

**TOWN OF ENFIELD COMMISSION ON AGING
MINUTES FOR WEDNESDAY, SEPTEMBER 11, 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, Justin Lopez, Elderly Care Services Coordinator, Marie Pyznar, Council Liaison, Tim Slade, Kay Tallarita and Will St. George.

Absent (Excused): Bob Cressotti, Council Liaison, Marlene Hoginski, Mary Keller, Enfield Senior Center Manager, and Patricia Linehan.

I. Welcome

Chairman Alice Egan opened the meeting at 2:05 p.m., welcomed everyone and asked for a moment of silence in commemoration of 911.

II. Secretary's Report:

Alice Egan asked if there were any corrections to the minutes. Kay Tallarita asked that the amount of \$4,000 in the Grandparents Raising Grandchildren section be updated to read \$5,000 from fund raising. This correction will be made. With this correction noted, Dave Goyette made a motion to accept the minutes with the correction to be made and Tim Slade seconded. The motion was carried (9,0,2).

III. Treasurer's Report:

Tim Slade provided the treasurer's report for August 2024. He reported that \$1,592.16 has been encumbered for anticipated expenses for the year leaving a balance of \$7,989.26. Tim also indicated that Marlene Hoginski mentioned that she may not need the additional \$300 budgeted for Triad for this year. Dave Goyette made a motion to accept the report as submitted, and Will St. George 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.

- The new Tai Chi/Qigong program started on September 9th with 20 participants.
- Foot Care starts on Friday, September 13th with all September and October appointments fully booked. Foot Care will be held on the second Friday of each month.
- The new Hospice Care Consultant will have appointments on September 19th from 10:00 to 11:45 a.m. and will be able to provide guidance on all stages of hospice.
- The Enfield Food Shelf is presenting a tabling event on September 23rd from 11:30 a.m. to 1:30 p.m.
- There will be a Diabetes presentation on September 26th at 1:30 p.m.
- Everyone is invited to enjoy a presentation by Rick Stromoski an award-winning Cartoonist on Thursday, September 19th at 1:30 p.m. and a Fall Pie Social on Friday, September 20th at 2:00 p.m.
- CarFit Event on Saturday, October 19th from 9 a.m. to 1:00 p.m. Registration Required.

Mary's report also indicated that the Enfield Senior Center has had a busy summer with the following attendance: June – 6,462 visitors, July – 6,538 visitors and August – 6,634 visitors. In addition, special events and presentations included some of the following: In June – Police Picnic, Bocce Tournament, Field Day, Situational Awareness & Self Defense for Seniors, Nutrition Education Presentation, a Medicare Fraud Presentation, Big Y Nutrition Presentation and an old Enfield Photographs Presentation. In July – an Ice Cream Social, Friday Afternoon Dance, Uniper Connectivity System Demonstration, Dementia Prevention Presentation, Medicare Presentation, Strange Stories of Enfield Presentation and Assistive Device Screening & Education Event. In August – Grandparent's Day, August Social, AARP Safe Driving Class, Escape from Albania Presentation, History of Enfield Schools Presentation, Hartford Healthcare Tabling Event and an ArrayRX Presentation along with a Greater Hartford Transit District Tabling Event.

V. STANDING COMMITTEE REPORTS

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

There was no report from the Study Committee.

B. Symposium Work Group

In Pat Linehan's absence, Dave Goyette discussed an email sent to him detailing some of Pat's ideas for the next symposium and for requested feedback. He provided a brief outline including that the symposium could be held in late October; some evening perhaps beginning at 6:30 p.m. and running for about 2 or 2 and 1/2 hours. A guest speaker could be Susan Campbell of the Journal Inquirer whose recent article about "Democracy" could invoke some discussion. Local town and state officials and state representatives could be invited to discuss voter registration and what transpires in a democracy and the responsibility of COA to help with these processes. There was a lengthy discussion about this suggestion, but the general consensus was that this plan, although a good idea, is too ambitious at this time since it would be virtually impossible to gather local and state representatives for a forum during this busy election time. There was also agreement that a night-time presentation would not be good for the senior population. Alice Egan suggested that we aim for next year and take the time to do this well.

C. Senior Living TV Program

Dave Goyette reported that two shows were recently taped; one to be aired this Wednesday concerning voter registration and the other by Audrey Cole regarding the Senior Medicare Patrol which will be aired in October. Cindy Guerrieri has been invited to the October 15th taping to be interviewed. Dave indicated that an interview with a representative from the Trolley Museum is planned next to discuss their upcoming Holiday activities. Will St. George commented that Mike Heluchu has been doing well at getting guests for the interviews.

D. Grandparents Raising Grandchildren

Kay Tallarita reported that the program is going well with an additional family joining. She noted that Melissa has been successful in recruiting several individuals to speak to the group including Attorney George Bickford and someone from the Enfield Police Department. She again thanked the COA members for their continued support of this program and invited them to attend one of the scheduled meetings. Kay commented that she would like to share some disturbing news that her son Patrick who has hosted an annual golf tournament to raise money for the summer camp program may not be able to conduct this event next year. She is hopeful that the event can go forward, but did want to raise the possibility that it may not occur which will leave a tremendous void in the funding needed for the camp program. Kay is waiting for final confirmation.

E. Triad

In Marlene Hoginski's absence, Dave Goyette reported that on October 10th from 11 a.m. to 12:00 p.m. there will be a Community Safety Event by the Enfield Fire Department and officers from the Enfield Police Department with possibly K9 Britford the narcotics Labrador Retriever. After the presentations, lunch will be served at noon to those who registered. On November 14th, there will be a presentation by Bob Kanehl of the Connecticut Poison Control Center.

F. Choices

Will St. George reported that the Senior Medicare Patrol (SMP) is a "sister" program to CHOICES. The SMP mission addresses Medicare Fraud, Abuse and focuses on Marketing Violations. Taxpayers loses between 60 and 100 billion dollars per year with Enfield residents losing a share of it. SMP also educates Medicare beneficiaries on how to keep track of doctor appointments, labs and procedures and how to read claims statements and compare those to what they received. SMP has a history of cooperation and collaboration with TRIAD for which Will is a member.

V. STANDING COMMITTEE REPORTS (continued)

F. Choices (continued)

Regarding CHOICES, Will reported that Open Enrollment will be from October 15 through December 7th. He has allocated 49 appointment slots over the timeframe where people can call or visit the Senior Center to book an appointment. Will expressed his thanks to those who support the CHOICES program in Enfield including Jason Neely, the NCAAA, Mary Keller and her Senior Center staff who book appointments and have made the use of a confidential appointment space at the Enfield Senior Center possible along with the Enfield IT department who have installed the technology needed to access the software and information needed to counsel. He also expressed thanks to the COA for their continued financial support of this program and to Justin Lopez who counsels through the Social Services Department.

G. Senior Tax Relief

Dave Goyette reported that the Senior Tax Relief Committee has been invited by John Wilcox to a meeting on September 17th at 1:00 p.m. in the Conference Room at the Enfield Senior Center to discuss the Senior Tax Relief program. He commented that he is looking forward to discussing some of the resident's concerns regarding this year's program. Of particular concern was how Trusts were viewed in verification of eligibility for this program. Dave will report back at the October meeting any information gathered from this meeting.

VI. Old Business

A. Social Services

Cindy Guerrerri reported that there will be a presentation on September 27th at Asnuntuck Community College of the Mental Health Coalition of which Alice Egan is the COA representative. This coalition will be kicking off its program with a distinguished group of content experts participating through ZOOM including the US Surgeon General and Senator Chris Murphy who will be discussing the SILO act of October 2023. The mission of this group is to provide support for mental health wellness and community conversation for the prevention of loneliness and isolation. She explained that a number of leadership members from the mental health sector, the faith community, police, homelessness group and others will be sharing experiences. Cindy said that she is pleased that CHR will be joining this discussion group and providing an additional perspective.

B. Friends of the Senior Center

There was no report due to Marlene Hoginski's absence, however, Alice Egan commented that this group is very generous in providing funding where there is a financial void for requests for the Senior Center. Much of the money for large requests comes from generous donations from the weekly bingo.

VI.I. New Business

A. COA Initiatives

Dave Goyette asked if there has been consideration in providing the funding for reprinting the old Blue Book. He reiterated that the estimate is \$3,750 for 5,000 copies with a plain cover through Minute Man Press who printed our previous book. Kay Tallarita asked if she could acquire an additional quote since she had another printer in mind who may provide a lower quote. With no objections, Kay will provide more information at the October meeting. Dave expressed concerns about encumbering the expense as soon as possible should any reductions to the COA budget be requested by the Town. He also asked who would like to Chair this reprinting effort. Will St. George offered to Co-Chair this project, but indicated that he will need help. Alice Egan offered to help, but cannot co-chair. Dave asked that consideration be made to co-chair for this project so that a co-chair can be named at the next meeting and the process begun.

B. Town Council Reports

Marie Pyznar apologized for her late arrival to the meeting, but indicated that there was no new news to report from the Town Council. She did, however, ask if she could participate in the September 17th meeting with John Wilcox regarding the Senior Tax Relief program since she has feedback from her constituents which she would like to discuss.

VIII. Announcements

Dave Goyette commented on a recent report indicating that there is a loneliness epidemic in seniors resulting in 26% of premature death. Cindy Guerreri commented that there will be some discussion of this issue at the September 27th presentation.

XI. Adjournment

With no further business to discuss, a motion to adjourn was made by Mary Ann Harris and seconded by Will St. George. It passed unanimously and Alice Egan adjourned the meeting at 3:25 p.m.

Next Meeting Wednesday, October 9, 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