

TOWN OF ENFIELD COMMISSION ON AGING
MINUTES FOR WEDNESDAY, May 12, 2021
In Person Meeting – Department of Social Services-110 High Street

Attendance

Present: Mike Arnone Jr ; Pauline Devino; Alice Egan; David Goyette; Marlene Hoginski; Judy Kilty; Priscilla Linehan; Tim Slade; Kay Tallarita; Cynthia Guerreri, Staff Liaison.

Absent: Bob Cressotti, Council Liaison; Howard Florian, Will St George; Lori Unghire, Council Liaison.

Guests: Mary Keller, Senior Center Manager, Jennifer Switalski, LMSW, Elderly Services Care Coordinator – Enfield.

I. Welcome

David Goyette, Chairman, opened the meeting at 2:04pm with a comment that ‘it is good to meet in person’. He thanked Cynthia (Cindy) for the use of the large conference room in the Department of Social Services at 110 High Street. Dave asked Mary Keller if going forward beginning with the June 9th meeting, the group would be able to use a room at the Enfield Senior Center. Mary replied that all that needs to be done is to complete a Building and Maintenance form to make a reservation. Marlene Hoginski offered to pick up the form so that Dave can complete it and request monthly meetings there. In Will St. George’s absence, Pauline Devino offered to take the minutes.

II. Secretary's Report:

A motion to accept the minutes as presented was made by Kay Tallarita and seconded by Judy Kilty. The motion passed (10, 0, 0).

III. Treasurer's Report:

Tim Slade reported that charges for Verizon cellular service for the Senior Minor Repair Program (SMRP) will continue to remain high until an adjustment is made. He indicated that he understands that the monthly charge will be \$8.99 per month and \$.10 a minute per call. Cindy Guerreri commented that the monthly charge seems low and that she will follow up to confirm the price. She explained that billing from Verizon is inclusive for town as well as educational services. Cindy said she will ask that the Commission for Aging’s bill be separated from the town-wide billing to avoid confusion. There was clarification that the monthly billing would not be for a smart phone and that the service would continue for the entire year not just for the period when SMRP is active. With the discussion completed, Alice Egan made a motion to accept the report as presented and Marlene Hoginski seconded. The motion passed (10, 0, 0).

IV. Committee Reports

A. SMHR - Senior Minor Repair Program

Tim Slade reported that the program will be starting again on June 1st. Advertisement of the program is occurring on Facebook, in newspapers, through the DSS website and posted on the Enfield Senior Center (ESC) Facebook, ESC newsletter and through newspaper columns. Tim indicated that appointments are booked through June. Most requests for now are for air conditioner installations. Cindy indicated that it is important that applications for service be booked by Melissa Torres-Newman of DSS since these demographics are important for data collection to the established grants. Tim indicated that there are 5 volunteers, but currently 2 are out for health reasons. All volunteers will be wearing masks and following social distancing protocols when performing repairs. Tim also indicated that new space at the Enfield Annex in the basement has been secured for equipment storage. He asked Cindy how applications for new volunteers are to be handled. Cindy indicated that all applications must be handled by DSS in cooperation with the Police Department for background checks and badge preparation. Tim asked if it would be acceptable to have a potential volunteer temporarily work with a current volunteer while the appropriate paperwork is being processed. Cindy said she did not think so, but would check.

B. Symposium

Pat Linehan reported that this program is on hold. Jennifer Switalski commented that she recently attended the National Conference on Aging's virtual presentation on the topic of substance misuse by seniors as they navigate over the counter medications. She said that the information was enlightening and described how busy pharmacists and physicians unintentionally are not assisting seniors with good choices.

C. ISCP - Isolated Seniors Calling Program

Cindy reported that Dave, Mike and others from non-profits like the Food Shelf met to ascertain the level of need for the Isolated Senior Program. Data from other non-profits like the Felicians, the Town, DSS and other towns like Vernon can be helpful in managing the program.

D. SLTV - 'Senior Living' Public Access TV Show:

Pat Linehan reported that all shows are continuing to be recorded via zoom. Mark from Cox hopes to have programming in studio again by Fall. The May show will be about honoring veterans and for June the topic of senior safety will be rebroadcast. The July show will feature a discussion about senior eye care. Dr. Andrew Epstein of the Northern Connecticut Eye Associates, LLC will be guest speaker.

E. Transportation Survey

Cindy Guerrerri commented that a broader survey from the annual satisfaction survey will be conducted with the community at large due to the anticipated addition of the train station. She suggested that this item be removed from the agenda. Dave Goyette commented that

Congressman Joe Courtney has been successful in securing 7 million dollars for schools from President Biden's American Relief Fund and is requesting 4 million dollars for the train station construction.

F. Grandparents Raising Grandchildren

Kay Tallarita distributed copies of the new brochures. She asked if some brochures could be made available at the Enfield Senior Center in addition to be available through DSS. Mary Keller said they would be happy to make them available to visitors to ESC. Kay indicated that discussions have continued virtually with the focus being on getting ready for camp and how to handle unvaccinated children. She spoke about a local author of children's books who has been working with the Women's Club of Enfield to sell the books and donate the profits to the Grandparents Raising Grandchildren program.

G. TRIAD

Marlene Hoginski said that there is nothing new to report. Dave Goyette asked for approval to move \$660 from the Symposium budget to the Triad budget to cover the cost of the additional File of Life magnets. Judy Kilty made the motion; Marlene Hoginski seconded and it was approved (10,0,0). Dave reported that 2,500 updated emergency phone number magnets that are red with white lettering have been ordered and should be available in a week to 10 days. The cost for the magnets is \$1,150.00. The money for this purchase will be coming from the Missions and Outreach budget. Marlene Hoginski made the motion to approve this purchase; it was seconded by Alice Egan and approved (10, 0, 0). Dave mentioned that we need to talk about distribution of these magnets. Mary Keller indicated that she has not yet heard if the police or fire departments will be holding annual picnics this year, but noted that distribution can be done if conducted. They can also be distributed through ESC which is holding an outdoor concert in June. Other areas where magnets, Blue Books and File of Life items can be distributed are through Meals on Wheels and with the SMHR program.

H. Blue Books

No Report, but comment that Blue Books can be distributed at ESC functions, Meals on Wheels and through the SMRP.

I. CHOICES

Jennifer indicated that interest continues in the Choices Program for retired seniors as well as those considering retirement. There will be a 5- day training program next month for volunteers.

V. Old Business

A. Grants

Cindy Guerreri reported that she will be recruiting for a Grants Performance Manager who will be responsible for overseeing 19 grants, managing all grant requirements, for data collection, and for writing grants after researching. She hopes to hire this person by July 1st since it is a

challenge to work with 3 separate fiscal year ends: federal, state and town. This position must have the ability to collaborate with other departments to access grant needs. Cindy stated that there will be an abundance of money for grants coming from the American Relief Fund, but this money will not be sustainable so work will need to be done with the Town Manager of Enfield to continue to provide support when the grant monies expire.

B. Senior Groups

i. Friends of the Senior Center

Marlene reported that the group will be meeting tomorrow.

ii. The Senior Center Advisory Board

No report.

C. Senior Center Focus

May Keller stated that on May 19th, the doors to ESC will be opened to the public to facilitate card games and mahjong during scheduled hours. However, from June 1st through June 4th ESC will be closed so that cleaning can be done and reorganization of equipment to its pre-pandemic state can occur. On June 7th the doors will be reopened to the new hours of 8 am to 5 pm daily. Night hours are being worked on, but will not occur in June. Mary explained that for more timely communication, an in-house newsletter has been developed which will replace the newspaper insert previously provided by the Journal Inquirer (JI) newspaper. The JI insert is being replaced because of its limitations to making corrections and updating information and because of the uncertainty of local sponsors like ShopRite continuing sponsorship under its new owners. Producing our own newsletter provides for timely changes as needed. Distribution of the newsletter is made through email, social media and hard copies are being made available at the Center. Jennifer asked for copies of the newsletter for distribution through DSS. When asked about physical projects being done, Mary reported that work continues on the gazebo with a new roof and interior improvements and plans continue for the construction of a bocce court. There has been a commitment from a patron to provide funding for seating around the bocce court.

VI. New Business

A. Elderly Services Care Coordinator Report

To Jennifer, Tim commented that he spoke to a resident who received an Enfield Cares pamphlet and mentioned your name and was happy with what you and the town can do. Jennifer mentioned that she would like to re-do the pamphlet with updated information. Regarding the At-Risk Registry, data collected may be used for activation in a town-wide emergency; a QR code could be developed for the Police based on pertinent data. Jennifer explained that there is a separate grant for Enfield Cares, SMHR, At-Risk Registry and Isolated Seniors. Cindy needs to submit all required data for the requested grants by May 27th for approval.

VII. Announcements

None

VIII. Adjournment

A motion to adjourn was made by Marlene Hoginski and seconded by Alice Egan and passed unanimously. Dave Goyette adjourned the meeting at 3:20 pm.

Next Meeting: In Person on Wednesday, June 9, 2021 at 2:00 p.m. at the Enfield Senior Center.

Respectfully Submitted by Pauline Devino, Substitute Recorder

Cc:

Christopher W. Bromson, Town Manager,
Lori Unghire, Council Liaison,
Bob Cressotti, Council Liaison,
Cindy Guerreri, Staff Liaison & Director of Social Services,
Jennifer Switalski, LMSW, Elderly Services Care Coordinator - Enfield,
Mary Keller, Enfield Senior Center Manager
Marguerite DuPrey, 'Commissioner Emeritus'
32 Woodside Park, Enfield, CT. 06082.

Cc: (one time)

None