

**TOWN OF DARIEN  
COMMISSION ON AGING  
REGULAR MEETING  
MARCH 20, 2013**

**ATTENDANCE:** Joe Pankowski, Chair; Mary McCarthy, Jennifer Geddes, Ron Heinbaugh, Ray Slavin, Robin Woods

**STAFF:** Olive Hauser, Director of Social Services; Beth Paris, Senior Center Coordinator (9:07 a.m.)

**OTHERS:** Darien Selectman David Campbell

**CALL TO ORDER.**

Mr. Pankowski called the meeting to order at 9:03 a.m. A quorum was present.

**FEBRUARY MEETING MINUTES.**

**\*\* MS. GEDDES MOVED THE FEBRUARY 20, 2013 MINUTES.**  
**\*\* MR. HEINBAUGH SECONDED.**  
**\*\* THE MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY.**

**HUMAN SERVICES REPORT.**

Ms. Hauser said that the new brochures and booklets with the name "Darien Human Services" are ready for distribution.

The Heights has closed application acceptances. The names of those who were chosen in the lottery will be notified in the coming weeks. Some of the previous tenants have been scheduled to move back into the facility starting on April 1st. However, there are some details that have yet to be finalized.

A letter was sent to a select group of seniors about SNAP program and/or the Medical Savings Program. There was a very good response to this mailing and more seniors will be contacted.

Both the State Department of Social Services and Social Security have launched websites that will allow seniors to create accounts to track their SNAP accounts and other benefits. This will be a major asset for the department when seeking information on residents' eligibility for programs.

*Ms. Paris joined the meeting at 9:07 a.m.*

The Energy Assistance Program has run out of funding, but the Darien Fuel Bank still has funding. The Oldtimers recently made a significant donation to the Fuel Bank.

Staff Training will be given for the Operation Fuel software. This will eliminate the need for the residents to go to NEON to apply for assistance. The recently acquired ability to input EAP applications directly into the State software was a major break through. This also allowed the department to track the balances in the individual client's grants.

A recent analysis of the number of visits to Home Goods Closet was done. 53% of the visits were made by seniors. Originally, it was thought it would be mostly families but the need for these items by the senior community has become apparent.

Mr. Robert Locke, the Darien Tax Collector, will be retiring in June. Mr. Locke was also the treasurer for the Salvation Army Unit. The Salvation Army generates over \$6,000 for the Darien Human Services Department. The Darien Salvation Army Unit is looking for new members.

April 1st is the start of the Renter's rebate this year. Letters will be sent out to the elderly and the disabled in the coming days.

Ms. Geddes commented that that Calvary Baptist has been very generous with their donations this year.

### **SENIOR CENTER REPORT.**

Mr. Pankowski thanked Ms. Paris for a wonderful St. Patrick Day program.

The AARP Safe Driving Course was well attended. The program has now been changed to one single four hour session rather than the previous two day sessions. The discount rate for insurance has to be renewed every two years.

The Matter of Balance program is underway. The next class session will be scheduled in the fall. This class is geared toward preventing falls.

The Senior Center has partnered with Premier Therapy to provide a 10 minute Aches and Pain clinic. This program will only be held at senior centers offering multiple options for exercise and is by appointment only.

The Senior Center will also be participating in National Health Care Decisions Day again this year on Monday, April 16, 2013 from 12:45 p.m. to 1:30 p.m. Additional details are on the flyers.

A local high school student will be presenting a program on "Making Emergency Kits" for a Girl Scout badge in early April at the Darien Library and for also for the seniors.

The ongoing building issues continue. New leaks have been located and the front door is now unusable.

Stamford Hospital and Norwalk Hospital will be offering Health and Wellness lectures for the Senior Citizens. The Center is also working with the University of Bridgeport Dental Clinic to schedule some programs.

### OLD BUSINESS

Next month, the Commission will need to have a vote to elect a chairperson.

Ms. Woods and Mr. Campbell gave an update on the Building Committee. Mr. Campbell reported that the BOE move was scheduled to occur within the next 30 days. There was a problem with the sprinkler system water pressure at 35 Leroy. Painting is underway along with tiling and various other tasks. The BOE Maintenance Department is moving to the Town Garage.

Remediation will start at the BOE building at the end of April. Once the remediation is completed in the office area, construction will begin. The HVAC system has been redesigned and the project is out for a rebid. The projected completion date is October.

Mr. Pankowski asked about the generator for Town Hall. Mr. Campbell said that the current generator will only provide emergency lighting. A request has been submitted to the Board of Finance for a larger generator that would allow the Town Hall to be functional during emergencies. Having one large generator would be more efficient than have two small generators. Mr. Campbell briefly spoke about the requirements for a shelter during storms.

### NEW BUSINESS

Ms. Paris then distributed copies of documents about some current legislation under consideration. The State Commission on Aging is about to be un-funded. She spoke about the impact that this would have on the elderly and various departments. Ms. Hauser agreed. There is a current moratorium on nursing beds in the State. There are several concerns regarding these issues, such as seniors who have no family in the area or are the last of their family. She encouraged everyone to contact their legislative representatives regarding this issue.

### ADJOURNMENT

**\*\* MR. HEINBAUGH MOVED TO ADJOURN.**

**\*\* MS. GEDDES SECONDED.**

Town of Darien  
Commission on Aging  
Regular Meeting  
March 20, 2013

**\*\* THE MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY.**

The meeting adjourned at 9:40 a.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Sharon L. Soltes  
Telesco Secretarial Services

**Darien Senior Activities Center  
Commission on Aging Report**

March 20, 2013

Respectfully Submitted: Beth Paris, Coordinator

Thanks to great programming we are increasingly having parking issues at the Center. Looking into putting a few more parking spots in the upper front area of the building.

We are advertising all of regular programs that happen weekly in our March and April Newsletter and highlighting some in order to connect people to programs they might not be aware of that happen on a regular basis. We have been fortunate to increase the number of Volunteer instructors over the past 6 months so we can offer more Programs at little or no cost.

Worked with **LLI** to set up and advertise tour program of **Norwalk Community College** collaborated with **AIP+Gallivant** to provide transportations for Seniors who wanted to go over as a group rather than parking on the Campus.

We hosted an intergenerational program with **Darien High school CORE Group** "Pleasure through Plants Program" 14 Students and 16 Senior members' participated- great conversations and a fun filled afternoon for both groups. Our Irish Day celebration complete with Corn beef and Cabbage luncheon feature the **Pender-Keady Dancers-** over 100 folks enjoyed "the luck of the Irish" for an afternoon

**Premier Therapy** in Darien will be providing 10 minute consultations during their Aches and Pain Clinic during the month of April...we are hoping to be able to offer this program quarterly as we anticipating it being popular.

Budget process is moving along. Projecting needs to Mather's for October 2013 move while managing 30 Edgerton. There are budgeting considerations that are not predictable based on energy cost if we need to be at 30 Edgerton for another winter.

**Monthly Caregiver Educational Support Group: 12**

**Caregiver Options Counseling: 7**

**Referrals to Human Services: 3**

**AIP+Gallivant Assist:16**

**Ongoing Work in Progress: Budget**

Vendor Building cleaning review

Program Planning Present/Future

Statistics/Report

Trend Research

Collaborations & Partnership Development

**Building Issues:** Door Lock on side of the building twig broken off in it-had locksmith in; Bucketing building daily as roof thaws... Front door saddle screws broken off cannot utilize one door and need to keep the other ajar or Seniors can not pull it open. Front stair treads lifting especially top section will try and re-bolt down.

**March Highlights:** 1<sup>st</sup> AARP Chapter 972 meeting  
4<sup>th</sup> Blood Pressure  
5<sup>th</sup> French Literature  
5<sup>th</sup> Historical Series Art Gottlieb LCSW  
6<sup>th</sup> DCA Garden Club Flower Arranging Class  
7<sup>th</sup> BINGO Plus w/ Pm James  
13<sup>th</sup> Hope Street Pharmacy Food, Drinks and Herbal Remedies  
That mix poorly with Medications  
14<sup>th</sup> Pender-Keady Dancers with Irish Luncheon  
18<sup>th</sup> DHS CORE Group: Spring Planting Project  
19<sup>th</sup> Caregiver Educational Support Group” Ethics of Care giving  
19<sup>th</sup> Irish Music with Bonnie Liedner& Cookie Martini  
20<sup>th</sup> AARP Driving Course 10:00-2:00  
22<sup>nd</sup> Spring Crafts with Kim Van Munching  
22<sup>nd</sup> Norwalk Community College Tour for LLI  
22<sup>nd</sup> Ask a Lawyer  
25<sup>th</sup> March Birthdays  
26<sup>th</sup> Darien Library presents “Daring Female Adventures  
29<sup>th</sup> CLOSED Good Friday

Meetings Attended: 3/1 Human Services Meeting; 3/11 AIP+Gallivant Board; 3/13 SWCAA Advisory Board; 3/20 COA Meeting