

**TOWN OF DARIEN  
COMMISSION ON AGING  
REGULAR MEETING  
JUNE 21, 2023**

**ATTENDANCE:** Joe Pankowski, Chair; Marcie Cleary, Tom Dempsey, Peter Eder, Gerri Genovese, Susan Kostin, Mary McCarthy, Susanne Okie

**OTHERS:** Beth Paris, Mather Senior Center; Ali Ramsteck, Human Services  
Christopher Jones, At Home in Darien

**CALL TO ORDER**

Mr. Pankowski called the meeting at 9:03 a.m. A quorum was present.

**APPROVAL OF MINUTES**

**• May 17, 2023 Minutes**

The following correction was noted:

Page 2, under **OLD BUSINESS**, please change the following from:

SWCAA will hold their Agency summit meeting on September 20th.

To:

SWCAA will hold their Agency summit meeting on October 30th.

**\*\* MS. KOSTIN MOVED TO APPROVE THE MAY 17, 2023 MINUTES AS CORRECTED.**

**\*\* MS. MCCARTHY SECONDED.**

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

**MATHER CENTER**

Ms. Paris presented her report. (See attached)

**HUMAN SERVICES**

Ms. Ramsteck presented her report (See attached)

**Discussion of Senate bill, 1076, (relating to what supporters called “aid in dying” and opponents call “physician – assisted suicide”), which was before the Connecticut General Assembly earlier this year. The bill, which is attached hereto, was voted on, favorably by**

**the Committee on Public Health, but did not receive a vote in the Judiciary Committee, and was effectively terminated there. A bill with substantially similar provisions is expected to be raised in the next legislative session.**

Mr. Pankowski then gave a brief overview of the bill and noted that it had failed in the CT Legislature and that it had been rejected over 20 times previously. NY, MA and CT do not allow it. Vermont and nine other states do.

Mr. Eder pointed out that there was strong opposition from those who are advocates for the handicapped. Discussion followed during which each Commissioner was given the opportunity to express their thoughts on the matter.

Ms. Paris pointed out that the Senior Center will be holding programs about hospice care, advance directives and palliative care. She said that it would be good to have these conversations with family members.

Mr. Pankowski pointed out that having advance directives was important and those would include Power of Attorney, Medical Directives and Do Not Resuscitate documents.

At the conclusion of the discussion, Mr. Pankowski said that there was not a consensus in the Commission with respect to the bill.

#### **OLD BUSINESS**

Mr. Jones spoke about the Out and About newsletter. He also mentioned a vetted service program. He explained that an individual who was a former building inspector who has done walk throughs to identify safety concerns.

Mr. Jones said there were a number of businesses that offer discounts for seniors. there are 29 businesses already participating. He said that the loan closet was proving to be very popular.

Mr. Eder said that the legislative focus was on Social Security and displayed two different informational booklet.

On July 4th at 9:30 there will be a ceremony of reading of Declaration of Independence at Darien High School.

Mr. Eder then gave a summary of the Aging in Connecticut Summit. He said that he would be serving on a panel on housing, including supportive housing. There is also a program called NORC, Naturally Occurring Retirement Communities. Discussion followed.

#### **ADJOURNMENT**

**\*\* MR. EDER MOVED TO ADJOURN.**

**\*\* MS. MCCARTHY SECONDED.  
\*\* THE MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY.**

The meeting adjourned at 9:54 a.m.

Respectfully submitted,

S. L. Soltes  
Telesco Secretarial Services

## **Commission on Aging Report**

Darien Senior Program at Mather Center

June 21, 2023

Respectfully Submitted: Beth Paris, Director

Program planning for the late summer through to fall is currently underway. We are adding 2 new exercise classes in June as well as taking suggestions from members for future events and opportunities. Also have booked several musical groups that are exceptional in quality and diversity. Lunch participation is consistent and growing especially when paired with themes! Also had our first complimentary luncheon sponsored by Wavy Lifecare Network was held June 1<sup>st</sup> looking forward to a great summer. Nobu Miki arranged Art Show at Atria with Member Students from all Mather Art classes June 8<sup>th</sup> was the reception art will be on display through the month of June. The July issue of Highlights and Happening was out on June 14th!

**Health and Wellness:** Waveny Lifecare Network *Complimentary Lunch* -Medicare Short Term Care Services Telemedicine Program; Christine Burns RN from Waveny Homecare Network- Summer Safety Tips; Dr. Miller from Stamford Health – Stroke Prevention; Mindfulness and Meditation for Stress Management Monica Keady; 15 Weekly Exercise Class –Table Tennis Wednesdays DMA Monday/Fridays) Corn hole Thursdays

**Educational and Academic:** Tech Help with Mary Beth Mason-Darien Library; Beeyonder Virtual Travel to Warsaw; Art Gottlieb. LCSW-*The Best Years of Our Lives*; *Historian Mark Albertson presents Abbott & Costello*; Monthly Book CLUB-*The Alice Network* by Kate Quinn; AARP Driving Smart Drivers Course; **Weekly:** Creative Writing –Intermediate Spanish –Italian Culture And Conversation

**Creative Pursuits:** Acrylic Painting with Nobu Miki; Water Color Class- with Elizabeth Lineman; Stain Glass Class- Lou Benedetto; Oil Painting –Althea Ericsson; Multi Media Art with Rene Soto Weekly Knitting and Crocheting Circle; Woodshop Donation Program Tuesday/Wednesdays

**Entertainment and FUN:** Say Something Nice Day –Themed Luncheon Entertainment Airborne; Movie and a Treat- Summertime 1955 and Father of the Bride 2022; Celebrate Flag Day Themed Luncheon –Entertainment Over Easy; WEEKLY BINGO Mondays; Cribbage Tuesdays; Mahjong Thursday; Brain Teasers and Twisters –Fridays

**Services:** Waveny Lifecare Network Health and Blood Pressure Screening First Tuesday Third Thursday of the month; Ask a Social Worker Tuesdays Darien Human Services; Monthly Educational Support Group; Information and Referral as needed/requested

**Program Days:** 22

**Family Inquiries:** 16

Caregiver Information and Referral: 12

**Human Services Referral:** 10

**At Home in Darien:** 7

### **Ongoing Work this Quarter:**

Orientation/Training Program Specialist

Monthly Newsletter/Weekly Constant Contact

Budget Resolution 2022-2023

Program Planning Fall to Early Winter

Reach out to My Senior Center Staff

Review Instructor Policy

Review Guide Lines for Participation  
Organize Membership Renewal  
Daily Lunch Program Supervision  
CASPC Conference Attendance  
Written Protocol for Guidelines and Rules

**Meetings:** Weekly with Staff; CASPC Conference 6/2; Department Head 6/6, Senior Center  
Directors of Fairfield County; 6/13; COA 21

Commission on Aging  
Human Services Report  
June 21<sup>st</sup>, 2023

- **Renter's Rebate**

Darien Human Services began accepting applications for the 2023 CT Renter's Rebate Program on May 16. Eligibility requirements are:

1. Must be 65 years of age as of December 31, 2022 or disabled and collecting Social Security Disability payments.
2. One year or more residency in Connecticut.
3. Income must not exceed \$40,300 for a single person or \$49,100 for a married couple.
4. Disabled persons under age 65 must show proof of Social Security disability.
5. If you filed a 2022 income tax return, a copy is required.
6. Proof of income must include:
  - Social Security (Form 1099)
  - Pensions
  - Interest on bank accounts
  - Dividends
  - Wages

We will also need proof of rent and utilities for all 12 months or the months you were renting in 2022. A printout from the utility company and receipt of rent payment from your landlord and canceled checks are all acceptable.

**Renters Rebate application deadline is September 7, 2023.** Please call us at 203-656-7328 for questions or to make an appointment. The department is open Monday through Thursday from 8:00am to 5:15pm.

- **MENTAL HEALTH FIRST AID**

The Town of Darien is offering another chance to attend the Mental Health First Aid 8-hour interactive certification course. This course is designed to give members of the public key skills to help someone who is developing a mental health problem or experiencing a mental health crisis. Like CPR training helps a non-medical professional assist an individual following a heart attack, Mental Health First Aid training helps an individual who doesn't have clinical training assist someone experiencing a mental health crisis. Dates are **August 1<sup>st</sup> and 3<sup>rd</sup>, 2023, both days from 8:30am-1:00pm**, at EMS Post 53. Please register by emailing Ali Ramsteck at [aramsteck@darienct.gov](mailto:aramsteck@darienct.gov). This program is being funded by ARPA funds.

- We currently have 1 new Protective Services for the Elderly case which is being referred to Probate Court for Involuntary Conservatorship. We work closely with the social workers from the state assigned to each case. These cases are often very time consuming and require collaboration with various resources and agencies.
- The Medical Loan closet continues to be a great resource for Darien residents for short term loans of wheelchairs, knee scooters, walkers, crutches and canes. A refundable deposit of \$50 (check payable to "Town of Darien") is required for wheelchairs, transport chairs and walkers with a seat. Thirty six households used the loan closet this past quarter versus twenty six the previous quarter. The feedback from residents is positive and they appreciate this convenient resource.
- The staff of Darien Human Services maintains an *Emergency Call List* with the names of vulnerable seniors and individuals with disabilities to contact prior to and after a storm or town wide emergency. We called the list this Monday in anticipation of Tuesday's storm. We now have close to 100 residents on our list. We are requesting that any individual who is vulnerable, or has medical conditions that might make them vulnerable during an emergency, notify Darien Human Services (203-656-7328) so their name can be added to our list.

Respectfully submitted,

Ali Ramsteck, LCSW, Director

SAVE THE DATE!



# AgingCT/SUMMIT

Monday, October 30, 2023  
Aqua Turf Club | Plantsville, Connecticut

Please join us for an annual conference that unites the people and systems addressing the challenges of aging and disability in Connecticut.

HOSTED BY



**AgingCT**

Five Agencies, One Vision.



## KEYNOTE SPEAKER: Ashton Applewhite

Advocate and Author of  
"This Chair Rocks"

*A best-selling author, activist, and expert on ageism, Ashton tackles the fear of aging with a fun, straight-talking approach. She debunks the many myths we perpetuate about what it means and how it feels to grow older, and what our worth is once we're wrinkled. She illuminates that it doesn't have to be this way.*

5 Sponsor logos



For advanced attendee registration and email updates, scan the QR code.

## WHY ATTEND?

This full-day event is expected to welcome over 300 thought leaders in the field of aging and disability services seeking to:

- Earn valuable CEU Credits
- Share ideas and best practices
- Create a sense of partnership
- Improve the quality of care and improve the independence and dignity of older persons and persons with disabilities.

Three Learning Tracks

ABOUT THE HOST: AgingCT is a partnership of five regional human services organizations, providing a centralized resource to assist Connecticut residents with aging-related issues.

Learn more at [agingct.org](http://agingct.org)

