

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

ATTENDANCE: Joe Pankowski, Chair; Ron Heinbaugh, Tom Valentino, Amy Squyres,
Robin Woods, Gerri Genovese, Mary McCarthy

STAFF: Beth Paris, Darien Senior Center.

CALL TO ORDER.

Mr. Pankowski called the meeting to order at 9:03 a.m. A quorum was present. Mr. Pankowski announced that there would be a Thanksgiving Feast held at the Senior Center later in the day.

SENIOR SERVICES REPORT.

Ms. Paris said that a record number of people were expected at the Thanksgiving Feast.

The craft shop is now open and offers all hand made items for sale. Most of the profit will go to support the Senior Center.

Ms. Paris then presented her report. (See Attached.)

Ms. Paris left the meeting at 9:10 a.m.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES.

October 16, 2013 Minutes.

The following correction was noted.

Page 1, last paragraph, line 1, please change: "was the responsibility of the Public Works Department." to "was the responsibility of the Parks and Recreation Department."

**** MS. SQUYRES MOVED THE MINUTES OF THE OCTOBER 16, 2013 MEETING AS CORRECTED.**

**** MS. GENOVESE SECONDED.**

**** THE MOTION TO APPROVE THE MINUTES OF THE OCTOBER 16, 2013 MEETING AS CORRECTED PASSED UNANIMOUSLY.**

HUMAN SERVICES REPORT.

Mr. Pankowski announced that Ms. Hauser was not able to attend the meeting. He then read the attached report into the record.

OLD BUSINESS.

Ms. Robin Woods said that the work on the new kitchen for the Mather Senior Center was progressing. After touring the interior of the construction site, she said that she was very impressed with the amount of light available. While Ms. Paris has expressed concerns about the amount of space in the new center, Ms. Wood said that having proper space and rooms will make programs and storage easier.

Ms. Squyres asked about the elevator situation. Ms. Woods said that an elevator company has been selected and a contract has been signed to work on the elevator. The elevator will be upgraded to code. She said that a client would be dropped off on the ground level of the Center and then have access to the elevator. The kitchen and dining area will be on the ground level.

The discussion then moved to the Edgerton facility. Mr. Pankowski said that based on statements made during the election, the Edgerton property may be held on for future educational use. The Board of Selectman will eventually make a decision on the use of the parcel. Mr. Pankowski said that the question of whether the Board of Education will need the parcel in the future is still unresolved.

If, in the future, the Board of Education decides it does not want the parcel, then the possibilities open up. If the decision is made that the parcel should be used for Senior housing, the charity has agreed to cover the cost of demolition. A discussion followed about potential future use.

NEW BUSINESS.

There was no new business to discuss at this time.

ADJOURNMENT.

**** MR. HEINBAUGH MOVED TO ADJOURN.
** MS. SQUYRES SECONDED.
** THE MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY**

The meeting adjourned at 9:26 a.m.

Respectfully submitted

Sharon L. Soltes
Telesco Secretarial Services

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

Darien Senior Activities Center
Commission on Aging Report
November 20, 2013
Respectfully Submitted: Beth Paris, Coordinator

We have a lot to be thankful for in this month of giving "thanks" We are enjoying solid attendance and steady new membership. Our October Wednesday CRAFT IN has stocked the Gift Shop with beautiful handmade creations and visitors are coming in everyday to browse and buy. For the third time in a row the AARP Driving Course was filled to capacity. There is a waiting list regularly for the Darien Flower Clubs monthly flower arranging class. Fairfield University Matter of Balance class finishes up another 8 week course and the Free Cardiovascular Screening event they organized filled every appointment slot.

Middlesex Middle School 8th Grade Intergenerational BINGO a record breaking 100 kids and 42 Seniors...great time had by ALL! Salute to our Veteran's Lunch and entertainment w/ACABELLA's. Sign Up for Thanksgiving Celebration 132.

Wii Bowling league added another team. And we are looking forward to Stamford Hospital's Lunch and Learn for this month "Eating Healthy for the Holidays" to draw a big crowd. We had a visit from Congressman Jim Himes early in the month he facilitated a "lively" discussion on senior concerns.

A new Clerk/Receptionist was hired Kathleen Meehan who started late October. Meetings are now taking place at the Senior Center on Fridays regarding furniture needs for Mather's. We are also trying to determine room layouts and use of space and storage.

Monthly Caregiver Educational Support Group: 7
Caregiver Options Counseling: 10
Referrals to Human Services: 5
At Home in Darien Assist: 14

Highlighted Programs for November:

1st: AARP Meeting/Middlesex 8th Grade Intergenerational BINGO
4th Blood Pressure Screening
5th Historical Series w Art Gottlieb LCSW *Rosie the Riveter*
6th, 13th, 20th Matter of Balance with Fairfield University
6th Darien Garden Club Flower Arranging Class
7th Veteran's Day Celebration w/ musical styling's of the ACABELLA's
11th Veteran's Day CLOSED
13th AARP Driving Course
14th Life Long Therapeutics Exercise Class
15th Fairfield University Cardiovascular Screening
18th Walgreens presents Medicare Part D
19th Caregiver Educational Support Group "Being Thankful Lowers Stress Level"
20th Thanksgiving Celebration Dinner
21st BINGO Swap with Pam James
26th Stamford Hospital present "Eating Healthy for the Holidays"
28th and 29th CLOSED for Thanksgiving Holiday

Ongoing work in Progress:

Program Planning Winter-Early Spring
Move Planning-Meeting w/Instructors & Staff
Statistics and Reports
Monthly Newsletters
NCC Student Supervision

Meetings attended: weekly meetings w/Sue Swiatek and furniture rep; weekly meeting NCC Student intern; SWCAA Advisory Board 11/13/13; Staff Training for Clerk/Receptionist

Building Issues: Temperature control throughout building is difficult to manage. Unfortunately need to open windows periodically throughout the day... Parking is getting to be a daily concern as we need more on level ground and closer to the building.

Commission on Aging
Human Services Report
Olive Hauser, Director
November 20, 2013

- The Energy Assistance Program is well under way. We are experiencing some problems in communication with NEON which is taking up more time than we would like.
- Operation Fuel opens the first week in December. This will be the first year we will be taking applications in the office over a secure internet portal.
- Ali and Inta went to a presentation on ACCESS CT or Obamacare and found it very helpful. We have been getting some calls from seniors asking what does it mean for them and of course they are not eligible to apply.
- Medicare Part D has been keeping both Ali and Inta busy. Open enrollment ends December 7th.
- The construction at The Heights continues. I have met the new property manager, Nicole Jefferson, and she has been very helpful and welcoming.
- Holiday preparations are well underway. Thanksgiving baskets are being distributed and Stop and Shop gift cards will be sent out by Thursdays.

If anyone is interested in sponsoring a senior for Christmas, please see me after the meeting.

Donations for Christmas are being actively sought. We are concerned about the increase number of children we saw in September and being able to collect enough gifts and gift cards to cover them all. The knitting Group at the Senior Center is busy making hats and mittens and scarfs. These are a big favorite of the children.