

Commission on Aging
Minutes of Regular Meeting
January 27, 2014

MINUTES ARE SUBJECT TO APPROVAL BY COMMISSION ON AGING

The Commission on Aging held a regular meeting on Monday, January 27, 2014 at the Senior Center, 14 Riverside Road, Sandy Hook, Connecticut. Chairman Curt Symes called the meeting to order at 5:07 p.m.

Members Present: JoAnne Albanesi, Karin Aurelia, John Boccuzzi, Joanne Davis (Co-Vice Chair), LeReine Frampton, Margaret Imbro, Joan Plouffe, Larry Schneider, Curt Symes (Chair), Sheila Torres (Co-Vice Chair) and Anna Wiedemann. **Excused:** Anne Rothstein. **Support & Advisory Present:** Marilyn Place, Director of Senior Services, Ann Piccini, Municipal Agent for the Elderly, and Linda Manganaro, Executive Director of Nunnawauk Meadows. **Also Present:** First Selectman Pat Llodra and about thirty members of the public.

Brief Announcements - Public Acknowledgements. Mr. Symes noted that the Newtown Basketball team will host a Senior Event on February 6, including a dinner and a basketball game. Sign-up information is available at the Senior Center and on Charter CV-21 news.

Minutes of December 16, 2013 Meeting. Ms. Imbro motioned to approve the minutes of December 16, 2013, second by Ms. Wiedemann. All were in favor.

Chairman Report (Attachment A). Mr. Symes discussed his report and noted that 2014 promises to be an exciting year for the Seniors of Newtown with the recently announced GE Grant for a New Community Center which would encompass Parks & Rec Pools and a New Senior Center. More information can be found on the Newtown Website - News & Announcements - Newtown Community Center Q&A posting of January 23.

First Selectman Update. First Selectman Llodra discussed the Newtown Community Center project (Attachment B). She noted that a number of GE employees in town asked how they could help Newtown. Their initial efforts concentrated on the immediate needs of the community and four GE executives have been working with the Town. GE wanted to do something substantial for the Town and awarded a Grant of \$10 million to create a new Community Center facility and \$5 million to manage the facility over 5 years. The only conditions are that the facility be intended to meet the social and civic needs of our community. Meeting the needs of the seniors and other functions is being planned. It may be located on the Fairfield Hills campus.

Mr. Boccuzzi said that some members of the Senior Center are confused about the fact that there seems to be two discussions going on, one about a community center and

one about a senior center. There does not seem to be a clear distinction. First Selectman Llodra said that we are at the requirements and planning phase and continued research is being done. She suggested giving time for the study group to continue its work. Mr. Boccuzzi said that no one came to the Senior Center and First Selectmen Llodra said that we are not there yet but we are holding on to 10,000 square feet for the senior center side of the building. She said that GE did not say that a senior center needs to be included, that was her idea. She said that the long range plans of the NYA are not known yet. Her vision is to have a building with the senior center and pools with a connection to the existing NYA building so that NYA has a relationship with the community building. She said that we are at Phase #1 of possibly three with CIP funds being used to fund the other phases. Mr. Symes said that the requirements must be validated and that he, members of the CoA and Senior Services and members of the Senior Center have now been reviewing requirements for years. He said that we are carefully assessing the requirements and will be holding information gathering sessions. First Selectman Llodra noted that experts will design the building, not the users of the building. Mr. Symes noted that the seniors would have use of the pools and other new P&R facilities, as well as, the benefits of any relationship established with the NYA.

A resident asked how we will determine the needs. First Selectman Llodra said that will be up to the design team and the building team. A resident asked how large the entire building will be; First Selectman Llodra said that this is not known but we should know more in the next two weeks. She is hoping for about 30,000 square feet. A resident asked what the overall cost will be. First Selectman Llodra said that a business plan must be set up. A resident noted that the seniors in Ridgefield do not usually use their community center section of the building. First Selectman Llodra plans to visit other community and senior centers. She said that dedicated space is important so that seniors do not share space with other groups. Ms. Frampton asked if where the building came down is dictating the size of the building. First Selectman Llodra said that this site is being looked at. A resident said that hopefully the building will be more efficient than the present building. First Selectman Llodra said an architect will be selected; then input will be solicited from the users. Mr. Boccuzzi said that in his experience input was sought earlier in the process on projects he has worked on. First Selectman Llodra said that we are not there yet. Mr. Symes suggested that round table discussions every two weeks or monthly at the center might be scheduled by Ms. Place and Mr. Boccuzzi. First Selectman Llodra noted that taxes will fund the building except for the \$12 annual fee that the seniors now pay. She feels that Social Services should then take over the current Senior Center. Then we should look at what Town Hall South can be used for. A resident asked why the seniors cannot take over Edmond Town Hall. First Selectman Llodra said that the building is under the authority of the Edmond Town Hall Board of Managers, not the Town. A resident asked if Reed School is being closed. First Selectman Llodra is not certain but we should be asking if we need seven school buildings and what could we do with a closed school. First Selectman Llodra said that a feasibility study needs to be done on the site that is being considered for the Community Center.

Unfinished Business

New Senior Center Requirements Update (Attachment C). Mr. Symes noted that the requirements analysis begun in 2005 and 2007 were being utilized as input to the current process. A yoga instructor here then noted that class attendees do not want to do classes at NYA but want to do classes at the senior center. Mr. Symes said that position has been articulated by the Director of the Senior Center for years.

Newtown Senior Survey Status - Community Relations & Outreach Team. Ms. Torres distributed a synopsis of the team meetings (Attachment D). A draft of the survey is being completed and should be ready by the next Commission meeting. The Commission will then be asked for their input. The team will continue outreach efforts, possibly including another Open House and participation at other town forums for greater visibility to the community of Senior Services and the CoA.

CoA By-Laws Revision Status. Ms. Davis noted that the team asked for input to the current by-laws and have not received feedback. They will have a draft at the next Commission meeting or possibly the following meeting. Mr. Boccuzzi questioned authority in the by-laws that is not noted in the ordinance. Ms. Davis advised him to send his comments to one of the team members.

New Business

Staffing of CoA 2014 Teams & Initiatives. Mr. Symes asked that the Commission look into grants that may be available. He would like to get a team together for this. He asked that the Commission advise him via email what items they are passionate about and want to work on personally across the year.

Treasurer's Report (Attachment E). Mr. Schneider met with the Finance Director and his staff with the goal of by the February Report providing the Commission with more detailed Treasurer's Report information.

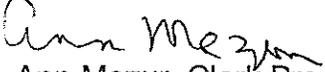
Director of Senior Services Report (Attachment F). Ms. Place discussed her report. She noted that there is a new art teacher beginning Feb 4. She would like to resume sending the newsletters out to all the seniors in town. The mailing list was cut down a few years ago as a budget cut. Ms. Wiedemann suggested leaving extra copies of the newsletter in the town buildings.

Municipal Agent for the Elderly Report (Attachment G). Ms. Piccini discussed her report. She noted that the oil companies are not making deliveries to those who still owe them money but Sippin and Holcomb will make a delivery to people in need.

Other Senior Advisory Reports. Ms. Manganaro reported that the Nunnawauk Meadows Residents Association is very active. Nunnawauk is planning several activities this year and has expressed interest in hosting various senior information forums.

Public Participation. None noted beyond the earlier discussions.

Adjournment. Upon motion by Ms. Frampton and second by Ms. Albanesi, the meeting adjourned at 7:10 p.m.


Ann Mazur, Clerk Pro Tem

Newtown Commission on Aging (CoA) – Chairman Report – 01/27/14 Meeting:

As I look out across 2014 for both the CoA and Newtown, it promises to be an exciting year. We are emerging from the healing of 12/14 as a stronger community and a fully staffed, highly motivated Commission with strong vision and support from across Newtown. The 1st time Senior Resources Guide, presence at both the Cultural Arts Festival in September & The Booth Library Book Fair in July and the Charter CV-21 Local Edition segment have set the stage for greater senior presence across the community. In fact, as I interact around town at meetings, the library, church on Sunday, the NYA, or at the BigY and Carluzzi, people now comment about senior activities and ask about the CoA.

Our First Selectman, Pat Llodra, has joined us today to talk about the GE Grant and recent Q&A regarding the Newtown Community Center, incorporating a new Senior Center.

The new center will provide the basis for an expanded set of combined Senior, Exercise and Community Programs and realize the dream of many years for a new facility here in town. We will be talking more about requirements, planning and the opportunity for new programs in greater detail during the meeting and in subsequent meetings across the year.

Finally, the SPT has been focusing on identifying and initially prioritizing a list of 2014 Activities for the Commissioners to decide what they want to undertake. Given the feedback to date, the key initiatives will include the New Senior Center work, the creation of a town-wide Survey, the pursuit of Grants for funding New Programs & Facilities, the updating of the By-Laws and Senior Resources Guide and continuing the work on the Mission Statement, Strategic Objectives and Strategy.

We have also now established the opportunity for a Senior-oriented Curriculum of key topics at Newtown Continuing Education and a Charter TV Series of Newtown Senior information.

Respectfully Submitted,

Curt Symes

Chair, Newtown CoA



Q&A #1 – NEWTOWN COMMUNITY CENTER

On November 18, 2013, the Town of Newtown announced that it will receive a \$15 million multi-year grant from GE for the development, construction, and operation of a community center. The Town will be issuing a series of Q&A documents to ensure the community is informed throughout the building process. We welcome any questions from the public and will work to incorporate expanded questions and answers on future Q&As. Question? Please submit it here: http://www.newtown-ct.gov/Public_Documents/index

QUESTION	ANSWER
Why did GE make this donation?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • GE has 150+ employees who live in Newtown. Jeff Immelt, Chairman and CEO of GE said, "GE has been part of the Newtown community for many years and we are committed to supporting our friends, family and neighbors as they continue to heal."
How did GE decide on a community center for their donation?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Over the last year, GE Newtown colleagues identified several ideas to help the town and identified that a community center was one of the town's greatest needs.
What is the intent of the donation?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The intent of the donor (GE) is to help Newtown create a facility that does not exist today and which will have programming designed to meet community needs. Of the \$15 million, \$10 million will be committed to the development and construction of this new facility. The remaining \$5 million will be dedicated to operating costs for the center over five years, including the hiring of experienced professional staff.
Will GE have any ownership rights to the facility?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • No, the community center will be owned and operated by the Town of Newtown.
What steps/actions has the Town taken to advance this project?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Several months ago the Town put together an informal, ad hoc, study group of representatives from the Commission on Aging, Parks and Recreation, town department heads, and community leaders. That group has begun the process of identifying current and future needs as well as reviewing the research done over past years on the development of a community center and a senior center.
Where will the facility be located?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A feasibility study will determine if the community center can be added to the Fairfield Hill Campus. The original plan for the community center located the facility on the site of the former Litchfield hall/Yale Lab buildings. It is important that this project integrate well with long-range plans for the NYA.
How would Newtown seniors and other residents be involved with this project?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • It is important that the voices of the community are heard in the development of this facility. The active participation of the Parks and Recreation Commission and the Commission on Aging, along with the directors of those departments is essential. Further, general public input will be solicited at many steps along the way. Plans for the facility would progress through multiple public hearings.
When do you expect the community center construction to be completed?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Town's goal is to have design and construction complete in 2016.

Senior Center Requirements Update – January 27, 2014

Sheila Torres

- There was a Community Center Team meeting in January and the team visited the Ridgefield Community Center. Selectman Pat Llodra also attended the meeting. Curt Symes and Sheila Torres plan to go back to visit Founders Hall, the Ridgefield Senior Center.
- **Here's What We Learned after the Last Visit:**
 - Once again, the director emphasized the need for storage. He wishes he had planned for 30 percent more storage.
 - Director emphasized the importance of making spaces multi-functional or multi-purpose and not encouraging the various groups or classes to get used to calling something "their room" because you want to maintain maximum flexibility.
 - Founders Hall members use the Recreation Center for their exercise, swimming and other activities. The buildings are adjacent to one another.
 - It's important to emphasize the parking and site work needs with the architects because they sometimes want to minimize costs in those areas, but it is very important.
 - Parking for more than 200 spots requires state permit and traffic studies and takes 1 to 2 years for the state to approve. It's important to put requests in early. He put in 195 and added 45 later because they had to do a fast track. However, he says he really needs 350 spaces, especially during events and shift changeovers, etc.
 - Ridgefield uses other facilities when there are bus trips so that they can alleviate parking issues. For example, the seniors will part at a local church and the bus will do pick up and drop off there.
- **Next Steps:**
 - Will meet with Marilyn Place to review current description of senior center requirements. We were unable to meet before the holidays and her vacation.

- Will provide Requirements Team and COA with copy of current requirements list once Marilyn has provided input
- Will attend next Community Center Team meeting and provide revised requirements and update COA on progress at next meeting.

Community Relations Team Report – January 2014

- CRO Team Met Twice in January to Review Accomplishments for 2013 and Continue Plans for 2014
- In 2013, Team’s Plan Was Shared with the Rest of the Commission as Follows:
 - 1) Complete and distribute Senior Services Guide
 - 2) Create and launch a “traveling exhibit”
 - 3) Develop a “Senior Census”
 - 4) Organize and host a “Sunday Café” event
- **Goal 1:** Senior Services Guide completed and distributed
- **Goal 2:** Traveling Exhibit Developed and Used at **Library Book Sale** and **Arts Festival** to Reach Out to and Engage Residents and Other Agencies
- **Goal 3:** The Senior Survey Goal will be the primary focus of the Team in 2014, especially in light of the new community center and the need to obtain input so that we can tailor programming accordingly.
- **Goal 4:** The team will continue its outreach through the Library Book Sale and Arts Festival, but will also do a Meet and Greet “Sunday Café” event to engage residents in a more personal way. This may also help in encouraging residents to participate in the senior survey.

Community Relations Team 2014 Plan

- 1) Develop, distribute, analyze and communicate results of COA’s First Senior Resident Survey
- 2) Launch a communications campaign that will encourage residents to participate in the survey
- 3) Use regular outreach events as an opportunity to encourage survey participation. Develop a personal outreach event that will bring out those residents who normally do not attend senior activities, invite them and their families and engage them so that they are enthusiastic about participating in the survey.
- 4) Continue Book Sale and Arts Fest participation, but add Sunday Café event and perhaps an Open House.

Survey Plan/Tactics – DRAFT

1. Develop brief, paper-based survey that will be mailed to individual senior residents using the voter registration list. It will include a stamped return envelope. Focus on the following age groups: 55 – 60 (upcoming seniors) and 60 plus.
2. Questions and survey design is being done with assistance from Anne Rothstein who has professional experience doing surveys and Paul Lundquist, currently on the Legislative Council, who will review our survey and methodology and act as consultant. Paul was the designer of the Fairfield Hills survey done a few years ago.
3. Survey responses will be tallied by the team during a “Data Dump Party” during which we will enter responses into a spread sheet.
4. The CRO Team is looking into grants to help us pay for the production and mailing of the survey.
5. The communications plan will include articles, flyers and talking points prior to the distribution of the survey, including photos of the envelopes so that when it arrives in the mail, residents will recognize it.
6. The team has drafted a preliminary questionnaire that focuses on questions related to programming and activities as well as topics that are important to survey participants. Survey takers will rank their responses and all questions will provide participants with the opportunity It asks survey participants to respond based on whether they would participate in them. This will help inform programming choices in the future.

1/27/2014

E

SENIOR SERVICES GIFT FUND					FRANK KNOTTS	BALANCE
DATE	RECEIPTS/DISBURSEMENTS	C/R	C/D	TRUST FUND		
7/1/13	Beginning Balance				36,954.36	
8/7/13	Cash Receipts			579.25	37,533.61	
8/5/13	CK #10258 Holiday Hill		(261.00)		37,272.61	
8/6/13	CK #10283 Getaway Tours		(675.00)		36,597.61	
8/6/13	CK #10314 Marilyn Place - driver tip		(92.00)		36,505.61	
8/9/13	Cash Receipts - Junior Women	50.00			36,555.61	
9/26/13	Cash Receipts - Mary Hanlon	10.00			36,565.61	
9/26/13	Cash Receipts - Art Gottlieb	10.00			36,575.61	
10/31/13	Cash Receipts			579.25	37,154.86	
10/31/13	CK #11423 Image One		(510.00)		36,644.86	
11/14/13	Cash Receipts - Bazaar - for holiday party	2,171.25			38,816.11	
11/20/13	Cash Receipts - Ann Marie Macey - for activities	1,000.00			39,816.11	
11/22/13	Cash Receipts - Bazaar - for holiday party	40.00			39,856.11	
11/27/13	CK #11726 Capellaro's		(1,095.00)		38,761.11	
11/27/13	CK #11730 Vinnie Carr		(450.00)		38,311.11	
12/4/13	Cash Receipts - anonymous - for activities	45.00			38,356.11	
12/4/13	Cash Receipts - Bazaar	70.00			38,426.11	
12/16/13	Cash Receipts - holiday party raffle	159.00			38,585.11	
1/8/14	Cash Receipts - Archdeacon Family Foundation	1,000.00			39,585.11	
		4,555.25	(3,083.00)	1,158.50	39,585.11	

AARP Income Tax assistance is schedule on every Monday 9-12am starting Feb 10 through April 7, by appointment only. This year tax assistance will be held in the new addition...better light and space.

Exercise class won't be interrupted as in the past.

Having two exercise classes from 9-10, second 10:30 -11:30 on Mondays and Wednesdays has helped with the overcrowded issues. Each class can hold 36 (chairs) very comfortably. Members can only come to one of the morning classes not both. No one has been turned away due to space issues.

The scope of all exercise and health/well being classes has been the main focus this whole year and have been successful.

Two new classes were introduced this year:

1. Chair Pilates to improve balance and posture.
2. Strength Training to help improve ability to perform daily activities

Although these classes are opened to all members...they are geared for the less active senior. Just like Chair Yoga, these classes help those with knee and/or hip limitations.

Plans for 2014 special programs:

- Book Discussion group
- Political and military history series
- Wireless laptop/notebook classes (we now have wifi)
- Genealogy Program
- New Art classes (will start Tuesday Feb 4 @ 10)

Lynn Welsh a retired art teacher and a member of the SC will begin Tuesday Feb 4 as our new art instructor. Her work is on display. She's very talented and creative and I believe she will be asset to our seniors.

Now that the building has wifi..... I'm in dialogue with Kevin Cleary (who facilitates a Genealogy program in other Centers) going over schedules etc. He was a speaker here on Jan 10 and for those in attendance there was a lot of interest.

We have a large group of retired professional members whereas in the next newsletter I will be doing an insert...similar to a survey... in asking for new programming that they may be interested in... would they be interested in facilitating one?

Looking for new volunteers.

It could be a hobby...crafts....the book discussion group....Poem reading.....

It wouldn't cost and it would be a good way for me to continue tapping into our richest resource....our seniors.

I've met with Valerie Culbertson, Director of Healing Newtown.....she has gotten a donation of a variety of instruments and she is planning an inter-generational program from seniors to different school age students. This will be an 8 week course with acoustic, percussion etc. At the end of the course the students will be paired w/ a student in the Best Buddy Program at the High School and they will have a little concert. This is new and in the works. Sounds exciting. Update next month.

2014 is going to be a great year...being resilient and productive.

Marilyn



***** \$125 was donated to the Gift fund in memory of frank Furze



Director of Social Services / Municipal Agent for the Elderly Report for January 27, 2014

Fuel Assistance requests are a majority of what we are doing. Last week I had three families and one senior household without fuel. I needed all income and assets, bank statements for each one. Two households did not have any income at this time. One waiting for unemployment to start. Sippin Fuel called that the elderly household was without fuel. They did deliver 50 gallons but the seniors owe them money so they will not deliver till they receive payment. The husband is in a nursing home for rehabilitation and the wife has dementia. She was communicating enough to help with getting the information I needed to complete a fuel application. We have completed one hundred sixty four applications. Eighty -five of those applications are for seniors and disabled. Seventy-nine applications were for younger families. Several new people applying.

Holiday Baskets for Thanksgiving is up to 81. That is sixteen over last year. Twenty of the applications are for senior and ten for younger disabled. We had fifty-two young families. We see each of the applicants and fill out the forms.

We had a total of eighty-three Christmas Baskets. Twenty-one seniors. This year I asked for the adopting families to get gift certificates for help with an oil delivery or food gift cards as most of the elderly don't need another coat or sweater. One senior called to thank us for the oil. I had nine younger disabled. This year we helped fifty-three families. It is amazing to see each year how much is given by the people of Newtown for our low income families. The gym at Fraser Woods School was filled.

I do not have the figures from Salvation Army bell ringing. December 14th was snowing but we did get donations at each of the sites. I have spent over three thousand of the budgets for requests already.

Donations for the food pantry have slowed down but we do have enough to fill the shelves. I put together food for a man who has a home health aide. State assistance is helping but the money to keep him home is a lot. It is much cheaper than putting him in a nursing home.

I had another call this week from Walgreens that a customer had not been able to pay for his medication. His income is good but again the home health aide is costing more than his income. He has maxed out all of his credit cards. I will set up a meeting with him to find out if there are any programs to help. All programs have income criteria.

I completed six Medicaid applications and eighteen redeterminations for Medicare Savings application. **MEDICARE SAVINGS PROGRAM** is now the name for QMB which pays for the supplemental insurance with the state but the doctor has to be a state provider. QMB and SLMB and ALMB pay for the Part B \$104.90 and the Part D for Prescriptions which is deducted from Social Security checks each month. They get extra help for their medications. This means that they pay only \$2.65 to \$6.60 per medication.