

**Commission on Aging  
Regular Meeting  
Monday, March 16, 2015 @ 5:00 p.m.**

THESE MINUTES ARE SUBJECT TO THE APPROVAL BY THE COMMISSION ON AGING

The Commission on Aging held a regular meeting on Monday, March 16, 2015 at the Senior Center, 14 Riverside Road, Sandy Hook, CT. Chairman Curt Symes called the meeting to order at 5:03 p.m.

**Present:** Curt Symes, Shelia Torres, Joanne Albanesi, Margaret Imbro, John Boccuzzi, Anne Rothstein, Claire Theune, Anna Wiedemann, Barbara Bloom

**Absent:** Joanne Davis, LeReine Frampton, Leah Lentocho

**Also Present:** Marilyn Place, Ann LoBosco, 5 members of the public

**ANNOUNCEMENTS:** Mr. Symes stated that progress is being made toward the new Community Center and the public will be able to vote on the acceptance of the GE grant for this project at the upcoming referendum on April 28, 2015 (as well as both the town budget and the school budget). This allows for an additional 6 weeks to help the community understand the Community Center project. More articles will be written for publication in "The Bee" and a facebook page (Newtown Community Center) has been created to provide information about the details of the project including the Q&A #3 as well as an architect's rendering.

**PUBLIC PARTICIPATION:** Officer Mary Helen McCarthy stated that she supports the relevant issue of "Senior Bullying" which was presented in an article in "The Bee". Mr. Symes agreed that it has become a national issue.

Karin Aurelia, 23 Cherry Street, stated that at last month's COA meeting the same subject of senior bullying was brought up and she feels that some board members may be illustrating similar behavior during meetings. She said that Marilyn Place is the Director of Senior Services and has all the experience needed to handle Senior Center related issues. She said the role of the COA with respect to the Senior Center should be an advisory role and would like to see more communication between Ms. Place and the board. Mr. Symes stated that in the Charter of the COA the terminology reads that the role and responsibility of the COA is to work with the Director of Senior Services and Senior Services works under the auspices of the COA. Discussion followed.

Ms. Aurelia also stated that the money in the Gift Fund should only be used by Ms. Place for programs directly relating to the Senior Center. Mr. Symes stated that the COA also receives donations which are deposited into the Gift Fund. He has spoken with Finance Director Robert Tait about the matter and will follow through on clarifying the use of such funds.

**MINUTES OF FEBRUARY 23, 2015 MEETING:** Mr. Symes asked whether there were any changes to be made to February's minutes.

**Ms. Wiedemann made a motion to accept the minutes of February 23, 2015,** seconded by Ms. Albanesi and unanimously approved.

**CHAIRMAN'S REPORT:** (Attachment A) Mr. Symes stated that we are at a critical juncture with respect to the success of the new Community Center Phase 1. Three information sessions have already been held at the Senior Center as well as the initial Parks & Recreation session. He stated the public still has questions about the overall intent of the project. He is hoping that future articles in The Bee and continued discussion will help the public embrace the concept.

Mr. Symes reported that he and John Boccuzzi have met with an attorney about the process of creating a 501c3 organization. He feels that a non-profit designation would have value in helping to finance and facilitate programs at both the current and new center. Mr. Boccuzzi stated that the attorney has been donating his time to advise them up to this point; however, there would be fees present payable to the government if the 501c3 is created. He also said there is quite a bit of paperwork involved in the process and Ms. Wiedemann offered to assist the attorney. Mr. Boccuzzi pointed out that this would be a separate entity from the COA and that no Gift Fund money would be used in the endeavor. Mr. Symes said that identifying people who are fundraisers would be a critical element to make this successful.

Mr. Symes addressed the article in The Bee about the possibility of the community sharing the 10,000 square foot space designated for the Senior Center. He asked commission members to network with seniors and get thoughts on a temporary shared space (until Phase 2 & 3 are completed). Ms. Albanesi said that if Phase 2 & 3 of the project are turned down it could affect the "temporary" shared space. Mr. Symes warned that if Phase 1 does not happen it would be unfortunate for seniors and any future programs. Mr. Boccuzzi feels that whether or not Phase 1 passes, there is a strong need for a solid, well designed senior center for the 5,000 seniors residing in Newtown.

**TREASURER'S REPORT:** (Attachment B) Ms. Wiedemann presented her report and asked if there were any questions.

**DIRECTOR OF SENIOR SERVICES REPORT:** (Attachment C) Ms. Place presented her report pointing out that numbers were a little low due the cold weather and is hoping to see more activity with Spring coming. She asked for a check in the amount of \$120.36 from the Gift Fund to cover expenses/paper products for the Community Forum Information Sessions held at the Senior Center. Mr. Symes stated that he will send a thank you to LeReine Frampton for donating the food for the events.

**Mr. Boccuzzi made a motion to allocate \$120.36 from the Gift Fund to cover supplies for the information sessions,** seconded by Ms. Wiedemann and unanimously approved.

Ms. Place said that she met with Reverend Jim Solomon and they are in the process of planning a Senior Sensitivity Training session for April 1, 2015 for some members of the COA and members of the Newtown Inter Faith Clergy Association. Following the training, she would like to see the Senior Center, Nunnawauk Meadows, and the Police Department involved in “self-help” discussion groups to promote awareness. Ms. Wiedemann suggested Meals on Wheels be invited to attend the training as well. Mr. Boccuzzi commended Ms. Place for pursuing this type of training.

Newtown Youth & Family Services will be holding its annual “Independent Living Day” on April 25, 2015 and they are looking for volunteers. Ms. Place is encouraging people to be involved in this very rewarding event.

**MUNICIPAL AGENT FOR THE ELDERLY:** Due to Ms. Piccini’s absence, Mr. Symes presented her report. He commented that many seniors are not aware of the functions of the Municipal Agent and the services provided. He was hoping the Senior Resource Guide would help make seniors aware of key services but feels there is still some work to do to educate seniors. Ms. Place suggested having a “Senior Fair”, somewhat like the Health Fair organized by Health Director Donna Culbert. She suggested making it an annual event. Discussion followed.

**UNFINISHED BUSINESS:**

*Community Relations & Outreach Update* – Ms. Torres stated that the team has not been able to meet this month but will have several things on the agenda for next month including the Book Sale, Arts Festival and goals for 2015.

Ms. Torres noted that she and Ann Piccini will be getting together very soon to discuss the Emergency Contact List which will be generated from the Q&A Survey.

*Grants Activities Update* – Mr. Boccuzzi reported that he closed all the loops on the 3 grants he has been working on and expects to be in a good place when they are finalized. He is also looking at a Cooperative Grant with the NYA to offer actual classes. Mr. Boccuzzi asked Ms. Place in what areas should we next focus. She said cultural and social expansion opportunities should be explored.

Mr. Boccuzzi stated that grant writing services can be very expensive and should be looked at carefully. Mr. Symes suggested tapping into our senior community to get help pursuing grants. Ms. Place suggested using The Bee to create awareness.

*New Community Center Information Sessions Update* – Ms. Torres said she will be scheduling a special meeting of committee members in early April to continue discussion.

**NEW BUSINESS:**

*Discuss COA Commissioner Assignments* – Mr. Symes stated that 2015 could be challenging and asked that each member think about on which specific team they would like to work. At that

point, priorities can be set and they can move forward. Mr. Symes said he would like to review the write-in data from the Q&A Survey, and Ms. Rothstein stated she will compile a spreadsheet from the data which will help set priorities.

*Discuss Communication Options/Vehicles to Newtown Seniors* – Mr. Symes asked for suggestions on how to reach the 5,000 seniors in Newtown and encourage them to become members as well as get involved and volunteer at the Senior Center. Officer McCarthy said that she has the opportunity to meet with many seniors and would be happy to hand out flyers/business cards in order to help in the process.

*Discuss Status of Motions* – With respect to last month's motion to advertise the vote on the acceptance of the GE grant at Edmond Town Hall, Ms. Torres stated she will follow up and send members the sample slide of what will be shown on the screen and then move forward. Mr. Symes asked whether any progress was made on the motion to offer an exercise class on Tuesdays and Thursdays between 4 and 5 p.m. Ms. Imbro stated that seniors indicated on the Q&A Survey that more flexible times were offered for these classes. Ms. Place reminded everyone of the time restraints on town employees. The normal work day is 8:00 a.m. to 4:30 p.m. which does not give much flexibility for these classes. Mr. Symes said that in the proposal for the new Community Center additional staffing is included which could facilitate the scheduling of such classes

**PUBLIC PARTICIPATION:** Rudy Magnan, Watkins Drive, stated he would like to volunteer his services to teach thinking skills to seniors. He feels that the changes in the Tax Relief Program for Seniors in Newtown have resulted in misleading seniors.

There being no further business, **Ms. Albanesi made a motion to adjourn the meeting at 6:53 p.m.**, seconded by Barbara Bloom and unanimously approved.

Respectfully submitted,

Ann LoBosco, Clerk

# Attachment A

## Newtown Commission on Aging (CoA) – Chairman Report – 3/16/15 Meeting

Welcome to our March CoA meeting. As I had mentioned at our February meeting, 2015 holds the promise to be an exciting and potentially outstanding year for both the CoA and the Seniors of Newtown.

In addition to our major initiatives in process, like the Survey and Grants work, we will continue our focus over these next few meeting on the critical path activities that will be essential to the success of the new Newtown Community Center Phase I, embracing Community Spaces, Senior Spaces and an Aquatics Facility. The feedback, to date, from the Information Sessions that were hosted here at the Senior Center (3) and the initial Parks & Recreation session have been both enlightening and encouraging. Most people have understood and embraced the concept of a three-phase approach to delivering a complete Community Center for Newtown over a period of time. However, given the past history and attempts at implementing a New Center, there are those doubters who continue to question the overall intent of the project. A Newtown Community Center Facebook page has been set-up to provide timely and ongoing information regarding details of the project. Recently, a new Q&A #3 as well as Architect's Rendering or Overview Schematic has been posted with very informative and helpful information.

Here is the link to the [Newtown Community Center Facebook Page](#) – please familiarize your selves with its content.

The Community Relations & Outreach team has been meeting and will be discussing their activities, and the Grants Initiative is now taking shape. As an adjunct and extension of the current grants work in process, we have recently interacted with a local Newtown Attorney for insight, guidance and counsel on both the process of creating and administering a 501c3 non-profit organization. This will be discussed further in ensuing meetings across 2015. The 501c3 approach would help to finance and facilitate the outfitting of facilities needed for new programs by both the current and new center, enabled by the GE Foundation Gift-Grant.

As we move into 2Q15 sheila Torres and I have been discussing structures for the Commissioners to organize their work activities around and we will discuss further at the meeting.

In addition, we need to continue our discussions on ways to more effectively and globally communicate to the Seniors of Newtown. An upcoming example is to make Seniors aware of the “free” Shrek the Musical by the Newtown Middle School Drama Club planned for March 26<sup>th</sup> at 2:30pm at the NMS Cafe.

Finally, I want to mention my thoughts for us as a Commission to consider conducting or participating in a “CoA Visioning Process for the Seniors of Newtown” as a part of our longer term Strategic Plan work needed by 2016.

Respectfully submitted,

Curt Symes

Chair, Newtown COA

*Attachment B*

SENIOR SERVICES GIFT FUND

DATE	RECEIPTS/DISBURSEMENTS	C/R	C/D	FRANK KNOTTS	
				TRUST FUND	BALANCE
7/1/13	Beginning Balance				41,995.66
7/22/14	Trust Distribution			609.76	42,605.42
8/1/14	CK. #14903 Holiday Hill		(270.00)		42,335.42
8/1/14	CK. #15024 Michael's at the Grove		(200.00)		42,135.42
9/4/14	CK. #15537 Superior Signs		(340.00)		41,795.42
9/4/14	CK. #15468 Minuteman Press		(485.00)		41,310.42
9/18/14	CK. #15611 John Bocuzzi		(61.24)		41,249.18
9/18/14	T-14601 Trust Distribution			491.00	41,740.18
10/16/14	CK. #16219 Andrea Zimmermann		(281.25)		41,458.93
10/22/14	T-21447 Trust Distribution			609.76	42,068.69
11/13/14	CK. #16575 Sean McKee- Party Entertainment		(250.00)		41,818.69
11/13/14	CK. #16578 Michael's At the Grove - Party		(490.00)		41,328.69
11/21/14	T-27757 Cash Receipts			10.00	41,338.69
12/1/14	CK. #16894 CW Resources - Senior Nutrition Srv		(240.00)		41,098.69
12/16/14	T-30470 Holiday Raffle			71.00	41,169.69
1/28/15	Trust Distribution			598.40	41,768.09
			(2,617.49)	2,389.92	41,768.09

**NEWTOWN SENIOR CENTER  
 Director of Senior Services  
 February 24, 2015 – March 13, 2015**

*Attachment C*

**PROGRAMS                      NUMBER OF ATTENDANTS (February)**

Zumba Gold	20
Exercise	60
Floor Yoga (2 days)	14
Chair Yoga (2 day)	61
Cards	32
Mah Jong	6
Chorus	13
Bingo/Keno	21
Lunch	50
Knitting	21
Cards (craft)	47
Quilting/sewing	6
Walk-Ins	27
Billiards/ping pong	16
Trips	42
Newsletter	7
Wii	
Movie	
Painting/Art	
Special events	50
Tai Chi	15
Entertainment	
AARP Safe Driving	
Ballroom Line dance	38
Current Events Discussion	13
Spanish Lessons	17
Speakers	26
Chair Pilates	19
Strength & Balance	23

**Attendance Daily:**

<b>Monday</b>	<b>Tuesday</b>	<b>Wed.</b>	<b>Thurs</b>	<b>Friday</b>
<b>33</b>	<b>109</b>	<b>228</b>	<b>166</b>	<b>158</b>

**MONTHLY ATTENDANCE**

**694**

#### **COMPLETED EVENTS:**

- Information sessions on expanded senior center Feb 26 @ 3  
Saturday March 7 @ 11am and 1pm
- Spirituality Discussion Group Part2 March 10 @ 2:00
- Annual special fish luncheon March 13

#### **UPCOMING EVENTS:**

- 4<sup>th</sup> Grade Girl Scouts Talent Show March 18
- St Patty's Day Corn beef Dinner and Bingo party March 17
- Wheel of Fortune sponsored by Home Instead Senior Care
- Info w/ Salvation Army Capt Colette on Camp Connri adult camp March 20
- Special luncheon for 30 seniors (social isolation) March 24
- NYS Independent Day April 25

#### **ENTERTAINMENT:**

- Billy Michaels March 13 @ 1:00
- Music from the Heart w/ Ethel Kaufman April 8 @ 1:00

#### **Upcoming Trips:**

- The Feast of St. Joseph @ the Brownstone in NJ March 26
- Radio City's NY SPRING Spectacular w/ the Rockettes April 1
- Mohegan Sun April 23
- Newport Playhouse April 28

***ONGOING: AARP Income tax preparation every Monday till April 13 appointment only***

#### **New programs for the Spring:**

1. Chinese Brush Painting 10 week course starts March 26
2. Intergenerational craft program w/ CAC every 2<sup>nd</sup> Thursday
3. Caregiver Support Group 1<sup>st</sup> and 3<sup>rd</sup> Tuesdays 5:30 – 6:30 starts in April
4. Healthy Eating cooking demos w/ nutritionist 6 week course starts in April
5. Qi Gong (Chinese energy exercise for health and fitness) starts in April @ 4
- 6.

#### **More Upcoming Events for seniors:**

- Independent Living Day is Saturday April 25. Forms for the seniors are at the front desk and on the info rack. Also, NYFS are looking for volunteers young and old to help on that day. If your interested please call NYFS (203) 270-4335 for more info
- Hearing and Dementia talk through MasoniCare April 15
- Brain/Mind Healthy Fitness talk through MasoniCare May 7
- Diabetes Foot care through Comm. Health Assoc.
- When your Get Up ..Got Up and Went Dr Varanno May 15
- Cake Nurse w/ Linda Pinckney RN Regional Hospice May 18 every 3<sup>rd</sup> Monday
- Financial Planning Seminar Series
  1. Retirement Income Tuesday May 19
  2. Final Expenses Tuesday June 16
  3. Long Term Care Tuesday July 21
  4. Medical Expenses Tuesday August 18

Bible Study will be Wednesday 2:30 - 3:30 April 1

The Hot Dog Luncheons once a month are doing great. Pays for itself. New people and old coming together and extending their day socializing. Today was the annual Fish Luncheon and it was wonderful! 30 seniors enjoyed an afternoon of good food and entertainment w/ Billy Michaels singing some St Patty's tunes and welcoming the Spring!

It was mentioned last month about the article in the March 4 Newtown Bee.

*Bullying: A Problem Behavior That Spans Generations.*

I hope you had the chance to read it.

This pertains not only to the Center , Nunnawauk Meadows but just about everywhere you go these days.

This article is a collaboration of myself, Linda Manganaro, Donna Fedus MA, Officer Mary Helen McCarthy and Nancy Crevier. We have been meeting to not only to network on this problem (that has been around forever) But also, how we can address it . The Bee article was for AWARENESS.

We also met with Rev Jim Solomon....(because where else do seniors go most often..church)

We are in the process of planning a Senior Sensitivity Training session for members of the Newtown Inter Faith Clergy Assoc with Angela DeLeon from The Masters Program from People's Bank promoting safety and awareness for senior citizens. Following the training we plan to have "self help" discussion groups not only here at the Center, but at Nunnawauk Meadows and many of the churches. More info to follow.

This winter was just "horrible" for everyone due to the snow. Everyone is more than ready for the sun, getting out of the house and being busy/active again...

Please Note:

We have tapped into the health/fitness grant therefore we really do offer more than any other center around for a variety of exercise. We should hold these new classes at or / include Nunnawauk Meadows.

During and after our info sessions here at the Senior Center about the Community Center, there was some questions asked about having more educational lectures, seminars, cultural programs etc.....I do offer a variety (see above) with networking I don't pay for them but there is so much that can be offered and that can be costly. Maybe research a grant for said programs.

So much to do .....

Keeping the seniors busy and active.

Marilyn





# NEWTOWN YOUTH AND FAMILY SERVICES IS SEEKING VOLUNTEERS!

**SATURDAY, APRIL 25th, 2015**

Newtown Youth & Family Services (NYFS) event, Independent Living Day (ILD) allows seniors and allows low income and disabled residents to remain in their homes independently for longer periods of time. Additionally NYFS provides the seniors with a link to the outside community making them feel welcomed and cared for as part of the larger community.

Many senior citizens in Newtown face increased costs of living without the ability to make additional money. In order to live independently, they need assistance with basic home upkeep. As part of our continuum of care, this project focuses on providing the following: mulch spreading, errands, organizing closets and garages, mowing, clearing debris from walkways, discarding expired food and newspapers, changing floodlights, and disinfecting living areas to clear away dust and mold.

This yearly NYFS event allows seniors an increased chance of living longer in their own homes. NYFS provides services to any senior or disabled resident in Newtown but ILD focuses primarily on Nunnawauk Meadows, a restricted income over-sixty housing development. Over 40 individuals were served from this neighborhood last year.

**Independent Living Day has a few shifts you can work:**

**Volunteer 9:00 AM- 11:30 AM**

**AND/OR**

**Volunteer 11:30AM-2:00 PM**

DEADLINE to sign up is Friday, April 18th, 2015. To sign in, volunteers are to report to Nunnawauk Meadows 3 Nunnawauk Rd. Breakfast and sign in for the morning shift will be from 9:00-9:30 and lunch and sign in for the afternoon shift will be from 11:30-12:00.

*If you are interested in volunteering or having volunteers come to your home, please call 203-270-4335 or visit [www.newtownyouthandfamilyservices.org](http://www.newtownyouthandfamilyservices.org) for more information.*

15 Berkshire Rd. ♦ Sandy Hook ♦ CT ♦ 06482 ♦ Phone: 203.270.4335 /203.426.8103 ♦ Fax:  
203.270.4338

WWW.NEWTOWNYOUTHANDFAMILYSERVICES.ORG  
Serving Western Connecticut for over 30 Years

**Newtown  
Youth &  
Family  
Services**

## **Director of Social Services/ Municipal Agent for the Elderly**

### **Report for March 16, 2015**

We are almost finished doing fuel applications. We need all bank statements and income for everyone in the household. Income has to be below the poverty guidelines. We have completed Two Hundred Fifteen applications. Thirty eight are disabled and one hundred one are elderly.

For about two weeks we have checked every fuel assistance application to check if there were completed. Today was the last day to request a deliverable fuel. We faxed forty three requests which were granted.

Operation Fuel has given me \$5000 for heating fuel. I have \$500 left. I can only do an application for people who received Chap with the fuel assistance program in Danbury.

Salvation Army has paid for twelve deliveries of oil, two CL&P, fill-up of gas for a car and a car insurance.

Our food pantry is doing well. We have had several large donations. The people in Newtown are so generous. Our pantry is open to elderly, disabled and families.

We are helping people sign up for food stamps and health insurance. Can be done on the computer or paper application with required documents. We have completed eight applications this month. I completed twenty two redeterminations for the Medicare Savings Program.