

NEWTOWN COMMISSION ON AGING
Regular Meeting – held via Zoom
Monday, March 15, 2021
Called to order at 3:00pm

THESE MINUTES ARE SUBJECT TO APPROVAL BY THE COMMISSION ON AGING

Present Via Teleconference: Barbara Bloom, Anna Wiedemann, Larry Passaro, Ruby Ryles, Cris Carvalho Fados, Joanne Albanesi, Lia Levitt, Claire Theune, Curt Symes, LeReine Frampton, Anne Rothstein

Absent: Bob Edwards

Also Present Via Teleconference: Director of Human Services Natalie Jackson, Kaki Taylor from C.H. Booth Library

Public Comment – K. Taylor, from the Library reported that they have expanded their hours again and books on wheels has become more popular

Minutes – B. Bloom moved to approve the minutes from the February 22, 2021 meeting. C. Thuene seconded, all in favor.

REPORTS

Chair Report (Attachment A)– A. Weidemann announced that B. Edwards has resigned from the COA.

Vice Chair, Grant – A. Rothstein is looking into AARP to see if that will cover any of the lunch program. She asked how much money is needed. N. Jackson will work up an estimate. C. Symes questioned if the grants will dry up moving forward? A. Rothstein replied that she does not think that will be the case. Grants are separate from budgets and many companies have foundations so they cannot roll up and go away.

Director of Human Services update – N. Jackson reviewed her report (Attachment B). They did run their membership numbers, 401 are residents and 36 out of town for a total of 437 members.

First Selectman update – None

Treasurers Report (Attachment C) – It is the same as last month, no deposit or expenses.
J. Albanese moved to approve the treasurer's report for audit. B. Bloom seconded, all in favor.

Update on Social Justice, Kindness and Racism: Reviewed his presentation (Attachment D). L. Levitt suggested that members look at biocinewtown on Instagram which is all Newtown run by Newtown kids. It shows the inequality, and racism in the school system.

Member comments – L. Levitt announced that the Alzheimer's Associated of CT is having their conference from April 7 to 9, 2021. On April 9th, there is a free caregiver of Alzheimer's conference that maybe useful to caregivers.

L. Passaro advised anyone who had unemployment wait another week to file. They have now made \$10,200 of unemployment tax free but the software out there has not been updated.

Having no further business, L. Passaro moved to adjourn the meeting at 5:02pm. B. Bloom seconded, all in favor.

Respectfully submitted
Arlene Miles, Clerk

Attachments: Chair Report, Report from Human Services Director, Treasurers Report, Presentation on Newtown Concerns about Social Justice, Race, Diversity, Equity-Equality, Inclusion and Kindness

Attachment A

COA Chair Report March 15, 2021

PLEASE NOTE THE TIME CHANGE FOR THIS MONTH – WE WILL BEGIN AT 4PM. THIS IS WHY THIS MONDAY'S MEETING IS BEING CALLED A SPECIAL MEETING.

I'll let Larry talk more on this, but we are not pursuing calls to businesses until things have begun to reopen and establishments are more secure.

I had my first shot, thanks to Natalie Jackson and Donna Culbert. I signed up on VAMS and the town website when it was announced that 55 and over would be eligible. Everyone who called me raving about how well this was being run, was not wrong. It was outstanding! I am hopeful that with these clinics moving along, it won't be long before the Senior Center can reopen with limited attendance. And with the weather finally warming up, there's hope for outdoor programs!

Curt Symes will do a short presentation regarding Social Justice, Kindness and Racism. I reached out to Doug Lord who said they are offering educational programs and are encouraging people to learn about and discuss issues that are important. It's a step, he hopes that will help foster conversations so that Newtown can become less divisive about this issue and all issues. Constructive discussion is important to learning.

I'm attaching the link for the Legislative Council public hearing to hear voter comments on the 2021-2022 Annual Budget of the Town of Newtown.

https://www.newtown-ct.gov/sites/g/files/vyhlif3546/f/agendas/lc_agenda_public_hearing_03-17-21.pdf

If you have time, stop by the Senior Center this Saturday, March 13th. The talented crafters have another pop up boutique from 8am-2pm. They will have St. Patrick's, Easter and spring themed items.

And don't forget daylight savings is this weekend. We "spring" ahead an hour. I'm looking forward to the days getting longer and especially getting warmer!

Stay well everyone, Anna



Attachment B

Department of Human Services

Supporting a high quality of life for the Newtown community through services, programs and information that promote mental, physical and social well-being.

Commission on Aging Report: March 15, 2021

Efforts to vaccinate our senior community continue at the Senior Center. To date, over 2,000 vaccines have been administered in Town. According to ct.gov, 99.45% of Newtown residents 75+ have received the vaccine and 75.1% of that population statewide have received at least the first dose. On March 22nd the State opens eligibility to individuals 45 to 54. The Human Services team continues to be an initial point of access for support to seniors who need assistance registering for the vaccine, or have questions about the process.

Newtown Human Services continues to work with the Health District to be the clinic site for our senior residents. We hope to continue be the vaccine site until we reach residents through age 55. The town's rollout began with our oldest residents, 100+ and we continue to work our down our list of residents who have preregistered. Last week we scheduled residents ages 63+. As we continue to reach out directly to preregistered residents by phone to schedule we are finding that a significant portion of our seniors have found opportunities to receive the vaccine at a site out of Town through VAMS. In effort to vaccinate the community as quickly as possible we continue to encourage residents to utilize VAMS.

At this time all in-house programs continue to be on hold to allow for clinics. All Health & Wellness classes and socialization groups are continuing via Zoom. Our COVID curbside lunch program on Mondays and Wednesdays also continues with our new partnership with Whitsons Culinary Group. Per a call with WCAAA last week, funding for meals may resume in April or May. We will be exploring the option of returning to CW Resources as well as the potential to utilize funding in a way that allows us to continue with Whitsons. As we learn more I will continue to share information on this.

I am thrilled to share that this afternoon I will be joining representatives from Newtown Helping Hands to present a check to FAITH Food Pantry for 100% of remaining funds raised through this effort at the start of the pandemic. This last disbursement of monies, in the amount of \$6,496.21, to FAITH will assist in the continued relief of essential food in Newtown. Newtown Helping Hands was a successful cooperation between partnered groups, restaurants, and volunteers. Keep an eye out for an upcoming article in the Bee, highlighting:

- Restaurants involved
- Organizations involved
- Estimated # of volunteers
- Estimated community service hours
- Total grocery shopping deliveries
- Total monies raised / # of donors
- Total meals distributed to families and frontline healthcare workers at Newtown Rehab.
- Special food drive collection sponsored by WIN

A huge thank you to the Senior Center crafters! They made several hundred dollars to benefit the Senior Center at their Pop-up Boutiques over the past 2 weekends at the Community Center!

Respectfully submitted,

Natalie

Natalie Jackson, LCSW
Director, Newtown Human Services

Attachment C

COA/SENIOR SERVICES GIFT FUND

| DATE | RECEIPTS/DISBURSEMENTS | C/D | C/R | FRANK KNOTTS TRUST FUND | BALANCE |
|------------|--|------------|----------|-------------------------|------------------|
| 7/1/20 | Beginning Balance | | | | 31,634.57 |
| 7/22/2020 | Qtrly Distribution- Knotts Trust 200-16 | | | 637.00 | 32,271.57 |
| 9/10/2020 | Ck #42023- Anna Wiedemann- Reim for Sr. Center Lunch 8/14/20 | (206.23) | | | 32,065.34 |
| 10/7/2020 | Mandatory Distribution- Knotts Trust 200-82 | | | 781.30 | 32,846.64 |
| 10/20/2020 | Qtrly Distribution- Knotts Trust 200-95 | | | 637.00 | 33,483.64 |
| 10/31/2020 | Bazaar-Donations 220- 09 | | 305.00 | | 33,788.64 |
| 10/31/2020 | Tote Bags- Archdeacon 220-09 | | 434.14 | | 34,222.78 |
| 11/23/2020 | Bazaar-Donations- 220-11 | | 447.00 | | 34,669.78 |
| 12/4/2020 | Ck #42817- Diversified Printing Solution- Tote Bags | | | | 34,235.37 |
| 12/14/2020 | Donations- Bazaar- 220-14 | (434.41) | 700.00 | | 34,935.37 |
| 12/14/2020 | Donations- Bazaar- 220-15 | | 284.00 | | 35,219.37 |
| 12/23/2020 | Ck #43288- Anna Wiedemann- Holiday cookies | (290.52) | | | 34,928.85 |
| 12/24/2020 | Donation- Arch Deacon Family Foundation -220-16 | | 5,000.00 | | 39,928.85 |
| 12/24/2020 | Donation Bazaar- 220-17 | | 541.50 | | 40,470.35 |
| 1/31/2021 | Qtrly Distribution-Knotts Trust 200-172 | | 705.75 | | 41,176.10 |
| 2/5/2021 | Donation-Bazaar 220-19 | | 65.00 | | 41,241.10 |
| | Less approved items to be booked: | | | | |
| | Pool table | (3,550.00) | | | (3,550.00) |
| | Puzzle table | (1,600.00) | | | (1,600.00) |
| | Sr lunch balance | (223.25) | | | (223.25) |
| | Clocks | (50.00) | | | (50.00) |
| | | | | | <u>35,817.85</u> |

Attachment D

Curt Symes
Professional Senior Advisor & Life-Planning Consultant
COA Information Presentation - 3/15/21

on

Newtown Concerns about Social Justice,
Race, Diversity, Equity-Equality, Inclusion & Kindness

Who is Discussing

Newtown Allies for Change (NAfC)

First Selectman

Superintendent of Schools & BOE

Booth Library – Social Justice Roundtable

Trinity Episcopal Church, NCC, etc.

Why is Newtown so White.info

Newtown Human (Senior, Social) Services

Friends of Newtown Seniors (FONS)

Commission on Aging (COA)

Others ☐ 100s of people now

What is Happening

Awareness
Education
Advocacy
Programs

Focal Point - Coordinator for Schools

CT is 68% White & 32% Black, Brown, Yellow, & Red
including Asian, East Indian, Mid Eastern, Muslim,
Latin & South American and Native Americans

What Can Seniors Do ?

Consider Ben's Bells (Be Kind) Arts & Crafts Projects in
Support of Social Justice, Race, Diversity,
Equity-Equality, Inclusion & Kindness

Highlight the terms and components of a Seniors'
Social Justice Program

Consider Developing a Support Position Statement

Terminology & Definitions

Social – pertaining to society and its interactions

Racial – having to do with different ethnicities

White, Black, Brown, Red, Yellow

Justice – legal application of fair judgement

Diversity – meaning a broad, inclusive audience

Equity – having to do with fairness and justice

Equality – treating all things equal

Inclusion – accepting, not excluding different views

Kindness – an expression or demonstration of friendship,
empathy, compassion

Challenges

Across 2020 and into 2021 we continue to be horribly reminded of the harsh realities of Political Divide, Racism, White Supremacy, Anti-Black, Brown, Red and Yellow biases latent within our nation

This is not a new phenomenon, but coupled with the ongoing Police Brutality, Killings and Shootings around the country, and the Zombombings, it highlights the need for a return to some degree of equitable Social-Racial Justice

The Civil War of 1861-1865 and various Legislation-Amendments were supposed to ensure Equal Rights, however, the Racial Disparity that I saw in high school in the 1960s still exists in schools today!

The past riots of Chicago, Newark and Los Angeles further exemplify the underlying Social-Racial-Health-Economic problems