

NEWTOWN COMMISSION ON AGING
Special Meeting
Monday, June 15, 2020
Called to order at 3:00pm

NEWTOWN MUNICIPAL CENTER
COUNCIL CHAMBERS
3 Primrose Street, Newtown, CT 06470

THESE MINUTES ARE SUBJECT TO APPROVAL BY THE COMMISSION ON AGING

Present: Anna Wiedemann, the following members were present via teleconference: Barbara Bloom, Joanne Albanesi, Ruby Ryles, Larry Passaro, LeReine Frampton, Anne Rothstein(3:07), Cris Carvalho Fadus, Claire Theune, John Boccuzzi(3:16)

Absent: Bob Edwards, Curt Symes

Also Present: Director of Human Services Natalie Jackson, First Selectman Dan Rosenthal

Public Comment – None

Minutes –J. Albanesi moved to approve the minutes of the 5/18/20 meeting with corrections. The date on the minutes is February 18, 2020 which needs to be corrected to May 18, 2020. L. Frampton seconded, motion unanimously approved.

REPORTS

Director of Human Services update– N. Jackson reviewed her report (att.). The most exciting update is that are they starting outdoor programming. As of now there is no date to reopen the building. Last week as the first Tai Chi class was held under the tree outside. The class was filled the same day the ROBO call went out. They will be expanding outdoor programing with outdoor chair yoga, outdoor painting and an herb club. Patio furniture should be arriving by the end of the week. The space can be used to meet friends, a book club or a discussion group. They are updating the COVID-19 resource guide. Newtown Helping Hands efforts continue. The restaurant meal program will be coming to an end in the next few weeks.

First Selectman update – On the 17th most businesses in town will be either fully or partially open. They will be opening Eichler's beach this week and the Community Center on the 22nd. They will have a registration system so people can schedule blocks of time to manage expectations. It is best not to have people just come and wait in large crowds.

Treasurer's Report – L. Passaro reported that the report (att.) is virtually the same as last month. The only change is they finally got the tickets for the Christmas party charged against the account. J. Albanesi moved to file the Treasurers Report for audit. B. Bloom seconded, motion unanimously approved.

Discussion and possible action: COA to provide special curbside lunch on July 31, 2020 – L. Passaro moved to approve \$720, do not exceed, as a budget for the lunch. B. Bloom seconded, motion unanimously approved. They have a variety of options they will work on, but it was agreed that they would keep it local.

Having no further business, the meeting was adjourned at 3:35pm.

Respectfully submitted
Arlene Miles, Clerk

Attachments: Chair Report, Report from Human Services Director, and Treasurer's Report

June 12, 2020

Good afternoon everyone,

First off I hope everyone is well and safe. NO one other than myself, our clerk Arlene, Dan Rosenthal and Natalie will be allowed access into the Municipal Center. All other members must call in to participate.

Here are the instructions for Monday's meeting: **THE CALL IN NUMBER IS 203-270-4249. The meeting will start at 3PM. You can call in a few minutes prior.**

Per FOI you have to own your comments, because it's by phone you have to identify yourself when speaking every single time. Any comments, motions, or anything you need to let anyone listening know who you are.

The capacity for incoming calls is around 24. From a clerking aspect, members need to be noted as present, present via teleconference (and identification rules apply to those calling in as well) or absent.

What can I say that's different from yesterday, the day before, etc. I'm happy to see sunshine and the arrival of spring (finally!). Lots of new and exciting things on the horizon from the Senior Center, but I will let Natalie share this news with all of you.

I'd like to thank Betsy Jacobson who phoned in to attend the meeting in May. It was nice to have someone join us. I did try to call Betsy to reach out to her and thank her personally, but there is no phone number listed in the data I have. I tried searching the internet but those numbers were old. So if you know her, please let her know I appreciate her "attending".

I began choices training yesterday via ZOOM. It was wonderful to see so many participants. There's a lot to learn (and relearn – because it seems to be an ever evolving process with changes in the law, things that were put into place temporarily because of COVID, etc.) but the instructors were wonderful. I'm excited for the future classes. It was great to see Alyssa Cole in attendance. Nice to see a familiar face!

Continued thanks to our Selectman Dan Rosenthal who continues to be the calm head in an often stormy time lately. Gratitude to Natalie Jackson and her staff for allowing the crafters to meet once a week – socially distant with masks – to catch up and share ideas. We are ever hopeful for a fair in the late fall. Stay tuned for some fun things she has in store.

Talk to you all Monday. Enjoy the beautiful weekend. Keep reaching out to your friends and neighbors.

Stay well and stay safe, Anna



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: June 15, 2020

Efforts continue to identify new and creative ways to reach our seniors, in these uncertain times of COVID 19. We have begun program planning that will allow for in-person events, held outdoors. Programs will focus on health and wellness, education, and social opportunities. On June 10th we hosted our first health and wellness activity, *Tai Chi under the Tree*. To ensure we are providing programming in the safest way we limited the class size to ten and marked spacing for appropriate social distancing. The class "sold out" within minutes of being announced. We will be adding to the outdoor program offerings in the coming weeks, including *chair yoga* and "*Plein Air*" art classes, both starting this week. Programs on the horizon also include an *herb garden club*, a *reserve the patio program*, and *cornhole tournaments*.

In addition to new outdoor programing we have continued efforts to provide resource information, "virtual adventures", opportunities for virtual exercise/movement programs, and new virtual opportunities for gathering (including *Zoom Coffee & Conversation*) through our weekly Constant Contact blasts and a special edition newsletter,

The Department of Human Services remains committed meeting the immediate needs of residents who are either financially impacted by the pandemic or have limited access to basic needs due to sheltering in place. Resources to assist with energy, housing stabilization, and food security have been identified. Key efforts currently also include:

Newtown Helping Hands (NHH): This is the collaborative effort by many key organizations and individual volunteers to get food into the hands of those struggling and those who should continue to sequester, while supporting our local restaurant community.

- **The restaurant meal program** simultaneously supports local restaurants and Newtown families and individuals in need (referred by Newtown Human Services). Each resident/family receives a hot meal on Wednesdays and Saturdays. Some meals are donated by restaurants and some are sponsored with a "fee" per meal paid to the restaurant using funds raised by the NHH GoFund Me. Currently, 26 families are receiving meals on Wednesday and Saturdays, plus families received a special Mother's Day brunch and proceeds of a special drive organized with the Rotary and Woman In Newtown (WIN), focused on cleaning and hard to find products.
- **Shopping and Delivery Service** is for Newtown seniors (age 60+) and others in high-risk groups who should not be shopping. Clients order 1-7 days in advance and pay for their groceries. Volunteers age 18-59 shop and deliver. There is no fee for the service. Almost 60 volunteer shoppers stand ready to serve.

Requests for the NHH can be made by contacting 203-270-4297 or at newtownhelpinghands@gmail.com. In the future, the Shopping and Delivery Program will continue with current and future volunteers, however, it can be transferred to the local chapter of Shopping Angels, a similar world-wide organization, if NHH and community deem appropriate. Restaurant Meals will be coming to a close as residents are able to return to work and to allow restaurants to focus efforts on preparing for Phase II. Newtown DHS remains a contact and source of support if this change imposes a difficult burden.

When the pandemic is officially ended, the plan will be to disburse remaining funds to Faith Food Pantry. NHH envisions a possible continuing presence serving as a Newtown resource for needed community service projects, service organizations, and individuals interested in volunteer service.

Senior Meal program: curbside lunches continue to be distributed at the senior center in partnership with CW Resources. The program is now at full capacity each week. Distribution has been taken on by DHS staff as CW Resources can no longer fill that role. In addition, several "special Friday lunches" have been offered through very generous donations by community partners and local restaurants.

FAITH Food Pantry continues to rise to meet the food needs of residents affected by COVID 19, tripling their previous distribution. DHS continues to support the private entities' efforts in all ways possible.

The Resource Guide for Residents Effected by COVID 19: DHS continues to update this document regularly as circumstances evolve and new information is received. You can always find the most recent version of the Guide on the Town website, COVID 19 page: [CLICK HERE](#). The DHS continues to stay abreast of federal, state, and local resources to assist those impacted. We also are continuing to look for ways to combat social isolation caused by this pandemic.

I will echo the sentiment in my report from last month, by saying the DHS remains committed to safety and wellbeing of Newtown's residents and again, we urge anyone who is in need of support, or who just wants to connect with a friendly voice on the other end of the line to call us--- we are here!

Be well,

Natalie

Natalie Jackson, LCSW

Director, Newtown Human Services

DATE	RECEIPTS/DISBURSEMENTS	COA/SENIOR SERVICES GIFT FUND			BALANCE
		C/D	C/R	FRANK KNOTTS TRUST FUND	
1/23/2020	Dec P-Card- Amazon- TV Stand				
1/23/2020	Selling of Crafts-Donation- 220-50	(161.64)			35,237.92
1/24/2020	Qrtly Distribution- Knotts Trust 200-168		197.00		35,434.92
				637.00	36,071.92
2/27/2020	Ck #39869- 63 Ct Conf-COA Booklets	(2,000.00)			34,071.92
3/12/2020	Ck #40004- William Highes- Reim for folding Tables	(250.00)			33,821.92
3/16/2020	Donation from COA Member 220-60		500.00		34,321.92
3/16/2020	Bazaar Donation 220-61		50.00		34,371.92
4/14/2020	Feb P-Card- My Senior Center-Annual Fee and Fobs	(1,981.40)			32,390.52
4/14/2020	Feb P-Card- Hales Farm Market- Landscaping	(879.82)			31,510.70
4/22/2020	Qrtly Distribution- Knotts Trust 200-268			637.00	32,147.70
5/4/2020	March P-Card- Ikea-Benches for fitness area	(196.72)			31,950.98
5/4/2020	March P-Card- Amazon-Cork/white board for classroom	(141.41)	**		31,809.57
5/21/2020	Tickets for Holiday Party	(175.00)			31,634.57
	Less approved items to be booked:				
	Pool table	(550.00)			
	Clocks	(50.00)			
					-600.00
					31034.57