

**TOWN OF ENFIELD COMMISSION ON AGING
MINUTES FOR WEDNESDAY, May 14, 2025 – 2:00 P.M.
ENFIELD SENIOR CENTER, 299 ELM STREET**

Attendance

Present: Mike Arnone Jr., Pauline Devino, Alice Egan, Howard Florian, Dave Goyette, Mary Ann Harris, Marlene Hoginski, Priscilla Linehan, Tim Slade, Kay Tallarita and Will St. George.

Absent (Excused): Bob Cressotti, Council Liaison, Cynthia Guerreri, Staff Liaison, Mary Keller, Enfield Senior Center Manager, Justin Lopez, Elderly Care Services Coordinator and Marie Pyznar, Council Liaison.

I. Welcome

Chairman Alice Egan opened the meeting at 2:05 p.m. and welcomed everyone. She thanked Will St. George for his thank you notes to each of the members for help with the recent update to the Blue Book.

II. Secretary's Report:

Alice Egan asked if everyone reviewed the minutes. With no corrections needed, Dave Goyette made a motion to accept the Secretary's report as presented and Marlene Hoginski seconded the motion which was carried through a show of hands.

III. Treasurer's Report:

Tim Slade presented the financial report and noted that the only expense for this month was for Verizon for the use of a phone for CHOICES. Tim indicated that there was a request of transfer of funds (\$1,000.00) from the Missions and Outreach account to cover the additional expense for the reprinting of the Blue Book for 2025 due to the increase in costs from the \$3,750 price to \$4,660.02. A majority of the members voted to increase the purchase order in an email response to Dave Goyette on March 21st based on a request by Alice Egan. The original purchase order will be adjusted due to the new pricing and Tim will be updating the Financial Report by \$1,000 to reflect this additional expense. Tim Slade also reported that the Donation Account for the defunct Senior Home Repair Program in the amount of \$10,356.20 was approved on 5/5/25 by the Town Council through resolution number 7218 allowing for the distribution of funds to the Friends of the Enfield Senior Center and to the Grandparents Raising Grandchildren account. Tim asked for a motion to confirm the distribution of funds from the Donation Account as approved through resolution Number 7218 by the Town Council on 5/5/25 to the Friends of the Enfield Center in the amount of \$5,000 to supplement senior lunches and \$5,356.20 to the Grandparents Raising Grandchildren program to supplement the camping program. Mary Ann Harris made the motion and Marlene Hoginski seconded with all members approving through a show of hands. Tim indicated that he will be contacting Cindy Guerreri to indicate approval by the Town Council for distribution of the funds as soon as possible. Dave Goyette asked for discussion about the remaining funds in the budget and presented quotes for the purchase of pens and letter openers with the Commission name for distribution at town wide events. After a review, the members voted to purchase yellow-colored openers and blue or black inked pens through a motion by Marlene Hoginski and second by Mary Ann Harris and approval through a show of hands by all. With no further discussion, Marlene Hoginski made a motion to accept the Treasurer's report with changes to be made and Howard Florian seconded. The report was approved through a show of hands.

Senior Center Focus

Mary Keller was absent, however, Alice Egan reported in her place that a Cinco de Mayo event sponsored by the Friends of the Enfield Senior Center is scheduled for Friday, May 16th with a Mariachi Band and Churro dessert. To date over 100 seniors are planning to attend. She further reported that the Friends are planning monthly events including entertainment. For June, the Friends will be sponsoring entertainment by the Savage Brothers Band at the June 6th Police Picnic.

V. STANDING COMMITTEE REPORTS

A. Symposium Work Group

There was no report this month.

B. Senior Living TV Program

Pat Linehan reported that the Executive Director and Secretary of the 100 Women Who Care Organization were interviewed on May 7th. This international group of about 40 local members choose one non-profit organization four times a year to donate \$100 each to. She also indicated that the last taping of the year will occur on 6/4/25.

C. Grandparents Raising Grandchildren

Kay Tallarita again thanked the members for their anticipated donation for camping expenses for the children involved in this program. She reported that 15 children have already been signed up for summer camp. Kay also mentioned that the Community Police spoke at the last meeting and were amazed at the number of grandparents raising grandchildren and expressed an interest in continuing to be involved with the program. Kay also reported that a picnic is scheduled for June 23rd and that the COA members are invited to attend.

D. Triad

Dave Goyette reported that there was a meeting last Tuesday where he, Will St. George and Howard Florian were present and that there is no meeting in June. He noted that a Fire/Life event is being scheduled for September 12th.

E. Choices/Senior Medicare Patrol

Will St. George reported that he recently participated in a Senior Medical Patrol refresher course and learned something about the recent federal cuts. He indicated that the CHOICES program and Senior Medical Patrol are being moved to CMS with no funds, the SHIP national training program may be going away as well as the Medicare Savings Program. Will noted that about 2 billion dollars could be taken away from the State of Connecticut through these cuts. The State Center for Advocacy estimates that 12.2 million Medicare/Medicaid people will be affected by funding cuts. He suggested that advocacy has an effect and that a letter writing campaign to our congressmen could be helpful in expressing disappointment with the federal cuts.

F. Senior Tax Relief

Dave Goyette reported that based on a 7-4 vote along party lines at the May meeting, the Town Council has decided not to renew the Senior Tax Relief program for the tax year 2025-2026 even though the COA Senior Tax Relief committee presented compelling facts and figures (which were not considered) to support the continuation of this program which had the support of Council Liaison, Bob Cressotti. Tim Slade commented that it seems over the last few years that an anti-Senior/Volunteer attitude exists due to the abrupt discontinuation of the Senior Repair Program and non-renewal of the Senior Tax Relief program after this year.

G. AARP Tax Aide/VITA Program

Mary Ann Harris reported that the AARP and VITA Tax Aide programs are concluded for this year with over 600 tax returns filed. She noted that many seniors opted not to file returns because they thought they did not have to, but Mary Ann reported that if a tax filing is not done, someone may use your name or you may be missing out on a refund. Dave Goyette offered congratulations to Mary Ann for her leadership in these programs over the last 11 years. Mary Ann again said that she wished to thank the Enfield Senior Center and Asnuntuck staffs who have been so helpful in providing scheduling assistance, technical assistance and paper and ink as needed for the program.

VI. Old Business

A. Social Services

Cindy Guerreri was not present so there was no report., however, Mike Arnone presented some summary notes from the April 23rd Community Connection session held to gather information for the Enfield Together Coalition task force.

VI. Old Business (continued)

A. Social Services (continued)

These are Mike's summary notes along with responses to a survey sent to all the Commission on Aging commissioners:

- There appears to be a generational divide as neighborhoods change and younger residents seem to not communicate to get to know each other.
- A lack of interaction between older adult residents and younger new residents.
- A neighborhood community appears to be small in scope.
- Neighbors only know each other that are close in proximity to their home.
- There appears to be a lack of civic pride as in the past.
- Town events seem to not reflect the interest of the older population.
- Communication through technology seems to be an obstacle.
- COVID seemed to have taken the sense of community cohesiveness away from neighbors.
- Transportation routes are an obstacle.
- Some boarder residents feel connected to other communities outside of their neighborhoods.
- There was a sense of belonging to the neighborhood when it came to watching out for other residents in the neighborhood.

B. Friends of the Senior Center

Marlene Hoginski reported that the 6 new chairs for the Center's Library (compliments of the Friends of the Senior Center) have been received and that 4 new treadmills have been purchased through donations from the wills of deceased members and 1 by the Friends. The Friends are also purchasing replacement cushions in the Gazebo. Marlene also mentioned that snacks for the monthly in-house movies are being provided free of charge by the Friends.

VI.I. New Business

A. COA Initiatives

2025 Blue Book

Dave Goyette offered kudos to Will St. George for an excellent job in coordinating the updating of the Blue Book for reprinting. He mentioned that 5,000 copies will be delivered in the next week and needs volunteers to help distribute 1,000 copies to Town Hall, the Library, Social Services and the Senior Center and 500 copies to the COA for the Police Department and other services like the Food Shelf. Dave suggested that each Commissioner take 50 each for distribution; they will be available at DSS. When discussing advertising about the new publication, it was suggested that there be a news release in the Journal Inquirer and Senior Center newsletter. Pat Linehan offered to help with publication of the news releases.

B. Town Council Reports

Due to the absence of Council Liaisons, there was no report this month.

VIII. Announcements

No new announcements.

XI. Adjournment

With no further business to discuss, Will St. Goerge made a motion to adjourn and Tim Slade seconded. It passed unanimously and Alice Egan adjourned the meeting at 3:40 p.m.

Next Meeting Wednesday, June 11, 2025, 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