

**TOWN OF ENFIELD COMMISSION ON AGING
MINUTES FOR WEDNESDAY, NOVEMBER 10, 2021
Enfield Senior Center, 299 Elm Street**

Attendance

Present: Mike Arnone Jr.; Pauline Devino; Howard Florian, David Goyette; Cynthia Guerrerri, Staff Liaison; Marlene Hoginski; Priscilla Linehan, Will St. George, Kay Tallarita and Lori Unghire, Council Liaison.

Absent: Bob Cressotti, Council Liaison; Alice Egan, and Tim Slade.

Guests: Mary Ann Harris, Potential COA Member, Mary Keller, Senior Center Manager, Jennifer Switalski, LMSW, Elderly Services Care Coordinator – Enfield and a Representative of Scott Bertrand, Executive Director of the Enfield Housing Authority.

Prior to the opening of the meeting, Mayor Bob Cressotti stopped in to say that although he was unable to participate in today's meeting due to a conflicting appointment, he intends to remain as Council Liaison to this committee. Due to his recent election as Mayor, Bob will continue to participate as long as his schedule permits.

I. Welcome

David Goyette, Chairman, opened the meeting at 2:05 p.m. He advised that Tim Slade is now resting at home after his hospitalization and rehab. Dave reported that Alice Egan is absent due to a death in her family requiring out of state travel.

Prior to conducting committee business, Dave mentioned that he invited Julie James of the Felician Sisters Senior Services and representatives from Community Builders to speak about a proposal for elderly and family housing on the Felician grounds. The guests provided Attachment A – Felician Campus Redevelopment for discussion. The Commissioners had many questions posed to the presenters. Commissioner Will St. George requested that his questions be reflected in the minutes. Will asked "what are the specific HUD programs and HUD Tax Credits you are using"? The reply was "I don't know, there are so many and it is very complicated." Will stated "I am concerned about the viability of Enfield Housing Authority." One of the presenters stated that they were not competing with the Enfield Housing Authority, yet a guest representative of Scott Bertrand, Executive Director of the Enfield Housing Authority, stated that was not the case indicating they were in direct competition. The response was that Community Builders was unaware of it. It is anticipated that there will be more future discussions and presentations as this initiative moves through the Town Council and review boards for consideration.

II. Secretary's Report:

Dave Goyette asked if there were any corrections to the minutes. Will St. George requested that one change be made to the Choices section to reflect that, appointments for him at the Library and Enfield Senior Center are being scheduled by staff at the Enfield Senior Center, not by Lisa Sprague at the Library as reported. However, he stated that he was very grateful to Lisa and Mary Keller for their assistance.

Kay Tallarita requested that a correction to the Grandparents Raising Grandchildren section be made to the title of Deb Fiori from Chairman to President of the Women's Club State Federation and that two Enfield Staff will be speaking at this meeting next week and will get a donation of \$200 for this speaking engagement.

With no further corrections requested, Kay Tallarita made a motion to accept the minutes with corrections noted and Will seconded. The motion passed (10,0,0).

III. Treasurer's Report:

In Tim Slade's absence, Dave Goyette reported that the only expense of \$432.09 is for vaccination sleeves which is being charged to Missions and Outreach. A motion to accept the minutes as presented was made by Will St. George and seconded by Kay Tallarita. The motion passed (10, 0, 0).

IV. Committee Reports

A. SMHR - Senior Minor Repair Program

In Tim Slade's absence, Dave reported that the program ended on November 2nd with 92 jobs completed from June to November. He noted that the SMHR phone has been temporarily given to Will St. George, to use for the Choices program, at a cost of \$10.78 per month and \$.10 per minute. Pat Linehan gave Kudos to the SMHR program for its excellent work and for the kind way requestors were treated by the repair staff.

B. Symposium

Dave Goyette asked if we should consider a symposium for next year or wait. There was consensus to plan one for 2022. Pat Linehan reported that everything is ready for what was discussed last month. She indicated that she will make a commitment for this Spring, but will need help. Mike Arnone, Howard Florian and Kay Tallarita volunteered to help. Pat will hold a planning meeting with the volunteers. There was a general comment that it would be helpful to have a community partner, perhaps someone like Scot Kaupin. Will St. George distributed Attachment B on Livable Communities for further consideration.

C. Senior Living TV Program

Pat Linehan complimented Dave Goyette on the wonderful publicity (posters) for Senior Living TV, prepared by Mike Helechu, with a listing of past programs and a telephone number to call for information. Posters have been distributed to the Library, Senior Center, DSS and the Town Hall for posting. Regarding broadcasts, in December, Marilyn Cresotti will discuss Adult Educational Recreation. Jenn Switalski of DSS was to be interviewed in January on Elder Care, however, Cindy Guerreri said that this interview will have to be rescheduled due to a conflict.

D. Grandparents Raising Grandchildren

Kay Tallarita reported that Thanksgiving will be celebrated with each family receiving a gift card. In addition, there will be two celebrations for the holidays on December 6th with the Women's Club and on December 13th where gift cards will be given to the kids. She noted that there are about 1,400 documented grandparents raising grandchildren in town, but that there may be even more. For a future Senior Living TV program perhaps a grandparent and child might speak along with Amy and Heather about the program.

E. Triad

Marlene Hoginski reported that on November 17th, Officer Mark Rochette of the Enfield Police Department will be presenting an active aggressor presentation at the Enfield Senior Center at 2:00 p.m. Following this presentation, the Friends of the Enfield Senior Center will be speaking about their program and serving light refreshments.

F. Choices

Will St. George stated that the set-up at the Senior Center has been great with the support of the IT department for their technology and for the staffs of the Library and the Senior Center. Using Attachment C, he explained that there has been much confusion regarding traditional Medicare plans and Medicare advantage plans and in the ability to analyze the benefits of each. Will reported that there has been a national increase of 8% in the number of Advantage plans offered and a 6% national decrease in the number of prescription drug plans under traditional Medicare. To help seniors understand their options, he will be making two presentations at the Enfield Public Library on November 8th.

G. Nursing Home Project

In Alice Egan's absence, Dave Goyette reported that work has begun on this annual project with Parkway and the Saint Joseph's Residence in providing some holiday cheer to about 45 residents. He noted that Alice can submit any receipts for reimbursement of items purchased.

V. Old Business

A. Grants

Cindy Guerreri made a request that this topic be included under a new category named Social Services which will be inclusive of information from the Elderly Services Care Coordinator. She noted that due to Jenn Switalski's busy schedule, she may not be able to attend each meeting. Dave Goyette's comment that he finds the information from the Elderly Services Care Coordinator very beneficial and hopes that it will continue to be provided to this group. Cindy assured Dave that either she, Jenn or a designee will continue to attend these meetings.

B. Senior Groups

i. Friends of the Senior Center

Marlene reported that the Friends group will be conducting a meet and greet at the Senior Center for those unfamiliar with the group's activities after the November 18th active aggressor presentation by Officer Mark Rochette of the Enfield Police Department. Marlene explained that from 2006, when the Friends program began, until the present, the Friends have provided over \$500,000 in enhancements to the Enfield Senior Center including new dining room chairs, a roof on the gazebo, automatic door entry on the side of the building and other numerous improvements. Much of the money for these improvements came from the Elm Street Bingo and from patron donations.

C. Senior Center Focus

Mary Keller reported that in consultation with the North Central District Health Department, the Enfield Senior Center will temporarily suspend the following activities until after Thanksgiving: Cards, Games, Billiards and Coffee Service due to a recent cluster of COVID cases around these activities, some resulting in hospitalizations. The Health Department is suggesting that any participants of any of these activities be tested five days after the time of participation.

VI. New Business

A. Elderly Services Care Coordinator Report

Jennifer Switalski reported that in last three weeks, she has provided 73 units of service with a lot of follow up required. 21 clients received Choices counseling and several others needed Medicare or Medicare benefits counseling. She also reported that she recently spoke at a Moose Lodge meeting where she received a donation for the Grandparents Raising Grandchildren program.

VII. Announcements

Lori Unghire, Council Liaison, announced that this will be her last meeting since she will be assuming a new role as a minority member of the Town Council. Everyone wished her well on her recent reelection and thanked her for her service to this committee. Lori noted that someone will be replacing her.

As a follow-up to a comment from Jenn Switalski last month regarding the Lasagna Love program, Kay Tallarita presented Attachment D which explains how this national free food initiative works.

VIII. Adjournment

With no further business to discuss, a motion to adjourn was made by Marlene Hoginski and seconded by Kay Tallarita. It passed unanimously. Dave Goyette adjourned the meeting at 4:05 pm.

Next Meeting Wednesday, December 8, 2021 at 2:00 p.m. at the Enfield Senior Center.

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