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COMMISSION ON AGING

TOWN HALL

DARIEN, CONNECTICUT 06820

Meeting: February, 2009.

The meeting was called to order at 9:05 AM.

Present: Joseph Pankowski, Alexander Liu, Mary Giarratana, Norman Guimond, Ron Heinbaugh, Karen Joelson, Mary McCarthy, Amy Squyres, Robin Woods.

Seth Morgan from the Board of Selectmen spoke to the COA members regarding the Senior Center. Discussed was the support of the budget, promoting more programs for the elderly, getting various jobs done. The senior center is underpromoted, he would urge more information on the number of hours of operation, the number of people involved, revenue / expenses, programs that the senior center has, and programs they want to have. More detailed explanations are wanted: how the programs change, attendance of seniors, what programs are favored. Mr. Morgan and Linda Santarella stated that they will continue to maintain the senior center building, as it is necessary to keep the building repaired and safe and comfortable for the seniors.

Robin Woods gave a report on the senior center wheelchair lift into the gym. Joseph Pankowski stated that we need a second quote on the lift before making any decision on what to do.

At this point Karl Kilduff (town administrator) came in and he answered questions regarding the lift.

There will be more discussion at the next COA meeting.

Joseph Pankowski, Sandy Liu, Mary Giarratana, Nancy Zengo are planning to meet next Thursday at the senior center. They will try to

put together the information that the Selectmen want regarding the center and will put it in clear language so that further information is not needed.

The minutes of the January meeting were accepted.

Ron Heinbaugh read the Senior Center report and Thursday/Friday report.

Senior Center Report:

- The Wellness Program has been in place and will be until April and has been a huge success. The program was provided a grant by the State, thanks to Karl Kilduff.
- A wonderful birthday party was had for a wonderful senior on January 12, with her whole family in attendance – her children and spouses and grandchildren. Her family ‘treated’ all the seniors to lunch.
- Attended an ‘Aging in Place’ meeting on January 12 and was very impressed by what is offered for seniors in the area. Alyssa Israel, the coordinator, will be coming to the center to speak at a later date.
- Most of the requested work, especially emergency items have to be done by the Public Works Department. The cement pathway to the front entrance will be done when the weather gets warmer to lay the cement.
- This week, Monday, Phillip Lechuk will do a wonderful program on Gettysburg and the Civil War.
- The Darien Library Programs will resume on Wednesday, February 11th.
- On Thursday February 26, a group from the center will take a trip to Rocky Hill Veterans Hospital to present 3 games to wounded veterans. Monies were collected over several months affording us the ability to buy three games used for therapy at the hospital.
- We have a young man – Jacob Schweidermeyer, who is going to do a project with the seniors on Conserving Energy. He will at a later date speak to the seniors, along with an employee from C.L.& P. He also will be changing light bulbs and checking smoke detectors. This is to earn his Eagle Scout badge.

- Our Budget meeting will be held February 18th at 7:30 PM at the Town Hall. Since we are asking for an increase in Program monies, I would ask for your support at this meeting.

Thursday/Friday Report:

- The Thursday part of the Wellness Program continues to feature educational and informative topics such as the movie 'Supersize Me,' how to read and understand food/nutritional labels, posture evaluations, a visit by a massage therapist, and a speaker on 'How to Talk to Your Doctor.' Program includes ongoing fitness component – each participant is worked with individually by the personal trainer who takes into account their medical needs and personal issues and limitations. Program is generating a lot of enthusiasm and excitement.
- Two spring trips are in the planning stage with the New Canaan Center. A trip to the Botanical Gardens in the Bronx and a bus trip to the Museum of Modern Art. No dates have been set as of this date.
- Carroll Stenson, our Short Story instructor will return from Florida next month and we hope she will continue her program soon as it is highly successful.
- Public Affairs Dept. of CL&P will give a program this month on 'Energy Matters.' Margo Jackson, Specialist, will present a one hour workshop dealing with energy conservation, how to save on heating and lighting bills, how to cut appliance operating costs and how life styles and habits effect energy bills. Participants will receive info on conservation programs and a free product sample.
- We have added a new dimension to our Ballet Program. We're showing a ballet related movie on Fridays. This month they will include 'Makarova Returns,' 'Sleeping Beauty,' 'Balanchine & Nureyev Essays,' and 'The Nutcracker.'

Alexander Liu read the Fiscal Year 2008/09 Report for February 2009.

The meeting was adjourned at 10:15 AM

Respectfully submitted,

Dorothy Matteis.