

**TOWN OF DARIEN
COMMISSION ON AGING
REGULAR MEETING
FEBRUARY 20, 2013**

ATTENDANCE: Amy Squyres, Acting Chair; Robin Woods, Pat Morgan

STAFF: Olive Hauser, Director of Social Services; Beth Paris, Senior Center Coordinator

CALL TO ORDER

Ms. Squyres called the meeting to order at 9:06 a.m. A quorum was not present.

JANUARY MEETING MINUTES

The minutes were tabled to the March meeting due to the lack of quorum.

SOCIAL SERVICE REPORT

Ms. Hauser said that the department was still taking the applications for Energy Assistance. NEON is merging with CT&E, which is the property management organization in Stamford. This has resulted in a number of challenges for the clients who wish to contact NEON. The grants have remained at the all time low of 50%-75% less than previous years. Because this year is colder than last year, many clients have already used up their grant funding and have requested additional help with fuel.

The Home Good products closet use has increased over 200%. Many seniors have come to rely on the closet to supplement their budgets.

The Senior Resource Directory is being updated. More information is being added and the Directory is being reformatted in a larger type. The target completion date is April and the department hopes to distribute it widely.

"The Heights" has started accepting applications. Applications can be obtained at the Housing Authority in Town Hall or online at www.theheightsdarien.com. Applications will be accepted until they reach 400 or six weeks have passed February 1st. The first group of residents will be returning home during Phase 1 this spring.

The recent storm left 1,000 Darien residents without power. During the storm, reassurance calls were made to vulnerable seniors. Only two seniors called reported being without power but the power was restored by the afternoon.

The 2013-2014 budget has been submitted to the Selectmen.

SENIOR CENTER REPORT

Ms. Paris said that the plans are underway for a stronger health involvement once the Senior Center moves to the BOE space. Stamford Hospital has established a speakers' bureau that will be providing speakers about various health issues. Other participants include the University of Bridgeport Naturopathic School and the Fones Dental School. The quality of life issues are critical because people are seeing longevity. The more engaged people are the slower the decline. AARP has a free section on their website where people can go and work on brain teasers that help with the short term memory.

Hope Street Pharmacy will begin offering their monthly health and wellness information sessions again for the seniors.

The Fairfield University Matter of Balance Program begins Monday, February 25th for an 8 week session. There are still a few places open for this free program.

Ms. Paris said that a group was working on starting a Memory Cafe for people who have just been diagnosed with Alzheimer's in Stamford. Ms. Paris said that after the Senior Center moves into the new location, she would like to establish one in Darien.

Yesterday a stained glass window in the gift shop exploded outwards. No one was in the gift shop at the time. This has been boarded up. With the freezing and thawing cycle, there are leaks all over the building.

Ms. Paris said that the budget has already been presented to the Board of Selectmen. No decision has been announced yet.

OLD BUSINESS

Ms. Woods then reported that 35 Leroy project work continues. There was a problem regarding the water pressure being too low for the sprinkler system. This will require a larger pipe be installed in the building for the sprinkler system. This may have an effect on March 28th completion date. The move in date for the BOE is scheduled April break.

Reports on the HVAC system and the hazardous materials for the BOE space are still outstanding.

Aging in Place had a successful fund raiser. There are now about 20 active volunteers. There are additional volunteers who are still moving through the vetting process.

Ms. Hauser said that Gallivant is available and would like everyone to continue to promote the service. Ms. Morgan asked if the drivers would be able to assist a resident who had limited

mobility. Ms. Hauser said that there were liability issues and suggested that the resident contact the coordinator about the details.

Ms. Squyres said that the volunteer drivers take residents to places beyond the area that Gallivant covers and during the hours that the Gallivant does not cover. Discussion followed about the details of Aging in Place volunteer drivers.

NEW BUSINESS

There was no new business to discuss at this time.

ADJOURNMENT

Ms. Squyres adjourned the meeting 9:35 a.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Sharon L. Soltes
Telesco Secretarial Services

Darien Senior Activities Center

Commission on Aging Report

February 20, 2013

Respectfully Submitted: Beth Paris, Coordinator

Attendance has been brisk at the Center. We have been very fortunate that the weather has been relatively cooperative during the week. Folks are getting out and participating. We are officially part of the **Wii National Bowling League** and our team is growing and competing. **Hope Street Pharmacy** has reconnected with us and will be offering monthly health and wellness information sessions again.

Coordinator is working with **Stamford Hospital** to explore a partnership with them to utilize the Center has a satellite for the Health lecture series it offers to the community at large. Will be mentoring a student(s) from **Norwalk Community College** each semester we can match the students learning requirement with a Center need. Also speaking with the **University of Bridgeport Naturopathic School** and **Fones Dental School** regarding potential for clinics to be held through out the year once we have moved to Mather's sight.

New endeavor working with area professionals with specialties in Alzheimer's disease in developing **Memory Café's** attached is information and description...

Lots of wonderful entertainments this month. The **Belly Dancer Sirica Linda** is back by popular demand on the 21st complete with **Mediterranean Themed Luncheon**.

Fairfield University Matter of Balance Program begins **Mondays Feb 25th** for **8 weeks** still a few places opened 9:30-11:30. Catalogue pages for Parks & Recreation Spring Calendar completed and submitted.

Monthly Caregiver Educational Support Group: 9

Caregiver Options Counseling: 6

Referrals to Human Services: 3

EMS Calls: 0

AIP+Gallivant Assists: 14

Ongoing works in progress: Budget Details
Monthly Newsletter
Program Planning
Statistics
Trend Research
Collaborations & Partnership Development

February Highlights: 1st AARP Chapter Meeting

4th Blood Pressure

5th Valentine Heart Craft

5th French Literature & Conversation

6th Darien Garden Club
7th BINGO Plus
8th Happy Hearts Craft
11th National Wii Bowling League starts
12th Closer Look at US Presidents w/Phil Lechak
13th Hope Street Pharmacy Discusses Heart Health
14th Beginner Bridge resumes
14th Valentine Day Music and Trivia w/Bonnie&Cookie
18th CLOSED President's Day
19th Caregiver Educational Support Group
21st: Belly Dancer Sirica/ Mediterranean Lunch
25th Matter of Balance classes begin Fairfield U
26th Darien Library presents: The Best of the Silver Screen

Building Issues: Large piece of stain glass window fell out of the building gift shop room currently boarded up.
As we experience thaw and re-freezing on the roof new areas are leaking throughout the building especially in the main hall.

Meetings Attended: Feb. 2nd SWCAA Senior Center Meeting; Feb. 7th AIP+Gallivant Program Committee; Feb. 13th SWCAA Advisory Meeting;