

**TOWN OF DARIEN  
COMMISSION ON AGING  
REGULAR MEETING  
OCTOBER 18, 2012**

**ATTENDANCE:** Joe Pankowski, Chair; Mary McCarthy, Jennifer Geddes, Ron Heinbaugh, Gerri Genovese, Ray Slavin, Tom Valentino, Robin Woods, Pat Morgan, Amy Squyres

**STAFF:** Beth Paris, Senior Center Director; Olive Hauser, Social Work Director (9:10 a.m.)

**OTHERS:** Anthony Homicki, Darien Tax Assessor; Millie Millan-Garcia, Assistant Tax Assessor

**CALL TO ORDER**

Mr. Pankowski called the meeting to order at 9:05 a.m.

**MINUTES OF SEPTEMBER 19, 2012**

**\*\* MS. GEDDES MOVED THE MINUTES OF SEPTEMBER 19, 2012.  
\*\* MR. HEINBAUGH SECONDED.  
\*\* THE MOTION TO APPROVE THE MINUTES OF SEPTEMBER 19, 2012 AS  
SUBMITTED PASSED UNANIMOUSLY.**

**CONTINUED DISCUSSION OF TAX DEFERRAL/ABATEMENT**

Ms. McCarthy distributed copies of a proposed letter to the Board of Selectmen. She reviewed the details with the Commission.

*Ms. Hauser joined the meeting at 9:10 a.m.*

Mr. Homicki then spoke about how the change would assist the low income residents and the elderly.

**\*\* MR. HEINBAUGH MOVED TO APPROVE THE PROPOSED LETTER AS  
PRESENTED.  
\*\* MS. WOODS SECONDED.  
\*\* THE MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY.**

Ms. Hauser asked if the increase had been mentioned in the Tax Assessor's Quarterly report. Mr. Homicki said that it had not mentioned because it would have been premature. Ms. Hauser suggested possibly issuing an addendum so that the staff is aware. The discussion moved to when this would be presented to the Board of Selectman.

### **SENIOR CENTER REPORT**

Ms. Paris then announced the details regarding the upcoming Oktober Fest, Halloween Party and Thanksgiving programs for November. A new issue of the newsletter with all the upcoming programs is available. Many of those who attend the events go on to become regular attendees for the other scheduled programs.

Dr. Paul Turner from the DuBois Center was the speaker during the National Depression Screening program in October. The program was well attended and a number of attendees took the screening. It was also featured on a News 12 broadcast.

Fairfield University "Matter of Balance" program was well attended and there was a waiting list. It is an 8 week program and possibly scheduling the program to be presented again in the Spring is being considered.

The Medicare programs are also being well attended and will conclude in November.

Building wise, there is a mouse problem in two of the closets at the Center. It is being addressed by HOCON.

The heat in the gym has also become a problem.

### **SOCIAL SERVICES REPORT**

The Renter's program ended and the checks are in the mail.

The state software for the Energy Assistance Program is now on the computers, which allows the department to track the applications. This year's Energy Assistance allocation will remain at the same level from last year. Last year, Darien residents received 75% less financial assistance than previous years.

The RTM has approved a name change for Social Services to the Department of Human Services along with some other, minor adjustments to the department.

There has been a 39% increase in kids in Back to School program. Expecting an increase in both the Thanksgiving and Christmas programs. The Department will also be maintaining the time and donations for the Seniors during the holiday season as well. The gingerbread man ornaments will be on the Christmas Tree in the Town Hall lobby beginning November 26<sup>th</sup>.

Ms. Hauser announced that NEON and CTE will be merging their programs. She reviewed the details of this with the Commission members.

Christian Community and Person to Person will merge November 1st. The groups will be based out of St. Luke's Church with Person to Person taking the lead role. Ms. Woods said that both agencies complimented each other.

**CONTINUED DISCUSSION OF NAME OF NEW TOWN HALL FACILITY.**

Mr. Pankowski asked Ms. Paris if she had the opportunity to discuss the name change with the seniors. Ms. Paris said Ms. Swiatek advised her not to become involved in the issue.

Discussion followed about the possible name. It was suggested that it be changed to Darien Senior Activities with the possibility of adding "& Services" or "& Programs". Ms. Hauser pointed out that her department provides the case managements. Following some discussion, the general consensus was using " Darien Senior Activities & Programs " was acceptable.

**\*\* MR. SLAVIN MOVED TO APPROVE THE FOLLOWING NAME FOR THE NEW TOWN HALL FACILITY AS FOLLOWS:**

**MATHER COMMUNITY CENTER  
DARIEN SENIOR ACTIVITIES & PROGRAMS**

**\*\* MS. SQUYRES SECONDED.**

**\*\* THE MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY.**

The discussion then moved to the fact that Norwalk does not have a Social Services Department.

**OLD BUSINESS**

Ms. Woods informed the Commission members that the gas line was installed and the fuel tanks were pulled at 35 Leroy. Abatement is underway. A contractor has been chosen for that project.

Right now on the Mather Community Center, there is abatement assessment underway. No estimates have been given. Once that happens, the next step will be value engineering.

February is still the scheduled date for the Board of Education to move to 35 Leroy.

Mr. Pankowski said that the debate on the property at Edgerton continues. A discussion then followed about various scenarios involving potential projects for that parcel, such as senior housing development or a potential school in the future.

*Ms. Hauser left the meeting at 9:50 a.m.*

It was pointed out that no one knows who will be purchasing the Proccacini property or who will be moving into the Heights. That could have a potential affect on the number of students enrolled in the schools.

**NEW BUSINESS**

There was no new business to discuss at this time.

**ADJOURNMENT**

**\*\* MR. HEINBAUGH MOVED TO ADJOURN.  
\*\* MS. SQUYRES SECONDED.  
\*\* THE MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY.**

The meeting adjourned at 9:55 a.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Sharon L. Soltes  
Telesco Secretarial Services

**Commission on Aging  
Senior Center Report**

October 17, 2012

Respectfully Submitted: Beth Paris, Coordinator

We are enjoying solid participation on all our offerings this month. We decided to put an **advert in the Darien Times** to Highlight the **Oktober Fest, Halloween Party** and a **Veterans Program** to be helped in November. The entertainment s for these programs reasonably priced but more expensive then our usual offerings. We also are able to get our name out there and folks regularly participate in other types of programs throughout the month once they come to an entertainment.

We participated for the first time this year in **National Depression Screening Program** on **October 11<sup>th</sup>**. **Dr Paul Turner** from the **Dubois Center** gave a presentation during lunch to 45 Seniors over a dozen folks took advantage of the confidential screening- which they just initial- and were given a date and time to call Dr Turner anonymously. He then gives them a free assessment with recommendations. The Center was featured on New 12.

The **Matter of Balance** program presented by **Fairfield University** is in progress and filled up faster than expected. We are looking to schedule another series in the spring for those who were not able to attend this session. **Medicare programs** were solidly attended and will finish up in November. We also joined the **Wii virtual Senior Center** bowling league and have a volunteer ready to submit scores –we are looking for a Team Name and Shirts for our team photo.

Monthly Caregiver Education Support Group: 12

Caregiver Option Counseling: 5

Referrals to Social Services: 4

EMS calls: 2

**Ongoing Work in Progress:** Building Use of Virtual Center

Statistics

Newsletters

Program Planning Winter/Early Spring

Researching new collaborations

\* **Holiday Boutique opens November 1<sup>st</sup>**

Trouble shooting building

**October Program Highlights:**

1<sup>st</sup>: Blood Pressure

2<sup>nd</sup>: French Literature

2<sup>nd</sup> US Pacific Fleet Submarines w Art Gotlieb

2<sup>nd</sup> Medicare Part D Social Services Presents

3<sup>rd</sup> Flu Clinic

5<sup>th</sup> AARP Chapter 972 meeting

8<sup>th</sup> CLOSED Columbus Day  
9<sup>th</sup> Medicare Open Enrollment SWCAA  
10<sup>th</sup> AARP Driving Course  
10<sup>th</sup> Happy Harvest Program w Martini & Liedner  
11<sup>th</sup> Long Term Care Lunch & Learn  
16<sup>th</sup> Blue Notes perform  
16<sup>th</sup> Caregiver Educational Support Group  
17<sup>th</sup> 24<sup>th</sup> 31<sup>st</sup> Matter of Balance Series  
18<sup>th</sup> October Fest  
19<sup>th</sup> Ask a Lawyer  
23<sup>rd</sup> Craft Iris Folding Cards  
23<sup>rd</sup> Darien Library presents Beyond Books  
29<sup>th</sup> Connecticare: Medicare Advantage  
30<sup>th</sup> Halloween Celebration w Patsy Shore & Tony Castle

**Building Issues:**

Public Health Inspection 2 issues irresolvable  
Managing leaks in the Woodshop  
Mice infestation in Gym and Art room closet  
Gym closet has been emptied of debris  
HOCON will be cleaning closets  
Baits have been renewed monthly in Art Room area  
Heat is not working in gym areas-blowers off line

**Meetings:** 10/4 AIP+Gallivant Program Committee; 10/16 Department Head; 10/17 COA; 10/18 SWCAA Annual Meeting 10/22 AIP+Gallivant Advisory Board meeting