

**TOWN OF ENFIELD COMMISSION ON AGING
MINUTES FOR WEDNESDAY, AUGUST 14, 2024 – 2:00 P.M.
DSS, ALCORN SCHOOL, 1010 ENFIELD STREET**

Attendance

Present: Mike Arnone Jr., Pauline Devino, Alice Egan, Howard Florian, Dave Goyette, Cynthia Guerreri, Staff Liaison, Mary Ann Harris, Marlene Hoginski, Patricia Linehan, Justin Lopez, Elderly Care Services Coordinator, Tim Slade, Kay Tallarita and Will St. George.

Absent (Excused): Bob Cressotti, Council Liaison, Mary Keller, Enfield Senior Center Manager and Marie Pyznar, Council Liaison.

I. WELCOME

Chairman Alice Egan opened the meeting at 2:05 p.m. and welcomed everyone.

II. SECRETARY'S REPORT:

Alice Egan asked if there were any corrections to the minutes. Will St. George requested that a correction be made under Senior Center Focus from the Medicare Safety Patrol to the Senior Medicare Patrol. This error will be corrected. With this correction noted, Marlene Hoginski made a motion to accept the minutes with the correction to be made and Kay Tallarita seconded. The motion was carried (11,0,1) with Mary Ann Harris abstaining due to her absence in June.

III. TREASURER'S REPORT:

Tim Slade provided the treasurer's report for July 2024. He reported that an expense in the amount of \$107.84 from Enfield Produce was submitted. In view of the Grandparents program anticipating ordering food from Enfield Produce, Tim reported that Amy Morales will request that two \$400.00 purchase orders be prepared for Danny's Pizza and Enfield Produce to purchase food for the Grandparents program meetings and that Tim Slade will request a purchase order of \$200.00 for Verizon cell phone service for the Choices program for this fiscal year. Dave Goyette made a motion to accept the report as submitted, and Marlene Hoginski seconded. All approved with a show of hands.

IV. SENIOR CENTER FOCUS

In Mary Keller's absence, Alice Egan read a report provided by Mary Keller.

- A. Foot Care is back at the Center beginning on September 13th from 9:00 a.m. to 3:30 p.m. at a cost of \$40.00 per service. All September appointments have been filled with October appointments currently being booked.
- B. A replacement Tai Chi instructor has been hired to begin classes in September.
- C. Another AARP Smart Driving class is added for September 5th due to popular demand and a CarFit program will be held in October.
- D. Senior Living TV Programming information has been added to the Center's Newsletter.
- E. A Hospice Area Consultant has been added to our Ask The ... Appointments.
- F. Movies are on a hiatus while the projector is out for scheduled maintenance.
- G. A new trip is planned to the Newport Playhouse in October.
- H. We are hosting a Grandparents Day on Friday August 16th from 1-3 p.m. with registration required.
- I. The Enfield Food Shelf is presenting a tabling event on September 23rd from 11:30 a.m. to 1:30 p.m.
- J. The Rotary Garden is in full bloom and has been harvesting hundreds of pounds of food each week that is donated to the Food Shelf. Volunteers are always welcome.
- K. Representative Carol Hall will be at the Senior Center on August 28th at 11:45 a.m. to present the Array RX program.
- L. Additional information about any of these programs can be found in the Senior Center Newsletter.

V. STANDING COMMITTEE REPORTS

A. SMHR - Senior Minor Home Repair Program – Study Committee

There is no report from the Study Committee, however, Alice Egan circulated a pamphlet from B.F.F. detailing payable services for minor in-home repairs exclusive of gutter cleanings. Dave Goyette asked Cindy Guerrerri if there has been any follow up with Michelle Puzzo. She responded that she has had none. Justin Lopez also indicated that he had contacted her, but has had no call back and that several residents said that they tried to make contact, but have had no response.

B. Symposium Work Group

Pat Linehan indicated that she would still like to hold a “Town Hall” style symposium. The object will be for Community Building – Working Together and bringing together unity which is born out of differences and becomes the glue of a group that:

- 1) It frees (every member becomes themselves)
- 2) It enables (to speak without fear and hesitation)
- 3) It supports (from respect of differences and seeks them out)
- 4) It listens (to begin and sustain).

Pat noted that the focus on community would be on what is going on with a panel who can diffuse information circulating. There would have to be a trained moderator and guidelines. Those invited would include Town Council and other community leaders. Dave Goyette gave Pat a booklet relating how UCONN is conducting this type of seminar and indicated that other towns are trying to do the same thing. Cindy Guerrerri offered a suggestion that perhaps there could be some link with the Mental Health Coalition of which Alice Egan is the COA representative. This coalition will be kicking off its program on September 27th with a distinguished group of content experts participating through ZOOM including the US Surgeon General, Senator Chris Murphy discussing the SILO act of October 2023 and Lieutenant Governor Susan Bysiewicz. This group’s aim is to promote a higher quality of life through mental health wellness and community conversation of the prevention of loneliness and isolation. Pat responded that she would be glad to talk about this and invited the COA members to a meeting at 1:00 p.m. on September 3rd to discuss these ideas further.

C. Senior Living TV Program

Dave Goyette reported that the current program is a rerun of the May presentation on the Food Shelf. Cindy Guerrerri asked if she can receive a flash drive of more current programs since they are running older ones at Social Service. Tim Slade responded that he will speak with Mark at COX to get newer programs formatted for viewing. Pat Linehan said that she would like to see the town registrars interviewed in September or October in preparation for elections. Will St. George indicated that Audrey Cole is willing to interview if asked. Dave said that there is a planning meeting today to discuss programing for October, November and December of 2024 and January 2025.

D. Grandparents Raising Grandchildren

Kay Tallarita shared a listing of the 21 camp programs attended by children enrolled in the program. They consisted of athletic camps to day town fun camps. Payment for these camps was provided by private funding from the annual Golf Tournament hosted by Kay’s son in the amount of about \$4,000.00. Kay explained that no COA money is used for the camp programs and that the Enfield Women’s Club does not do any fundraising for this event or any other events for the program, however, the Women’s Club’s Treasurer holds any donations collected into a separate account for the program.

E. Triad

Marlene Hoginski reported that on October 10th from 11 a.m. to 1:00 p.m. Don Ellis of the Enfield Fire Department and officers from the Enfield Police Department will be providing a Safety program and service dog presentation at the Enfield Senior Center with lunch provided. Registration is required. She asked if a purchase order to Big Y could be prepared for the purchase of food for this event. Tim Slade asked her to see Lisa Strom today to begin the purchase order process.

V. STANDING COMMITTEE REPORTS (continued)

F. Choices

Will St. George reported that the long term project of the implementation of the Citizenship Award program is being postponed along with discussion of the MSP Medicare Savings Program. He also mentioned that he has joined the Triad group and is working on certification for the SMP Fraud program in Enfield where he will report directly to Audrey Cole. Will also suggested that Commissioners review the Medicare Advocacy document "Aging, Disability, Long Term Care, and Medicare Information Resources for Connecticut Residents" which was emailed to them, as an excellent resource for information for internal use only, not for the public distribution

G. Senior Tax Relief

Marlene Hoginski reported that she and Dave Goyette met with John Wilcox and representatives from the Tax Assessor's Office to discuss whether the Senior Tax Relief program will continue into 2025. With the Town Council not meeting until September, they were told that no decision has been made whether the program will continue. Marlene indicated that everyone who applied and was approved for this year's program did, or will receive the \$400.00 tax refund promised. A few cases needed further review involving individual Trusts. They were told that if the program gets approved for 2025, there will be changes regarding the amount of volunteer hours required increasing to 100 hours, no first come, first served requirement, volunteering to be for the entire year and a possible income limit. Dave commented that with no further information received, perhaps the Town may assume this program if they decide to continue it into the next year.

VI. OLD BUSINESS

A. Social Services

Cindy Guerrerri reported that some new partnerships formed have been very positive for Town citizens and at no cost to the Town. She mentioned that through a collaboration with Mercy House, representatives can intervene 14 days before eviction for possible resolution and that the Energy Assistance program will be available for sign up in Enfield in September without travel required to Hartford. In addition, Cindy noted that there is a fundraiser underway for a new program to provide showers for those homeless for the months of March to October and that a new Youth Counselor has been hired. She also reminded the Commission that meeting packets are available only electronically to avoid large paper copier costs.

B. Friends of the Senior Center

Marlene Hoginski reported that on September 19th at 1:30 p.m. Rick Stromoski, a nationally syndicated and award-winning humorous illustrator, will present "Let's Talk Cartoons" hosted by the Friends. Reservations are required for this presentation at the Center and on Halloween at 1:00 p.m., the Friends will be hosting a Halloween Costume Party with prizes for the best costume and cider and donut refreshments. Registration is required for this fun event. Also, fund raising continues for the annual Senior Center Appeal with about \$1,200 raised thus far. It is hoped that proceeds from this year's appeal can be used for the purchase of new tables for the Great Room and Craft Room and replacement of the Center's Library furniture.

VII. NEW BUSINESS

A. COA Initiatives

Dave Goyette suggested that we consider Pat Linehan's suggestion that we reprint to a 2025 Blue Book which has not been updated since 2020. He noted that he has inquired with Minute Man Press who printed our current copy, about the cost for reprinting. The estimate is \$3,750 for 5,000 copies with a plain cover. There was consensus for this project, but further discussion about updating and cost approval can be conducted at the September meeting.

B. Town Council Reports

With no Town Council Representatives in attendance there was no report.

VIII. ANNOUNCEMENTS

There were no new announcements to be made.

XI. ADJOURNMENT

With no further business to discuss, a motion to adjourn was made by Marlene Hoginski and seconded by Dave Goyette. It passed unanimously and Alice Egan adjourned the meeting at 3:45 p.m.

Next Meeting Wednesday, September 11, 2024 at 2:00 p.m. at the DSS Alcorn School.

Respectfully Submitted by Pauline Devino, Secretary

Ken Nelson, Mayor
Bob Cressotti, Council Liaison
Cindy Guerreri, Staff Liaison & Director of Social Services
Mary Keller, Enfield Senior Center Manager
Marie Pyznar, Council Liaison
Christopher Bromson, Town Manager