

**TOWN OF DARIEN
COMMISSION OF AGING
REGULAR MEETING
NOVEMBER 18, 2015**

ATTENDANCE: Joe Pankowski, Chair; Arden Anderson-Broecking, Jennifer Geddes, Mary McCarthy, Ron Heinbaugh, Robin Woods, Ray Slavin, AnneMarie Rayhill, Christine Castles, Gerri Genovese (9:03 a.m.)

STAFF: Olive Hauser, Darien Human Services Director (9:03 a.m.); Beth Paris, Mather Senior Center Director (9:03 a.m.)

CALL TO ORDER.

Mr. Pankowski called the meeting to order at 9:00 a.m. A quorum was present

APPROVAL OF MINUTES.

October 21, 2015

**** MS. GEDDES MOVED THE MINUTES OF OCTOBER 21, 2015.**

**** MS. ANDERSON-BROECKING SECONDED.**

**** THE MOTION TO APPROVE THE MINUTES AS SUBMITTED PASSED UNANIMOUSLY.**

CHRISTINE CASTLES REPORTED ON INFORMATION RELEVANT TO THE COMMISSION'S MISSION, WHICH SHE RECEIVED AT RECENT MEETINGS OF THE AMERICAN PUBLIC HEALTH ASSOCIATION AND THE CONNECTICUT PUBLIC HEALTH ASSOCIATION, AS WELL AS AT THE ROSALYNN CARTER SYMPOSIUM ON MENTAL HEALTH POLICY.

Ms. Castles said that there were mainly four areas that were addressed in all the conferences: Aging in Place initiatives; physical and mental health, and systems changes in the workforce.

At the Connecticut Public Health Association (CPHA), the keynote speaker on Healthy by Design was Dr. David Katz, the Director of the Yale Prevention Research Center. He focuses on the prevention of chronic diseases through lifestyle. Approximately 40-50% of chronic diseases are lifestyle related. This relates well to the Aging in Place initiative. One of Dr. Katz's major concerns has been diabetes in children. These children end up as part of the workforce. Dr. Katz's reported that he had seen cases where the patient had diabetes at 10 years of age and other patients who had strokes at age 11. Coupled this juvenile population with the Baby Boomers who will be developing dementia and other chronic diseases, there will be major issues with the workforce in the country.

Ms. Genovese, Ms. Hauser and Ms. Paris joined the meeting at 9:03 a.m.

Ms. Castles then went on to speak about the presentation given by Atty. Alyssa Norwood, who is part of the Legislative Commission on Aging, gave. She spoke about age related mobility. The City New Britain discovered that their older population wished to ride bicycles as a means of transportation. The City widened the streets and provided bike lanes at the request of seniors. The widening of the street also improved walk ability because it created a wider buffer between the passing vehicles and the pedestrians on the sidewalk. Atty. Norwood also stressed intergenerational activities for both the young and old together.

Ms. Castles spoke about another presentation on Oral Health for the elderly, which is important. By using redness, inflammation and plaque as indicators, the dental health providers were able to chart improvement.

At the American Public Health Association meeting in Chicago, there were numerous mental health presentations. One address that was similar to the Aging in Place programs was given about Montclair, New Jersey where the residents requested more walk able areas. Hedges were trimmed back and sidewalks were repaired to provide a more level surface. Residents were contacted and given time to address these issues. Those who did not comply received fines. The program was very effective.

A study was done on the effects of Super Storm Sandy. The results indicated that the older population was less distressed than the young adults in the study. A follow up study will be done to determine whether the lack of distress resulted from the older population being more resilient or having an attitude of giving up.

One of the other presentations was focused on Mental Health as a Social Determination. This presentation also covered suicide because a suicide will affect the entire family and the community in general. However, suicides have a greater impact on the adolescents and there have been copycat suicides among adolescents. Another critical focus is on reducing the stigma of mental health.

Ms. Castles then recounted the various presentations given at the 31st Annual Rosalynn Carter Symposium On Mental Health Policy Conference that addressed reshaping the behavioral work force. The national mental health system is in crisis. There is an initiative to have primary care absorb mental health problems for integrated wellness and systems of care. Unfortunately, most of the federal funding is focused on the youth and there is not much funding available for the elderly on either the Federal or State level. Because of this, the focus is on how to train peer support and volunteers for mental health services.

The role of primary care physicians will have to expand. They will be forced to integrate with the larger medical community. Mom and Pop health services will be left behind.

Hospitals and large health care systems will be the future care providers. There are 3.8 million trained nurses in country. The goal is to train them to be AP R.N.s (Advanced Practice Nurses) that can provide more services. The focus is now whole health or integrated health. Solo practice was the old model and the new model will be large team practices and population based care.

There is new legislation for K-2 grade school children where the school will be required to have In School Suspension (ISS) rather than having the students sent home for suspension.

There is also a tele-health movement to have web-based surveys as a means of early screening surveys. This would impact the elderly who may not have access to computers. There is a possibility that large retail stores like Walmart may have areas where the elder can go for physical therapy.

Another initiative is to include mental health first aid along with CPR training for everyone, students included. Discussion followed about how a child who would be trained in CPR would also administer mental health first aid. Ms. Castles said that the students would be trained to provide comfort and support.

There needs to be a break down the professional silos to integrate and have collaboration the various health professionals such as nurses with social workers, and the doctors with the social workers.

Discussion about the potential barriers might be for the seniors and potential role of the government in the health care programs.

MATHER CENTER REPORT.

Ms. Paris presented her report. (See attached.)

Regarding mental health, Ms. Paris said in Darien, there is more integrated services in the town. Resilience is a word that has been used frequently in the last few months. There are small groups that are being supportive of one another. There is a wonderful synergy between the Senior Center and Social Services.

Ms. Woods commented that a friend had been given a tour of the Senior Center and Ms. Paris had been able to provide the person with a number of resources and support systems. Ms. Hauser said that Darien was very fortunate in having so many residents who are interested in helping people.

Ms. Paris left the meeting at 9:20 a.m.

HUMAN SERVICES REPORT.

Ms. Hauser presented her report.

Ms. Hauser said that usually there have been 2 or 3 evictions and maybe one foreclosure. In the past month, there have been about 8 evictions for non-payment of rent. The marshal serves the resident and then provides copies to the Human Services Department. She reviewed the details of the process.

OLD BUSINESS

Ms. Anderson-Broecking presented her report on Old Town Homes. (See Attached.)

Mr. Heinbaugh reminded everyone that he would like to see Mr. Campbell honored for his work.

NEW BUSINESS

There was no new business to consider at this time.

ADJOURNMENT

- ** MR. HEINBAUGH MOVED TO ADJOURN.**
- ** MS. ANDERSON-BROECKING SECONDED.**
- ** THE MEETING ADJOURNED.**

The meeting adjourned at 9:40 a.m.

Respectfully submitted,

S. L. Soltes
Telesco Secretarial Services

Commission on Aging Report

Darien Senior Programs

November 18, 2015

Respectfully Submitted: Beth Paris, Director

We have had several requests for increase handicapped parking as well as complaints of not enough parking. One handicapped space takes up 3 parking spaces. Director has spoken with PW regarding this issue. We are recruiting more volunteers for the Welcome Desk as several of our volunteers will be leaving the area in December. Membership continues to increase. Annual Thanksgiving Luncheon RSVP list closes at ~~4:30~~ in order to safely seat everyone.

185

Highlighted & New Classes: *Intermediate Water Color* with Elizabeth Linehan: *Tis the Season to Reminisce* w Geri Genovese; Craft Classes *Holiday Seasonal*; Card Club of Darien Pleasure through Plants Program; Thanksgiving Luncheon

Health & Wellness Programs: *Ridgefield VNA* –Elder Law Education; *VN & Hospice of Fairfield County*- Take a Deep Breath*; Stamford *Hospital* –Vaccines and the Importance of Getting Vaccinated*; **Caregiver Educational Support Group** – Coping With the Holiday (* Complimentary Lunch included) Monthly Blood Pressure Screening; Matter of Balance Course w **Fairfield University Graduate RN students** ends 11/18

Educational & Informational: Art Gottlieb LCSW- *Cuban Missile Crisis*; Ask a Lawyer by Appointment; AARP Driving Course; Ask a Social Worker on Wednesdays; Caregiver Educational Support Group –Coping with the Holidays- Beth Paris

Entertainments: Monday at the Movies; Men’s Singing Group Hoot Owls; Bonnie Lieder piano entertains at Thanksgiving Luncheon; Musical Entertainment Bob Lupi

Program Days: 18 (CLOSED 11th 26th & 27th)

Caregiver Educational Support Group: 14

Human Services Referral: 9

At Home in Darien: 4

Caregiver Options Counseling: 5

EMS Calls: 0

Ongoing Work in Progress:

Daily Statistics

Monthly Newsletter

Department Head Training/Policy Procedure Updates/Evaluations

Monthly Staff Meeting

Program Development

Winter/Early Spring Program Planning

Meetings: SWCAA Advisory Board 11/4; 11/10 People’s Bank Meeting re. Programming; 11/12 Department Head Planning meeting all day; Human Services & At Home in Darien 11/17; COA 11/18;

Building Issues: Pending elevator upgrade-encouraging no more than 2 members in the elevator at a time- building attendant will ride along with folks that are apprehensive. Pending 3rd handrail installation staircase off lobby area...

COMMISSION ON AGING

HUMAN SERVICES REPORT

November 18, 2015

Olive Hauser, Director

1. The deadline for reviewing your Medicare Part D is December 7th.
2. We continue to take applications for energy assistance and Operation Fuel. If anyone thinks they are eligible or a bit over income and are struggling with an energy bill they should come to see us.
3. Our Holiday programs are in full swing. We are still looking for volunteers who want to make up a Christmas basket for a senior. Donations of Stop and Shop or Shop gift cards are still needed for Thanksgiving.
4. I met with Beth and Gina yesterday and some very exciting programs are in the planning. I encourage everyone to get Senior Center calendar and to sign up for the monthly town wide calendar of events sent out by AT Home in Darien.
5. We are having great weather but that could change quickly. Seniors should start planning now for bad weather. Put in a supply of shelf stable food and water. Have someone lined up to plow and shovel. Make plans to stay with family or a friend if you are worried about staying alone in a storm. Put your name on our call list and we'll check up on you. Carry a cell phone and have extra batteries and a car charger. Have an extra warm water blanket and a flashlight in your car as well as at home. We have a tips sheet that we would be happy to send to anyone
6. We are starting a closed Facebook page. Participation will be by invitation. The purpose will be to have individuals post information about our programs by having them post them on their own page

BRIEF REPORT TO THE COMMISSION ON AGING, NOVEMBER 18, 2015

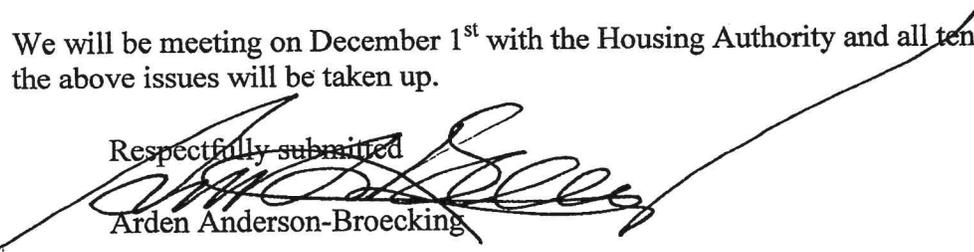
I was unavailable to attend last night's Special Meeting of the Darien Housing Commission.

At the October meeting of the DHAuthority, it was noted that some progress is being made on the redevelopment at OTHH, and that will include an informal presentation before the Planning and Zoning Commission. Close neighbors whose properties border the property on which the housing stands will be permitted to express their own concerns.

At the tenant meeting to following Thursday, a report on the previous Tuesday meeting was offered by tenant board President Allen Delaney. There is still question about when the moving of the present tenants will take place, although the middle of 2016 was mentioned. There is also concern about the HERC interviews of each and every returning tenant, ostensibly to be made aware of any tenant's who need special accommodation due to physical limitations.

We will be meeting on December 1st with the Housing Authority and all tenants, where some of the above issues will be taken up.

Respectfully submitted


Arden Anderson-Broecking