

**TOWN OF ENFIELD COMMISSION ON AGING
MINUTES FOR WEDNESDAY, SEPTEMBER 8, 2021
Enfield Senior Center, 299 Elm Street**

Attendance

Present: Mike Arnone Jr.; Pauline Devino; Alice Egan; David Goyette; Marlene Hoginski; Tim Slade; Will St George and Lori Unghire, Council Liaison.

Absent: Bob Cressotti, Council Liaison; Howard Florian, Cynthia Guerreri, Staff Liaison; Judy Kilty (resigned); Priscilla Linehan and Kay Tallarita.

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

I. Welcome

David Goyette, Chairman, opened the meeting at 2:05 p.m. He read a letter from Judy Kilty indicating that she is resigning from the Commission due to her moving out of town and being unable to serve as a result. This resignation is creating a vacancy.

II. Secretary's Report:

Tim Slade asked for a name correction for Maya Matthews whose name was originally noted as Mia Matthews. A motion to accept the minutes as presented with the correction to be made, was made by Marlene Hoginski and seconded by Will St. George. The motion passed (9, 0, 0).

III. Treasurer's Report:

Tim Slade reported that for August the SMHR allocation in the amount of \$466.02 was for new shirts for a new SMHR volunteer and some miscellaneous items. Dave Goyette commented that he was pleased that batteries were received from Don Ellis of the Fire Department so this expense could be deferred. Tim indicated that when received the expense for the additional order of sleeves will be expensed to the Outreach budget. He asked Marlene if any funds will be needed for the Safety and Pancake Breakfast. She indicated that there will be an expenditure. With no further discussion required, Marlene made a motion to accept the report as presented and Alice Egan seconded. All approved (9, 0, 0).

IV. Committee Reports

A. SMHR - Senior Minor Home Repair Program

Tim Slade reported that he did not have new figures on how many visits had been made in August, but said that there were nearly as many gutter cleanings requested as air conditioning installs. Tim indicated that there is a number of air conditioner removal requests for next week. He did report that a new volunteer from South Hadley, MA has joined the program. The volunteer is very capable with many valuable skills. There was a concern with the volunteer's long commute, but the volunteer is not concerned. He also wished to extend his appreciation to Melissa Torres-Newman for taking the phone calls and answering questions for SMHR and for updating the financial data. Tim also wanted to acknowledge his appreciation to Jim O'Neil, the custodian at the Enfield Annex for opening the locked doors for him and the volunteers on Tuesday mornings and when access is needed.

B. Symposium

Dave asked if anyone has given thought to taking on the Chairmanship for the symposium. Will St. George asked if there might be consideration in going out to the community, perhaps as an Executive Committee, to solicit professional ideas. Dave said in the past there had been a Board from the community. Will said that he would think about it if no chair comes forward.

C. Senior Living TV Program

Dave reported that tonight there will be a virtual taping with Dr. Martha McLeod and guest Mary Keller, Manager of the Enfield Senior Center. Dave wrote a press release about tonight's presentation. He also wished to acknowledge Will's excellent work on compiling the listing of shows available on the Cox Public Access TV channel 10 (see attachment A) which was distributed. Will thanked him and indicated that he will start a new listing going forward. For the month of October, the presentation will be on Adult Education and for November on Recreational programs. Dave commented that he met with Laura Downes on the Senior Living TV Program and other COA initiatives.

D. Grandparents Raising Grandchildren

Kay Tallarita was absent, so Dave presented the following report from an email he received. He noted that the group was busy preparing the children for returning to school with clothes and furniture and with assistance with the school portal. In addition, during the month, Alison Ware of Legal Aid spoke to the group.

E. Triad

Marlene Hoginski reported that on October 23rd from 9-11 a.m. there will be a Fire Safety Event and a Pancake Breakfast. There will be a smoke trailer and fire extinguisher demonstrations along with car seat safety checks. This event will not be widely publicized since it is intended to be for Seniors with registration required. Jennifer Switalski mentioned that they will have a flyer posted in the DSS office. Marlene noted that the next Triad meeting will be on September 14th where the group will be practicing their Files of Life skit for the September 29th presentation at 2 p.m. at the Senior Center. On November 11th at 2 p.m. there will be an active aggressor presentation by Mark Rochette of the Enfield Police Department concerning road rage, pick pocketing, etc. Marlene mentioned that with the resignation of Judy Kilty, who was also a member of Triad, there is a position open for any Enfield resident who would like to get involved. The group meets on the second Tuesday of each month at 10 a.m. at the Enfield Senior Center.

F. Blue Book/Magnets

Distribution of the Blue Book, File of Life and Emergency Number magnets and Vaccine sleeves continues through venues including SMHR and ESC. Dave reported that he and Mike Arnone found a copy of the 2015 Enfield Resources guide and shared it with the members.

G. Choices

Prior to the report, Will made a suggestion that it would be helpful to have a bullet for DSS on the agenda either under Choices or Grants. Jennifer said that Dave should check with Cindy Guerreri for approval.

Jennifer reported that the attached flyer (Attachment B) concerning Choices counseling will be forwarded to the Food Shelf, the Library and the Senior Center for posting. Medicare Open Enrollment is from October 15th to December 7th. Jennifer has 6 appointments already scheduled for this month with some requiring follow up visits. Meetings will be held on Monday, Wednesday and Friday from 10 am to noon in 2- hour blocks. Appointments will also be held at the Library from 1-4:30 p.m. beginning on September 16th. Will and Mary Keller will be arranging for a time for counseling at the Senior Center.

V. Old Business

A. Grants

Jennifer reported that the new Grants Performance Manager has been filled by Andrea Mashiak who will be starting on September 13th. She was previously with Youth Services. Tim made a comment that the current grant program for SMHR does not seem to conform to our program of 60 and over eligibility. He said that he and Dave would like to meet with Andrea to get clarification.

B. Senior Groups

i. Friends of the Senior Center

Marlene reported that the group will be meeting on September 9th and will be discussing some new ideas. Mary Keller noted that the Friends has been able to fund the completion of the gazebo and bottle filler. The idea for a bocce court is not “dead” and will continue to be considered.

ii. The Senior Center Advisory Board

Mary reported that she received an email indicating that the group does not feel that at this time there is enough to work on. She commented that this group can be of assistance as the Senior Center prepares for accreditation in early 2022.

C. Senior Center Focus

Mary Keller reported that work continues on month-to-month programming. Some evening instructors have decided not to teach due to the mask mandate so staff continue to look at new programming ideas. Mary noted that most visitors are compliant with the mask mandate and understand the necessity to keep everyone safe. When asked about attendance, Mary reported that statistics continue to rise to about 200 visits per day. The noon meal program averages about 20-25 people each day with Meals-On-Wheels averaging about 68. In addition, there have been numerous requests for medical equipment rentals. Alice Egan commented that Jim Malley’s programs were excellent and hopes that more will be planned. Mary indicated that she has reached out to the Historical Society for ideas for new programs. When asked about other uses of the Senior Center, Mary responded that the Center will be used for voting in November, and that if approached about an additional COVID vaccine site, the Center will gladly comply. Mary also reported that she is completing NCAAA paperwork that will designate the Senior Center as a Community Focal Point for Aging Services.

VI. New Business

A. Elderly Services Care Coordinator Report

Jennifer Switalski reported that the number of requests for service continues to increase with some requests requiring extensive follow up due to the need for medical or legal intervention. She reported that 28 new clients were assisted by DSS in August. In addition, she spoke about how the Risk Registry was activated for Hurricane Henri to assist any homebound residents. Jennifer reported on Medicare Coverage for Home Health Aide Care and reviewed the guidelines for eligibility with particular reference to only Medicare-certified home health agencies (only 3 in town). She also noted that anyone in the Care Giver program would not be eligible. Jennifer also provided Attachment C from NCAAA which officially designates DSS as a Community Focal Point for Aging Services. This 4-year award is being announced on the DSS website and a plaque is posted on the department’s door. Jennifer discussed the Assistive Technology program through the State which provides free iPads and training to eligible clients. Jennifer will be looking into these services. She also noted that work continues on compiling the At-Risk Registry for contacting affected residents during emergencies. Jennifer noted that within a year there should be a full technology solution for the At-Risk Registry. Tim asked about the Cares Program since information continues to be distributed with SMHR visits. Jennifer suggested that Cindy be asked to provide an update on this program at the next meeting.

VII. Announcements

Dave Goyette announced that he will be serving in a position on the Felician Executive Board. Their new focus is on a plan to renovate one of their buildings for senior housing. The builders are in the process of meeting with the Mayor and Historical Society for discussion on future building plans.

Lori Unghire reported about the recent ribbon cutting ceremony at Higgins Park for the new playscape. She said that it was widely attended. There was also comment about how the planning continues for the new Water Park on the Parkman School property.

VIII. Adjournment

With no further business to discuss, a motion to adjourn was made by Tim Slade and seconded by Marlene Hoginski. It passed unanimously. Dave Goyette adjourned the meeting at 3:20 pm.

Next Meeting Wednesday, October 13, 2021 at 2:00 p.m. at the Enfield Senior Center, 299 Elm Street.

Respectfully Submitted by Pauline Devino, Secretary

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)

Attachments