

**TOWN OF DARIEN
COMMISSION ON AGING
REGULAR MEETING
JULY 17, 2013**

ATTENDANCE: Joe Pankowski, Chair; Jennifer Geddes, Tom Valentino, Ray Slavin,
Mary McCarthy

STAFF: Olive Hauser, Human Services Director; Beth Paris, Darien Senior Center
Director

CALL TO ORDER.

Mr. Pankowski called the meeting to order at 9:00 a.m. A quorum was not present.

APPROVAL OF THE MINUTES.

There was no vote on the minutes due to a lack of quorum.

SENIOR CENTER REPORT.

Ms. Paris said that the attendance was increasing. She then presented her report.

There was an AARP driver course and there will be three more courses held before the end of the year.

There is a movement to have patients who are recently diagnosed with Alzheimer's to attend social events and work on memory skills. This program will also provide the caregivers with an array of community resources for support as the patient progresses in the disease. Ms. Barbara Abraham will be giving a 20-30 minutes information session on this on July 18th at 10 a.m.

There are 512 residents and 219 non-residents enrolled at the Senior Center. Ms. Paris said that last quarter, there were four member deaths and twenty residents moved out of town. Four or five of the residents moved to the newly opened Wilton Commons. Financial concerns were one of the reasons indicated by a number of the residents that moved out of town.

The Center will be closed for the week of August 18th for heavy cleaning. During this time, the staff will be marking the items that will be moved to the new location. Other items that will not be used any longer will be removed by Public Works.

Mr. Pankowski asked if there had been any consideration of having inter-generational classes. Ms. Paris said that the woodshop would have some insurance concerns, but she has been working on a potentially having a half day intergenerational camp next year for things like knitting, quilting and crafts.

Mr. Valentino then asked about the fact that many of the departing residents cited financial reasons. Ms. Paris said that many of them were concerned about not only the fixed costs, but also about maintenance.

HUMAN SERVICES REPORT.

Ms. Hauser said that the department has been busy. She then presented her report to the Commission members. (See attached).

The sun setting of the renter's assistance program has passed.

The Heights project is moving forward.

Ms. Joan Davey has been hired for a staff position. She will manage the home goods closet, purchasing and other similar programs.

OLD BUSINESS.

Mr. Pankowski said that the work continues on the future Community Center. Ms. Paris said that she still had concerns about the elevator use. Mr. Steeger and Mr. Ousterfine toured the current Senior Center on the 16th and these issues were discussed. The one in the future community center wing is operational but there are concerns about the fact that once the senior center is open, it will be heavily utilized on a daily basis.

Ms. Paris pointed out that the space they were moving into was smaller, so knowing the actual measurements of the rooms and the closet storage areas is important. She added that it would be critical to have the areas fully completed before the center opens. A discussion followed about having classes in both locations while the transition is underway and the future of the Edgerton site.

NEW BUSINESS.

Mr. Pankowski spoke about a recent report of an elderly person who was duped out of a significant amount of money by someone posing as a police officer. He said that there needs to be some type of protection for fraud for seniors. Mr. Pankowski said that it would be good to research what other states have done. It is important to allow the senior to maintain their autonomy. However, there needs to be some kind of fail safe for these citizens. Ms. Geddes said that she would obtain some of the information from Stamford Hospital's Protective Services from the Elderly.

The discussion then moved to the difficulty with making decisions about purchasing discount electricity rates. Ms. Hauser said that shifting companies to obtain the best rates requires the ability to constantly monitor the changes and tracking term expiration dates. This is also true for credit card rates.

ADJOURNMENT.

- ** MS. GEDDES MOVED TO ADJOURN.**
- ** MR. SLAVIN SECONDED.**
- ** THE MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY.**

The meeting adjourned at 9:43 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Sharon L. Soltes
Telesco Secretarial Services