

**DRAFT
TOWN OF DARIEN
COMMISSION ON AGING
REGULAR MEETING
MARCH 21, 2012**

ATTENDANCE: Joe Pankowski, Chair; Mary McCarthy, Thomas Valentino, Amy Squyres, Pat Morgan, Ron Heinbaugh, Ray Slavin

STAFF: Olive Hauser, Social Service Director; Beth Paris, Senior Center Director

CALL TO ORDER

Chairman Pankowski called the meeting to order at 9:05 a.m.

APPROVAL OF PREVIOUS MONTH'S MINUTES

The following corrections were noted:

Minutes of January 18, 2012:

Page 1, under **ATTENDANCE**: please add "Thomas Valentino".

Page 1, under **OTHERS**: please change: "Tony Homicki, Darien Tax Collector" to "Tony Homicki, Darien Tax Assessor" Time,

Page 3, under **ADJOURNMENT**: please change the following from: "The meeting adjourned at 9:48 p.m." to "The meeting adjourned at 9:48 a.m.".

Minutes of February 15, 2012:

Page 1, under **CALL TO ORDER**, please change the following from "to order at 9:04 p.m." to "to order at 9:04 a.m."

Page 3, under **NEW BUSINESS**, paragraph 2, please change the following from "seniors that were disabled or income restricted had no advocate." to "seniors that were not disabled or income restricted had no advocate."

**** MR. HEINBAUGH MOVED TO APPROVE THE MINUTES OF THE JANUARY 18, 2012 MINUTES AND THE FEBRUARY 15, 2012 MINUTES AS CORRECTED.**

**** MS. MCCARTHY SECONDED.**

**** THE MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY.**

SENIOR CENTER REPORT

Ms. Paris announced that there had been a meeting with architect about the details for the Mather Center. A building use policy is being developed. It would be good to have some flexibility in the hours and maintenance issues need to be considered. Marcie, the program director and Jim Coughlin will need to take part in the discussions about the building use. It will be important to be organized and not assume things.

Ms. Paris gave an update about the Care Giver event. The belly dancing event was well attended with 90 people and there was good participation. The St. Patrick's Day event was on Channel 12. An afternoon practice time has been requested for pickle ball.

There were three incidents at the Center during the last month that required 911 assistance. Ms. Paris reminded everyone that the more diverse the group at the senior center and the larger the group, the larger the chance of requiring 911 assistance. Two of the incidents involved Darien residents and those cases were referred to Ms. Hauser.

There are still building issues. Ms. Paris reviewed the details of a leak when the shut off valves broke and now require retro-fitting. There was also an oil leak. This has been repaired and is being monitored on a daily basis.

The breaker switches have been tripping because they are aging. The electrician, Sparky, said that these need to be replaced.

The old computers from the Police Station are being reformatted for the Center. These will be used for a computer classroom. An air conditioner will be installed in the room.

The upcoming schedule for April has many programs. Aging in Place, Gallivant and the Darien Senior Center will be sponsoring an event on Home Safety for Seniors. This program focuses on ways to prep and adapt a home for an elderly resident.

Ms. Rosemary Williams, Director of the Women's Perspective, will be leading a workshop on "Money Conversations for Women: Align Your Financial Decisions with Your Core Values" at 11 a.m. on April 4th, 11th, 18, 25th and May 2nd.

The Darien Senior Center and the Visiting Nurse & Hospice of Fairfield County will be presented a program on April 16th on advanced health care planning called "Planning for No Regrets" which is focused on advanced planning for health care concerns.

Ms. Kristen Cusato of The Alzheimer's Association of Connecticut will be giving a presentation about the disease and available resources on April 24th at 12:30 p.m.

The discussion then moved to the Coupon Cuties and how their program is expanding.

Mr. Pankowski commented that the St. Patrick's Day event was wonderful.

SOCIAL SERVICES

Ms. Hauser said that Allen O'Neill housing project is in full swing. All the seniors have been either settled or have been slated for one move.

Fuel assistance requests have slowed down. The office is trying to help seniors before the shut down notices are sent. There have been a number of cases where seniors have experienced a medical crisis and required home care or other services quickly. The new Social Services case manager has been able to assist with a number of these cases.

A problem has arisen about seniors hoarding. Hoarding becomes an issue when the caregivers can't get access to the homes. Some of the seniors are now too frail to clean out their residences while others are reluctant to part with their possessions. One caregiver has been somewhat successful with this type of situation. Mr. Valentino noted that now the Spring Clean Up was only by appointment from April through June, there could be an increase in hoarding. A discussion followed about the details of this topic.

Ms. Hauser reviewed a number of announcements pertaining to a recent shift in staff for the Darien Community Fund and the Darien Community Association.

Ms. Hauser said that the Director of NEON has been replaced and the Social Service Directors from neighboring towns will be meeting with the new NEON director to discuss the process for applying for fuel assistance.

SENIOR CENTER

Mr. Pankowski said Ms. Woods was currently in the Bahamas but emailed him that that BOE move to Leroy Avenue has been approved by the Architectural Board and it has been determined that there are no PCB issues at Leroy Avenue.

The discussion moved to purchasing a generator in order to have a comfort station or emergency shelter when the power is out.

Mr. Pankowski then spoke about the proposed senior housing at Edgerton and a discussion about whether the units should include garages, which will mean fewer units.

OLD BUSINESS

Aging in Place will be having a free lunch on March 22nd followed by a movie at the library. Getting people out for events is a means of helping seniors with social interaction. Volunteers are being vetted for helping.

Ms. McCarthy said that the Board of Finance has been contacted regarding the issue of tax abatement and opening discussions have been held. The timing will be very important.

The discussion moved to the real time effect of the Darien Patch and how that can promote senior issues.

NEW BUSINESS

Mr. Valentino asked if anyone would be having a table at the July Sidewalk Sales. Ms. Hauser said that the Department had a table in the past and it was not very effective. Ms. Paris commented that surveys were done in the past at the Sidewalk Sales and that there were a tremendous number of out of town attendees. There will be a table at the Memorial Day parade and the car show. Mr. Pankowski pointed out that it would be good to have events that would be focused on Darien. It was decided to reserve a table at the Tilley Pond Event.

ADJOURNMENT

**** MS. SQUIRES MOVED TO ADJOURN.**

**** MS. MORGAN SECONDED.**

**** THE MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY.**

The meeting adjourned at 10:00 a.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Sharon L. Soltes
Telesco Secretarial Services

Commission of Aging Report

Darien Senior Activities Center

March 21st, 2012

Respectfully Submitted: Beth Paris, Coordinator

Relocation of Darien Senior Center: There have been several discussions with Architect Tom Arcari and Associates regarding finishes, textiles, room orientations and other adjustments made to the building space for other potential user groups. Though it was our understanding that the prime use for the renovated facility was to replace the dilapidated building on Edgerton and provide a safe, secure modern space for the current and future Senior Center members, interests in space have been put forth by private groups and adjustments have been made to the plan affecting viable program space. Additionally these changes will most likely affect evening use that will impact senior programming during the traditional 9-3 slot as well as trend expansion (maintenance, monitoring, and management issues). With fewer dedicated rooms coupled with planned multi programming of space, the new space actually requires more set up and break downs each day.

To our knowledge, no governing priorities, policies or guidelines on who can use or how the space will be utilized during, before, and after senior center activities have been decided. Current center staff is stretched to the limit and will continue to be insufficient especially with the growth we anticipate in the new facility.

Sue Swiatek Director of Parks and Recreation, Jim Coghlan, Assistant Director, Marcy Rand, Program Specialist and I are planning to work on a draft policy, building usage guidelines and scheduling procedures, for submission to the Board of Selectmen. We hope to clarify the needs of the Senior Program and Parks and Recreation. Critical operations such as time set aside for cleaning; the handling of set up and break downs; and who will monitor use including weekdays, weekends, and evenings need to be addressed.

Programs: Caregiver Education Program has expanded. More referrals and options counseling this month on site and as needed. Several tours this month for new members.

90 Folks attended the Middle Eastern Themed Luncheon with Belly Dancer. We were featured on News 12 featured it that evening

Pickleball took right off. We already have a need for beginner court time. Looking at teams and pairings. 22 participants and growing.

Incidents: 2 Incidents required 911 to be called this month followed by option counseling, family support, and care planning assist. Referrals were made to Social Services.

Ongoing Work in Progress: Daily Stats

Tabulating Survey results
Membership & Renewal numbers
Communication Publications Contract
Program Planning Spring/Summer
Social Service Referral/Collaborations
Quarterly Report
Staff Meetings regarding theme Programs
Mather's Community Center Future Use
Back up support AIP+Gallivant

March Program Highlights: 2nd AARP Chapter Meeting speaker D. Scott Spector

5th Blood Pressure
6th Pickle ball begins
6th French Literature Conversation Class
6th Historical Presentation: Pennsylvania Station
7th Darien Garden Club Flower Arranging
8th & 20th 60 plus Gathering Pam James
13th Lunch and Learn with Ingrid Hess Complimentary Lunch
15th St Patrick's Day Celebration and Luncheon
16th Ask A Lawyer
20th Take Shape for Life
26th Acupuncture and Arthritis Health talk
27th Crafting with Kim –Spring Project

Building Issues:

- An over flow tank above boiler sprung leaks and flooded the boiler room. A two year old circulator pump burned out resulting in no hot water to the building. Repairs commenced. The problem was discovered by our Chef Tom who went to the boiler when he became aware that no hot water was available in the restrooms. We have no custodial services.
- A week later boiler filter mechanism leaked resulting in a large puddle of oil in the boiler room. The spill was abated and the mechanism was attended to and tightened. Again, discovered by the Chef.
- The Parks Maintenance crew removed and disposed of old computer parts from the computer room. We are hoping for computers to be set up by IT from other depts or Board of Ed as machines are replaced.
- Gym Floor. Required retaping the Gym for Pickleball court. This will be required on-going.
- The Parks Maintenance crew began work to repair the broken and potentially unsafe decking on the café stage.

Meetings Attended: Weekly AIP+Gallivant meeting with ED; **March 9th** DCA Executive Director meeting; **March 14th** SWCAA Advisory Meeting; **March 21st** COA meeting; **March 27th** Alzheimer's Conference; **March 29th** SWCAA Grant review at Waveney ADC Program; **March 30th** SWCAA Senior Center Forum