

**Commission on Aging
Regular Meeting
Monday, November 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, November 16, 2015 at the Senior Center, 14 Riverside Road, Sandy Hook, CT. Chairman Curt Symes called the meeting to order at 5:05 p.m.

Present: Curt Symes, Sheila Torres, Anne Rothstein, Barbara Bloom, Ruby Ryles, John Boccuzzi, Anna Wiedemann, Lisa Krauss

Absent: Margaret Imbro, Claire Theune, Mae Schmidle

Also Present: Marilyn Place, Ann Piccini, 3 members of the public

ANNOUNCEMENTS: Mr. Symes welcomed Lisa Krauss who was appointed as a commission member alternate. There still remains 1 vacancy (R) for a full member. He also reported that the CODERed Senior sign-up and enrollment is underway every Monday across this month.

PUBLIC PARTICIPATION: Karin Aurelia, 23 Cherry Street, wanted to personally thank all those who attended the Craft Bazaar on Saturday; in particular, Sheila Torres, Barbara Bloom, John Boccuzzi, Claire Theune, and Margaret Imbro. The event was a huge success and many seniors participated all day with set-up through clean-up.

ACCEPTANCE OF MINUTES:

Ms. Wiedemann made a motion to accept the meeting minutes from October 19, 2015, seconded by Ms. Bloom and unanimously approved.

Mr. Symes wanted to check on the progress of a motion made in a previous meeting to look at advertising in the newsletter. The bottom line is the Town has resisted putting advertising in any Town related publications. It is understandable for that to apply to the Senior Center newsletter; however, if the COA produces its own newsletter, perhaps that could be published with advertising. Ms. Torres suggested that if the two newsletters were combined in some way, it could reach more seniors. Mr. Symes suggested a sample newsletter be put together and a meeting with Pat Llodra be arranged to discuss the matter.

CHAIRMAN'S REPORT: (Attachment A) – Mr. Symes reported that the Community Center Commission (CCC) has made great progress on their analysis and compilation of the recent

Survey results. He would like everyone to think about coming forward with a unified position on what a new senior space/center should be. Mr. Boccuzzi feels we need to separate the Senior Center and the Community Center discussions. Mr. Symes submitted a Stakeholder Input Form (attached to report) which summarizes the findings of previous COA Senior Center work for the last three years. The current Senior Center needs to be painted and updated; the parking lot is going to be fixed; the roof needs to be looked at and, if necessary, repaired before renovations to the interior begin. This discussion will be continued during the COA's December meeting.

TREASURER'S REPORT: (Attachment B) – Ms. Wiedemann presented her report and announced that bell ringing for the Salvation Army will take place on December 11st, 12nd, 17th, and 18th. She passed around a sign-up sheet for volunteers. Ms. Place said that an anonymous donation of \$2,500.00 was made to the Gift Fund specifically earmarked for technical equipment (i.e. projector, screen, laptops, or television).

Ms. Bloom made a motion to accept the Treasurer's Report, seconded by Ms. Torres and unanimously approved.

DIRECTOR OF SENIOR SERVICES REPORT: (Attachment C) – Ms. Place reported that the Bazaar was a huge success. Every item sold was hand made by the seniors using materials already at the senior center. The profits totaled \$2,458.75 for the one day. Many seniors would like to use some of the profits to continue to pay the 3 teachers for the new exercise classes (for December and January totaling \$1,000.00). Also from those profits, Ms. Place is requesting \$2.00 per person be paid to offset the cost of the annual holiday party in order to keep the price at \$35.00 per person - $\$2 \times 100 = 200.00$; \$250.00 to pay for the DJ for the holiday party; \$150.00 to pay for entertainment at a combined gathering at Nunnawauk Meadows scheduled for December 18th; and \$525.00 to pay for staff and 10 seniors to attend the holiday party.

Ms. Torres made a motion to pay a total of \$2,125.00 from the bazaar's profits for the above mentioned 5 items requested by Ms. Place, seconded by Mr. Boccuzzi and unanimously approved.

Ms. Place also reported that she and several seniors will visit a furniture store to get ideas and pricing on new items for the Senior Center during the renovation phase.

MUNICIPAL AGENT FOR THE ELDERLY: (Attachment D) - Ms. Piccini reported that fuel applications are being processed and Operation Fuel is over which granted a total of \$10,000.00 to be used to help people with their electric bills. Renter's Rebate is complete with a total of 76 applications. Checking Part D drug cards for the elderly is ongoing; the deadline to make any changes is December 7th. Thanksgiving and Holiday Baskets will be distributed on November 20th and December 12th, respectively. Many donations will be coming in from food drives including the "Stuff a Bus" drive being held at Stop 'n Shop this Saturday, November 21st.

OLD BUSINESS:

Community Relations & Outreach Team Discussion – (Attachment E) Ms. Torres reported that seniors were called who gave their phone numbers on the senior survey indicating a request to be called in an emergency. The team is assisting those seniors with signing up to CODERed which is the town's way of alerting residents when there is an emergency. The team will be available on November 23rd and November 30th at the Senior Center to continue that process.

COA Newsletter & Website Update – Discussion will continue during December's meeting about the Senior Center newsletter and the COA newsletter. Ms. Ryles reported that she has been added to the Planning Committee for the Greater Danbury Senior Resources Website which will cover 10 surrounding towns. They are now deciding how the towns will connect and share resources.

By-Laws, CRC, Grants & Newtown Schools Arts-Music Discussion – The ad hoc committee consisting of Anna Wiedemann, Mae Schmidle, Barbara Bloom and Claire Theune will continue to work on the by-laws. Mr. Symes said that Michelle Hiscavich from the Newtown Schools Arts & Music Program asked whether the Hart bus could be used to transport seniors who may be interested in attending plays/concerts at the High School. Since the Hart bus does not operate in the evenings, he asked Ms. Place whether the Senior Center's van could be used for that purpose. Discussion will continue at December's meeting.

NEW BUSINESS:

Planning & Prioritization of 2016 COA Activities – Discussion will occur during December's meeting.

There being no further business, **Ms. Bloom made a motion to adjourn the meeting at 7:00 p.m.**, seconded by Mr. Boccuzzi and unanimously approved.

Respectfully submitted,

Ann LoBosco, Clerk

Att, A

Newtown Commission on Aging (CoA) – Chairman Report – 11/16/15 Meeting

Welcome to our November Meeting and Family Caregivers Month, as recognized by the National Council on Aging (NCOA). They have a great deal of very useful resources both highlighted and available on their website: www.NCOA.org

Currently, we have 1 new alternate member, Lisa Krauss, in the process of being appointed/sworn-in and 1 open slot.

The CodeRED Senior sign-up and enrollment is underway every Monday across this month.

The Newtown Community Center Commission (CCC) has made great progress over the past month in moving forward on their analysis and compilation of the recent Survey Results. I attended a preliminary working session on October 20 where the initial raw data was analyzed in preparation for their ongoing analysis and presentation at the November 10 meeting, that was reported very accurately this past week in both The Newtown Bee and the Voices.

In preparation for their November checkpoint analysis on the 10th I submitted a Stakeholder Input Form with the findings and results of our previous COA Senior Center Work across 2013-2014-2015. The form is also attached.

It is currently anticipated that the CCC findings and recommendations will go forward to the Board of Selectmen in 1Q16 for formulation into a public referendum.

Respectfully submitted,

Curt Symes

Chair, Newtown CoA

Community Center Input (Seniors - 10/22/15)

Name Curt Symes (COA), Marilyn Place (NSS & NSC), Ann Piccini (MAftE)

Organization(s) with which you are affiliated in Newtown

Commission on Aging, Newtown Senior Services & Center, Municipal Agent for the Elderly

Role in organization: Chair of COA, Director of NSS & NSC, Municipal Agent

What would be the top five activity-specific spaces or space uses your organization would like to see included in a Community Center in Newtown? Please keep these specific to your organization.

1. Senior Space for additional/expanded Exercise, Health & Wellness Programs, as well as, welcoming, community space for different levels of senior socialization
2. Senior Space & IT Facilities for group educational programs, seminars and information exchanges, like Boomers & Beyond, as well as, private space for Municipal Agent-Senior work
3. Senior Aquacize Classes as identified in 2014 Community Center Proposal
4. Proximity to other Newtown Exercise Facilities, like the NYA, FFH Walking Trails, etc.
5. Availability of some Permanent Space for Storage of Program, Arts, Crafts and Class Facilities, as well as, Senior Reference Materials (Videos, DVDs, Pamphlets, etc.)

Please use the rest of this sheet to give any specific details about the use, capacity and intention of the activity-spaces listed above.

As stated by numerous Seniors both during and across the four (4) NCCC Information Sessions, the current Newtown Senior Center is inadequate to meet the growing needs of the 5,000 strong Senior Community in Newtown, and was recently termed an "embarrassment" by seniors at the 4th session. This has been both a continuing and growing problem, since the early 2000s with two (2) previous failed attempts by the town to design, fund & develop expanded Senior Center Space.

Currently, Newtown is one of the last remaining towns in both the greater Danbury area and beyond to not successfully fund either a new or significant expansion of its Senior Space. As noted in the presentation/report to the NCCC back in June, Southbury-Oxford-Shelton-Ridgefield-Brookfield-New Fairfield-New Milford-Bridgewater have all moved ahead with expansions in the past few years. In fact, the Ridgefield Senior Center/Founder's Hall is on the same town plot adjacent to the Community Center.

In addition, as discussed at Information Session #3 on Oct. 13, the preliminary Business Case developed around the initial Newtown Community Center Proposal showed a significant growth in NSC Membership, based upon expanded space & programs similar to what other area towns experienced. Further, it was projected/anticipated that the expanded Senior Center/Space would reach a financial break-even point within three (3) to four (4) years. Thus, not imposing further financial burden on the taxpayers of Newtown.

The old adage of "If you build it, they will come" is not as relevant to Senior Space as the adage "If you don't build it, they will not come". The Seniors of Newtown have waited too long to be recognized & rewarded.

First Selectman Llodra summarized the situation in an interview with Voices News when she stated that “We are underserving our seniors. The senior center is inadequate in space and design for our growing senior population (and programs).” Extracted from - www.VOICESNEWS.com - Aug. 1, 2015 and Voices Weekender - Aug. 2, 2015.

Contrary to what many assumed, the Seniors of Newtown were also greatly impacted by the events at Sandy Hook on 12/14. The Senior Center, housed and shared with the Children’s Adventure Center in the town’s Multi-Purpose Building complex, was at ground zero on that day next to the Sandy Hook Fire Department and used by state and local officials as a command center.

When the center seniors speak of community it is with thoughts of inter-generational activities in mind, as has been demonstrated over the years by programs, launched by the center with the elementary, middle and high schools in Newtown.

And remember, it was and is the 5000 Seniors of Newtown who helped build and fund the Newtown that we all know and love today.

Now, all this said it has become apparent to many seniors by the end of the 4th Info Session that what the people of Newtown are reflecting in a Community Center is a multi-faceted complex, comprised of both Community Space, housing Public Areas, Senior Areas and Cultural Arts Areas, and Sports Space, incorporating Parks & Recreation, Aquatics/Pool Space and Ice Arena.

Finally, in conclusion the space & programs requirements work that was previously accomplished over 2013-2015 and built off the early 2000 and 2007 efforts, defined a need for approximately 10,000 sq. ft. which at a (realistic) projected cost of \$225/sq.ft. resulted in a funding need for \$2,250,000. The Seniors of Newtown both applauded and supported this effort and findings, and understanding both the GE Foundation Grant and town financial limitations were willing to buildout/furnish the full 10,000 sq. ft. interior facility in phases, especially knowing that the full 10,000 sq. ft. was not necessary at ribbon cutting. However, the building of the full 10,000 sq. ft. sketched out slab box/space was essential, as other towns had discovered and shared with us.

Adequate Newtown Senior Space/Center is a defined/mandated “Service” in a Municipality like Newtown here in CT vs. a discretionary, desired center housing sports and arts. Newtown dearly needs a complete Community Center complex, comprised of a number of facilities as a part of our overall healing.

NEWTOWN SENIOR CENTER
 Director of Senior Services
 Oct 18, 2015 – Nov 16, 2015

A.H. C

PROGRAMS NUMBER OF ATTENDANTS (Oct)

Zumba Gold	37
Exercise	202
Floor Yoga (2 days)	83
Chair Yoga (2 day)	64
Cards	31
Mah Jong	18
Chorus	8
Bingo/Keno	27
Lunch	150
Knitting	42
Cards (craft)	24
Quilting/sewing	7
Walk-Ins	8
Billiards/ping pong	22
Trips	74
Newsletter	8
Wii	4
Painting/Art	11
Special events	67
Tai Chi	35
AARP Safe Driving	16
Ballroom Line dance	21
Current Events Discussion	28
Spanish Lessons	36
Speakers	42
Chair Pilates	23
Strength & Balance	16
Inter-generational w/ CAC	47
Bible study	18

Attendance Daily:

Monday	Tuesday	Wed.	Thurs	Friday
198	275	255	278	402

MONTHLY ATTENDANCE

1408

GIFT FUND:

\$2500 anonymous donation in Oct . Earmarked for 2 flat screen TV's

\$2458.75 profit from Bazaar monies earmarked and suggested by seniors,

- 1. \$2.00 pp to be paid from monies to offset cost of annual holiday party (to keep at \$35 not to increase to \$37pp) ($\$2 \times 100 = \200)**
- 2. \$250 to pay for the DJ at annual holiday party**
- 3. Continue Payment for 3 teachers for Dec /Jan for the "grant" classes (\$1000)**
- 4. Pay for entertainment at combined gathering @ Nunnawauk Meadows on Dec 18 \$150**

As in past practice I am requesting payment for staff and 10 seniors to attend the Holiday Party. 5 staff (myself, Judy, Bob S., Marianne P., Ann P.) $15 \times \$35 = \525

Annual Bazaar is scheduled for Saturday Nov 14 from 9-3 .

So many have been busy! It will be wonderful...using donated items...making something from nothing, totally creative members! A complete profit in the end !

UPDATE : The bazaar was a huge success! The senior center was filled all day with so many complimenting those involved how wonderful it was. Was a great day for all involved. The seniors were and are proud!

Every item sold was hand made from materials already here at the center. Plans and work started in May, continued working till the night before on projects. Many hands, new and old members working together. It was very rewarding.

I continue to plan for the 2016 trips and programs.

Also, the Coalition for Elder Justice in Ct Symposium is Friday Nov 20. I am a member and will be attending. This will be an inter-active sessions working towards to increase safety, security, and well-being for our elder population.

Guest speaker is: Robert Blancato, National Coordinator of the EJC, a non-partisan 680 member organization.

Annual Holiday party is scheduled for Wednesday Dec 9 @ Michael's at the Grove in Bethel. Snow date is Dec 14.

Keeping the seniors busy and active.

Marilyn





A.H. D
Ann Piccini <ann.piccini@newtown-ct.gov>

meeting

Ann Piccini <ann.piccini@newtown-ct.gov>
Draft To: Curt Symes <CurtSymes@aol.com>

Fri, Nov 13, 2015 at 6:31 PM

MUNICIPAL AGENT for the ELDERLY/ Director of Social services
November 16, 2015

We are busy with fuel application. Completed 106.

Operation Fuel had a summer program till Oct 15th for applications for electric only. I completed 16 applications. Operation Fuel granted me \$5000 and I asked for more and they gave me another \$5000. These are for people who owe \$600 to over \$1000 on their electric bill and they have to be willing to apply for Eversources NuStart Program.

Renter Rebate applications totaled 76. All of the applicants received their checks on Oct 21, 2015.

We are Checking the Part D drug cards for the elderly. The dead line for a change in their drug card to another card is December 7th.

Thanksgiving Baskets so far we have a total of 76. Distribution will be Friday the 20th.

Christmas we have a total of 89 Baskets. Dec 12th will be the delivery date.

We have started to get donations for the Pantry. Saturday the 14th the school bus drivers will be at Stop & Shop collecting.

We completed 12 application for food SNAP and Health Insurance. Medicare Saving Program has been sending out redeterminations and this month we completed 14. I had 2 people get letters that they were no longer on the program. Completed applications to get them back on the program that pays their Part B \$104.90 and the monthly charge for their Part D drug card. They get extra help for their prescriptions.

AH. E

**Commission on Aging
Community Outreach Team**

Meeting Date/Time: Monday, Nov 2, 2014/ 2:30 pm

Present: Margaret Imbro, Sheila Torres, Anna Wiedemann

Location: Edmond Town Hall – Manager’s Office

Key Discussion Points

- Script to use when calling seniors who gave us a phone number on the survey to be called when there’s an emergency.
- Divided numbers and called all seniors to sign them up for CODERed, explained that is the town’s way of alerting residents when there is an emergency. Used Maureen McGovern script with a few edits.
- Signed some seniors up as we spoke to them on the phone
- Put out a newspaper media release letting seniors know we would be at the Senior Center Mondays in November 9, 16, 23 and 30. The release was published by The Newtown Bee.
- Attended Nov 9 meeting and signed up about 7 seniors
- Attended Nov 16 meeting and signed up about _____ seniors

Next Meeting: December 14 at 2:30 p.m. Edmond Town Hall