

**TOWN OF ENFIELD COMMISSION ON AGING
MINUTES FOR WEDNESDAY, DECEMBER 14, 2022 – 2:00 P.M.
DSS, ALCORN SCHOOL, 1010 ENFIELD STREET**

Attendance

Present: Mike Arnone Jr., Pauline Devino, Alice Egan, Dave Goyette, Cynthia Guerrerri, Staff Liaison, Mary Ann Harris, Marlene Hoginski, Justin Lopez, Elderly Care Services Coordinator, Marie Pyznar, Council Liaison, Tim Slade and Kay Tallarita.

Absent (Excused): Mayor Bob Cressotti, Council Liaison, Howard Florian, Mary Keller, Enfield Senior Center Manager; Patricia Linehan and Will St. George.

Guest: Ellen Zappo-Sasso, Town Manager

I. Welcome

David Goyette opened the meeting at 2:10 p.m. and welcomed Ellen Zappo-Sasso, Enfield Town Manager to the meeting.

II. Secretary's Report:

Dave Goyette asked if there were any corrections to the minutes; with no corrections to be made, Marlene Hoginski made a motion to accept them and Tim Slade seconded. The motion was carried (8,0,0).

III. Treasurer's Report:

Tim Slade provided the treasurer's report and mentioned that expenses for the month were low and that donations were up. With no questions or discussion about the report, Marlene Hoginski made a motion to approve it and Mary Ann Harris seconded. The motion passed through a show of hands.

IV. Committee Reports

1. SMHR - Senior Minor Home Repair Program

Tim Slade reported that yesterday, December 13th, an appreciation breakfast was held for the repair volunteers at the Country Diner. All the volunteers except one were in attendance and Mayor Bob Cressotti attended as a guest. During the breakfast, Mayor Cressotti reviewed the specifications for the new space and talked about keycard access. This new space is bigger than the old one, has keycard access and is drive up accessible. The lock from the old room will be transferred to this new space. Tim noted that he will be clarifying what keycard access will be assigned.

2. Symposium

Pat Linehan was absent so there was no report, however, Dave Goyette reported that he, Pat, Mike and Howard did have a follow up meeting, but there has been no further action at this time.

3. Senior Living TV Program

Pat Linehan was absent so there was no formal report, however, Dave Goyette reported there was a press release about the December taping of Grandparents Raising Grandchildren. Dave commented that he wondered if the town has a Hartford Courant media contact for future press releases. Ellen Zappo-Sasso commented that Don Stacom of the Hartford Courant can be reached at DS@courant.com.

4. Grandparents Raising Grandchildren

Kay indicated that a Christmas Party was held on Monday, December 12th with about 50 in attendance plus children; 6 women from the Women's Club participated. The party was catered and grandparents were given \$20.00 Target gift cards. The Moose Lodge made a donation towards the event and the Riley Dancers filled stockings for the children. The event was very successful with two new families joining from the Vincent DePaul Society. Kay indicated that it is still hard to get grandparents to come forward to join the group, but efforts continue to invite them. She also noted that she is very grateful to the Town for their continue support of this program.

5. Triad

Marlene Hoginski reported that the Triad group is on vacation until January 10, 2023 so there is no report.

6. Choices

Will St. George was absent; however, he provided the following report via an email to the members: During the period, I had 55 appointment slots with 21 of them from December 1st through the 7th. I spend 36 hours in appointments meeting with 37 people and their spouses or representatives. In addition to the appointment hours, a heavier than usual number of hours were spent on administrative work, presentations and training materials. I gave two “New to Medicare” presentations at the Enfield Public Library and one “Getting Ready for Open Enrollment -Drug Costs” presentation at the Senior Center. The “Open Enrollment Event” work was an excellent learning experience that did instruct a simpler and effective approach to 2023 Open Enrollment Events. Much deserved praise is bestowed upon the flexible, responsive and consistent support from the Senior Center staff. This essential excellent support especially provided by Mary Keller, Nancy Darrah, Gary Lucero, Cinceray Madison and Shannon Conley. They have demonstrated a sincere desire to support CHOICES work in our community. Kay Tallarita commented that she was counseled by Will and found a great plan. She said that Will is to be commended for a wonderful job.

7. Holiday Nursing Home Project

Alice Egan indicated that she hopes to have the shopping completed by the end of the week if she receives the suggested list of gifts from Parkway staff; Saint Joseph staff have provided their requests already. With time getting short, Marlene Hoginski asked Alice if a deadline to the Parkway staff has been provided. Alice answered no, but that she will have to do so.

V. Old Business

A. Social Services Update

Cindy Guerreri reported that some training for the Gatekeeper program has been completed for the North Central Health Department. She also indicated that a successful drive to collect new coats, socks and boots has been completed with any items not identified as needed to be donated to the Warming Center.

B. Friends of the Senior Center

Mary Keller was absent so there was no formal report, however, Marlene Hoginski reported that the Friends are discussing the possibility of purchasing a digital sign. The cost for this item, similar to the one at the JFK Middle School, will be about \$35,000 including wiring, cables and foundation work and will take 6 months to 2 years to complete. Marlene also mentioned that the Senior Center will be celebrating their 20th anniversary in June of 2023 so the Friends are also discussing how to celebrate this event. At the time of the building, Alice Egan was a Liaison and Marlene Hoginski was on the Building Committee for the project that cost 3.2 million.

C. Senior Center Focus

Mary Keller was absent so there was no report, however, Marlene Hoginski indicated that Mary has finalized paperwork for the Accreditation and has a committee planning for 2023 trips from the Center.

VI. New Business

- 1) **Wreaths Across America –Wreath Laying** - Marie Pyznar reported that on Saturday, December 17th, at noon 1,700 wreaths will be laid on the graves of veterans in St. Patrick cemetery. Volunteers are needed to assist with this enormous task. To date, fire, police and scouts will be volunteering in addition to the Northmen Football volunteers, but more volunteers are needed to unpack over 200 boxes and lay the wreaths. Anyone who purchased a wreath may lay it at St. Patrick’s cemetery or pick it up and bring it to their cemetery of choice. The public is welcome to this annual event.

- 2) **2023 Tax Preparation** – Mary Ann Harris reported that starting on February 1, 2023 through April 17th taxes will be prepared in person, electronically at the Senior Center through the AARP tax preparation program. Those filing through the Vita Program will have until April 15th to complete their tax returns. She was pleased to announce that for this year, there will be one new counselor and one new coordinator (who will review with clients what documents are needed for processing prior to them seeing a tax preparer) and that a dedicated room has been secured for Vita participants. Beginning in the second week in January, appointments at the Senior Center for the AARP process will be taken. Returns will be processed in the Multi-Purpose Room, but Mary Ann mentioned that the WiFi in there is very poor. She is working with Mary Keller to see if any improvement can be made. Mary Ann is anticipating about 21 AARP returns will be processed each week. Last year 275 returns were processed through both sites. Vita participants may book their appointment using the 211 system.

VII. Announcements

- A. Town Manager Ellen Zappo-Sasso commented that town administrators are looking at budget priorities and efforts to strengthen safety issues through cross training, collaboration and improved communication. She also mentioned that some money is available to nonprofits through a grant, and small businesses through ARPA, but applicants must apply by next Friday.
- B. Dave Goyette mentioned that Commissioners Howard Florian, Alice Egan and Will St. George will be reapplying to continue their terms for another three years.
- C. Dave Goyette commented that next month we will be reelecting officers and that anyone interested in applying for a position should contact him.

VIII. Adjournment

With no further business to discuss, a motion to adjourn was made by Marlene Hoginski and seconded by Mary Ann Harris, it passed unanimously. Dave Goyette adjourned the meeting at 3:05 p.m. and wished everyone a Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year.

Next Meeting Wednesday, January 11, 2023 at 2:00 p.m. at the DSS Alcorn School.

Respectfully Submitted by Pauline Devino, Secretary

Cc:

Mayor Bob Cressotti, Council Liaison
Cindy Guerreri, Staff Liaison & Director of Social Services
Mary Keller, Enfield Senior Center Manager
Marie Pyznar, Council Liaison
Ellen Zappo-Sasso, Town Manager