raise the rate to \$25.00 per customer. This will put financial pressure on the seniors who live on fixed incomes. He suggested that a letter be sent to the Regulatory Board about this. Ms. McCarthy said that there were two letters online, one from Governor Mallory and one from Senator Blumenthal regarding this issue.

**** MR. SLAVIN MOVED TO AUTHORIZE MR. PANKOWSKI TO SEND A LETTER EXPRESSING THE COMMISSION'S CONCERNS REGARDING THE CL&P PROPOSED RATE HIKE TO THE APPROPRIATE PARTIES.**

****MR. HEINBAUGH SECONDED.**

**** THE MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY.**

OLD BUSINESS.

Ms. Squyres said that there had been meetings with the chef about the upcoming party. She reviewed the details about name tags, food and flowers. Discussion followed about sending an email to the RTM members personally inviting them to the event.

Mr. Slavin asked about the Veteran's Tax Relief. Mr. Pankowski said that the issue had been presented and had not passed.

Ms. Genovese said that it was good to have Mr. Slavin back.

ADJOURNMENT.

**** MS. SQUYRES MOVED TO ADJOURN.
** MS. GENOVESE SECONDED.
** THE MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY**

The meeting adjourned at 9:43 a.m.

Respectfully submitted

Sharon L. Soltes
Telesco Secretarial Services

Commission on Aging Meeting

Human Services Report

Olive Hauser, Director

- Applications for the Renter's Rebate program for eligible elderly and disabled residents will continue to be taken until October 1, 2014.
- We began taking Energy Assistance applications on September 15, 2014. We have attended training in Bridgeport with ABCD and will be working with a new web based program. Last winter was long and cold resulting in a number of seniors needing more help than their energy assistance provided. This year the oil is up to \$4 a gallon, there is a rate hike looming for electric customers and the weather is predicted to be as bad as last year.
- We are already making plans for the holidays. Based on our Back to School program we will definitely have more families this year and expect some additional seniors as well.
- Medicare Part D enrollment begins October 15, 2014 through December 7, 2014. Ali and Inta are ready to help individuals who are applying for the first and those who have questions or wish to change.
- A reprinting of our Senior Resource Directory has gone off to the printer and should be ready for the September 27th Health Fair at the Maher Center. ~~(See memo)~~

Commission on Aging Report

Darien Senior Program

September 17, 2014

Respectfully Submitted: Beth Paris, Director

August & September Highlight

The Senior Program has been in a state of settling in for the past 2 months. As there would be with any new buildings a lot to learn and things to adjust to. For the most part things are moving along nicely. The elevator did not become fully operational until mid-August and as has some issues with new repairs completed last week 9/5/2014. There are upgrades still to come.

The incredible news is there have been 94 (and counting) new members since opening July 21st

Darien Residents 59, Non-Residents 35. We have seen increased participation in all our current programs and even had to open up new time slots for a beginner ballet class, another sitting exercise program and added a new Tai Chi as well as an additional Pilates Class. Lunch has seen a daily increase with participant utilizing our meal program as well as stopping in for coffee and just to socialize—a new number we are charting...

Senior Program is now managing its own operational budget which has added to daily duties but is going well. Finance Department has been patient and supportive during this process. As we move forward we will have a more realistic view of the financial needs of the department as we operate out of Mather's.

Created an 11 page program description booklet

Manual and Waiver for Woodshop Donation Program Safety and Use Practices –Waiver Form now under review.

Ribbon Cutting Day will be well attended with 130 signed up for event, lunch and entertainment...

Monthly Caregiver Education Support Group: 8 (September only)

Caregiver Counseling Options: 7

Referrals To Human Services: 7

At Home in Darien: 4

Program Days August: 21 Program Days September: 21

Highlighted Programs August:

4th Blood Pressure Screening

4th Ridgefield VNA Complimentary Lunch and Learn “ Which Flu Shot is Right for You”

6th Alumni Swing Band Entertains

7th , 14th 21st, 28th Reminisce, Remember, Reflect -Geri Genovese

13th Ct Pharmacy resents “The Side Effects of Aging”

18th Walgreens Pharmacy Presents: “Immunizations”

19th Fun Facts with Cookie Martini-Useless Information
20th and 27th Let's Talk with Amanda Geffner

Highlighted Programs September:

1st CLOSED Labor Day
2nd Historical Presentation Art Gottlieb LCSW "USS Nautilus"
3rd AARP Driving Course
3rd and 17th Let's Talk w Amanda Geffner
8th Veteran Benefits Presentation with Ann James
9th Hollywood Fun Facts with Cookie Martini
10th Ct Pharmacy presents: Senior Eye Health
11th BINGO PLUS with Pam James
12th Intermediate and Beginner Bridge Classes Begin for the Season
15th Walgreens Pharmacy Information Session on Vitamins & Supplements
16th Stamford Hospital Complimentary Lunch and Learn "Happy Feet"
22nd Ribbon Cutting 11:30 Luncheon 12:00 and Entertainment with Joe Gilligan "Touch of Sinatra"
24th Access Independence; Assistive Technology with Fran Sinish
29th People's United Bank Presents "Safe Tea-Fraud and Scams"

Ongoing work in progress:

Setting up Darien Senior Program as a Department continues
Program Planning Winter
Integration and Orientation to Public of new facility and use
Policy Development/Woodshop Donation Program Usage-Waiver
Staff Development
Setting up Purchase Orders
Time Management and Organization as numbers increase daily
Creating our own Webpage
Budget Workshop

Building Issues: Elevator has had several repairs& upgrades done is operational, plumbing leaks in kitchen area and upstairs janitors sink remediated; managing locking and securing building is a task, secured kitchen preparation table... Public Works is doing an excellent job trouble shooting and managing any needs that arise!

Meetings Attended :At Home in Darien Board Meeting 9/8; SWCAA Advisory Meeting 9/10; Meeting with Olive Hauser Human Services 9/10; Weekly Staff Meeting 9/5; Meeting for Tour Guides 9/9; COA meeting 9/17/