

DRAFT
TOWN OF DARIEN
COMMISSION ON AGING
REGULAR MEETING
JULY 20, 2011

ATTENDANCE: Amy Squyres, Charlie England, Ron Heinbaugh, Mary McCarthy,
Pat Morgan, Tom Valentino, Robin Woods

ABSENT: Joseph Pankowski, Jennifer Geddes

OTHERS: Olive Hauser, Director of Social Services, Jayme Stevenson, Selectmen's
Liaison to COA, Karl Kilduff, Administrative Officer, Beth Paris, Senior
Center Coordinator

CALL TO ORDER

Ms. Squyres, Acting Chairwoman, called to order the regular meeting at 9:05 a.m.

APPROVAL OF JUNE MINUTES

**** MR. HEINBAUGH MOVED TO APPROVE THE JUNE MINUTES.**
**** MR. VALENTINO SECONDED.**
**** MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY.**

SENIOR CENTER REPORT

Ms. Paris reported that the Senior Center will be closed for one week beginning August 22 for repairs. At that time, air quality will be tested. Also, it will take approximately three days for the grease trap to be installed.

Marcella Rand, MSW, a program specialist, was hired and will start in September. Until that time, the program schedule will be light at the Center. Ms. Rand has an elderly services background. She is replacing Carolyn Lewis. This is a part-time position, Monday through Friday, and nineteen hours weekly.

A recent program at the Center with a Darien physical therapist was well received with 42 in attendance.

Ms. Paris reported that the cleaning person who assisted at the Center during the day, no longer works at the Center. Service Master does the overnight cleaning. Ms. Morgan inquired who helps out when there are programs. Ms. Paris said that she and Tom, the Chef, set up and manage the programs.

Please refer to the attached Senior Center Report for other news and events at the Senior Center.

SOCIAL SERVICES REPORT

Ms. Hauser reported that the renter's rebate program calculations are still unknown. The State has not finalized the rebates.

The Senior Resource Directory is being re-done. She asked that the Board look it over and report changes to Elaine in the Social Services office.

Letters are going out to people who should be coming to the Household Closet for supplies so that they do not have to use their Food Stamps to purchase these types of items.

The State Department of Social Services satellite office in Stamford may be closing soon. The nearest office would then be in Bridgeport. Some of the programs they oversee are Title 19 and Food Stamps. The towns and cities will become the safety net.

Money Follows the Person is a new program. She said that while it is a good idea to de-institutionalize people who do not belong in convalescent homes, there are not many rentals in Darien for those who require housing after their institutional stay is over.

Ms. Paris mentioned that she and Ms. Hauser are working on a pilot program for a resource library. They are in the process of writing for a State grant, and Federal funding.

Ms. Hauser said the library posts resources and is an alternate source for information. Mr. England inquired if the library has a reference capability in this area. Ms. Hauser said most likely.

OLD BUSINESS

Ms. Woods updated the Commission on building committee business and said that the architects are continuing their work on the draft plans. Pricing has not been determined. Mr. Kilduff stated that the costs will be known by the end of August. Ms. Stevenson said that the presentation meeting to the Board of Selectmen may be videotaped on August 22.

NEW BUSINESS

Ms. Squyres said that Mr. Pankowski sent a letter to the newspaper this week that is a response to Mr. Valentino's recent letter. Ms. Squyres said that Mr. Pankowski acknowledges that anyone is free to write a letter to the newspaper and he is not mentioning names in his letter. Mr. Pankowski wants to clarify the Commission on Aging board's position regarding the proposed 'shuffle' plan.

Mr. Valentino provided an article that he believes will be useful to those hiring contractors. It is a checklist put out by AIP.

Mr. Valentino stated that three new members are needed for the board. There are no age restrictions, and the meetings are once a month for one hour. On occasion, there are special evening meetings.

Ms. Squyres said that the COA advocates for senior residents in many different ways, in addition to the help the Social Services department provides to residents, and the informational programs and events held at the Senior Center that benefit them.

Ms. Squyres then said this is a sad day too, as we are losing our secretary, Anne Hohlweck, and our board member, Charlie England, due to his moving away from Darien. The board expressed sincere gratitude to both Anne and Charlie for their work and efforts in serving the COA.

Ms. Squyres said that Ms. Gina Blum has been appointed as the new Director for AIP + Gallivant. A volunteer bureau is being established and is an important initiative to help with friendly visits, snow shoveling (done by students), leaf raking, and friendly shopper. The friendly visits program is a six-month, one-hour weekly time commitment that can be used for playing games, bill paying assistance, shopping trips, or reminiscing.

Ms. Woods inquired if AIP + Gallivant is backing up the Red Cross in their roles such as taking people to medical appointments. Ms. Morgan mentioned that the Red Cross did provide drivers to take seniors to their appointments. Ms. Squyres said that the Red Cross no longer has volunteer drivers and that Gallivant is now providing some medical transportation. The responsibility for driving seniors to medical appointments may go beyond the friendly visitors volunteer program.

ADJOURNMENT

- ** MR. HEINBAUGH MOVED TO ADJOURN THE MEETING.
- ** MR. VALENTINO SECONDED.
- ** MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY.

There being no other business the meeting was adjourned at 9:50 a.m.

Next scheduled meeting is Wednesday, September 21, 2011, at 9:00 a.m., Room 119, Darien Town Hall.

Respectfully submitted,

Anne Hohlweck,
Recording Secretary

Attachment (Senior Center Report)

Darien Senior Activities Center

Commission on Aging Report

July 16, 2011

Respectfully Submitted: Beth Paris, Coordinator

July is packed with different entertainments and ways to keep cool in the summer heat. Since Carolynn Lewis left in June and our new Program Specialist Marcy Rand is unable to fill the 19 hour position until September staff is a bit overwhelmed but Programs will go on as planned. We will formally announce her joining the staff with her bio in the September Newsletter. SWCAA has asked for us to assess needs for Resource Center to be established or to enhance existing information and referral system. Letter sent to First Selectman to include Senior Center Coordinator and Municipal Agent

Independence Day Picnic including make your own Sundae and **Sing a Long** with *Bonnie Leitner* drew 62 lunch additional 18 for entertainment 78 folks... Harbor Master *Robert Price* also enjoys a solid turnout for his presentation on "**A Harbor Master's Work and Responsibility**" New Program Let's Talk with Donna Spellman from Family Centers-weekly discussion on topics of interest "Grand parenting in the 21st Century"/"Summer Travel"/"Graceful Aging for Your Pets"

Ongoing Work in Progress: Monthly Newsletter/Publicity
Program Planning Fall and winter
Caregiver Support
Contract with Alzheimer's Association
Developing Resource Library Plan for SWCAA w Olive Hauser Municipal Agent
Statistic Gathering and Reporting
Submitted Department Head quarterly report April-June

Building Projects: Gift Shop completed-storage in another area of building
Prevention Procedures for birds hitting windows
Relocating and organizing donations for holiday fair
All chairs and rugs cleaned by Service Master

July Program Highlights: 4th CLOSED
6th Independence Day Celebration Lunch/make your own Sundae/Patriotic Sing-a-Long
7th, 14th, 21st, 28th Women's Roles 50's and 60's
11th Blood Pressure
11th "Darien Waters" Harbormaster Robert Price
19th New Release Movie
19th Caregiver Support Group "Mini Vacations"
25th Stories for seniors' w/Barbara Jefferies

Meetings attended: AIP + Gallivant meeting with Executive Director 2 x per month;
Monthly Social Services Meeting w Director; AIP +Gallivant
Program Planning Meeting-

Building Issues: - Air Conditioning Issue in Art Room continues
Birds flying into Center Windows daily
All exercise classes being relocated into Movie Room
Clogged toilet w leak able to repair