

**DRAFT**  
**TOWN OF DARIEN**  
**COMMISSION ON AGING**  
**REGULAR MEETING**  
**JANUARY 18, 2012**

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

**STAFF:** Director of Social Services; Beth Paris, Senior  
Center Coordinator, Ali Ramsteck

**OTHERS:** First Selectwoman Jamie Stevenson, Tony Homicki, Darien Tax  
Collector, Selectman David Campbell

**CALL TO ORDER**

Mr. Pankowski called the meeting to order at 9:04 and greeted everyone.

**APPROVAL OF THE PREVIOUS MONTH'S MINUTES**

December 21, 2012

Page 2, under **OLD BUSINESS**, paragraph 2, line 1: please change "will be meeting on January 23rd with the neighbors" to "will be meeting the week of January 23rd with the neighbors"

**\*\* MS. MCCARTHY MOVED THE MINUTES OF DECEMBER 21, 2012 AS CORRECTED.**

**\*\* MS. MORGAN SECONDED.**

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

**SENIOR CENTER REPORT**

Ms. Paris gave an overview of the various programs underway at the Senior Center. She reported that all 250 copies of the newsletters were gone. The membership renewals and new memberships drive is underway. There are more than 450 Darien residents and over 170 non-residents that were listed as members in December.

The Chinese New Year's luncheon featuring an Asian themed lunch and an astrologer will be held on January 23rd at 11 a.m.

Local author Julian Padowicz will be speaking on his works and how he accomplished his goal of being an author late in life on February 21st at 12:30 p.m.

On February 23rd the Darien Senior Activity Center will be hosting Sirica, who will perform belly dancing. Lunch begins at 12:00 p.m., followed by the show. Reservations are requested.

A survey is currently underway for Darien residents 55 and above regarding programming ideas. The response has been good.

### **SOCIAL SERVICE REPORT**

Ms. Hauser then presented her report to the Committee.

Social Services wrapped up the holiday season. The clients and seniors are very appreciative for all the efforts. Fuel assistance is going well due to the warm weather.

The Taxi Voucher program is not being utilized as much as expected. There are about 28 clients who use the service consistently. This will be considered to see if it would be best to continue the program.

### **TAX ASSISTANCE**

Ms. Geddes said that Darien Tax Assistance is the lowest town in the county. Most of the towns are increasing their assistance for veterans. Darien's assistance currently is \$1,500. Mr. Pankowski pointed out this might be an oversight. Ms. Geddes suggested that this be brought before the Board of Selectmen for their consideration.

Mr. Homicki, the Tax Assessor, then reviewed the State programs and the local programs. The local program is a five-tier program. He said that currently there are fewer applicants than previously.

Mr. Pankowski said that it would be important to have as much information as possible before going to the Selectmen. Discussion followed about what data was needed. Mr. Pankowski pointed out that there are benefits to "Aging in Place" which have to be acknowledged.

Mr. Homicki explained that difference regarding a tax deferral opposed to tax relief. Mr. Homicki said that he would have the additional information for the next meeting.

### **OLD BUSINESS**

Aging in Place - Ms. Squyres reported that there was a new president of Board. It will be important to raise the awareness for the programs Aging In Place offers. There are Friendly Drivers, Friendly Helpers, and Friendly Shoppers programs. Volunteers are needed. The new

area will be helping with the Gallivant drivers after the normal hours. There is also a need for drivers to cover areas that Gallivant does not cover, such as Greenwich.

The discussion moved back to the Taxi Voucher program and Gallivant program. There are background checks and vetting that is done for the volunteers. The Gallivant program runs until 4 p.m. and is not available on the weekend. It is important to offer the senior residents options.

Edgerton Group will be meeting with the neighbors on January 26th at 7:30 p.m. at the Noroton Fire Department meeting room. This will give the neighbors a chance to be heard.

Ms. Hauser reported that the Allen O'Neill project is moving forward. Phase 1 will begin in March and all the residents should be relocated by that time.

Ms. Woods reported that the Building Committee will be meeting on every other Tuesday at noon for site development at 35 Leroy. A design company has been selected along with a parking company. Contracts are being reviewed. BOE is expecting to move into the 35 Leroy site in December of 2012. Yankee Gas has stated that a gas line could be installed at 35 Leroy, but will be expensive. There is a possibility that a partnership can be formed with the Darien Sport Shop regarding the gas line.

#### **NEW BUSINESS**

There was no new business to discuss at this time.

#### **ADJOURNMENT**

- \*\* MS. SQUYRES MOVED TO ADJOURN.**
- \*\* MS. GEDDES SECONDED.**
- \*\* THE MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY.**

The meeting adjourned at 9:48 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Sharon L. Soltes  
Telesco Secretarial Services

## **Commission on Aging Report**

Darien Senior Activities Center

January 18, 2012

Respectfully Submitted: Beth Paris, Coordinator

**January** is the month for **renewal** and **new membership** drive which will go through March. We are again including a **program survey** to explore interest and ideas. Last year **Mahjong** and **Wii** were asked for by several respondents and both programs have taken off. We closed out December 2011 with **452 Darien Residents** and **176 Non residents a total of 628**. We are expecting to increase these numbers through programming and better and more consistent publicity. We are trying to set up a meeting with Josh at the Darien Times and have already contacted online sources for more coverage. We are also exploring other Newsletter options that might make a monthly or at least quarterly mailing possible.

**Budget Sessions** are ongoing with Sue Swiatek Director Parks and Recreation. We are asking for building attendant increase 2 part timers at 15 hours each to cover opening and closing for safety and practical reasons –mainly daily trouble shooting of an old building, set up and take down for meetings and programs, coverage in case of emergency small an large scale. Also requested additional hours for Program Specialist from 19 to 25 hours. All other cost will remain static. We are no longer asking for capital expenses of boiler and roof since we will be moving within the next 2 years.

### **Ongoing Work in Progress:** Budget Workshops

- Quarterly Statistic Report for BOS submitted
- SWCAA report in At-Risk Elderly Reporting Emergency Action Plan
- Daily Statistic
- Membership Renewal/New and Survey
- AIP+Gallivant office support
- Program planning Spring/Summer
- Development for Parks and Recreation
- Spring/Summer Catalogue
- Social Service Referrals
- Collaborative Meetings with other Agencies
- Building Management

### **January Program Highlights:** 2<sup>nd</sup> CLOSED

- 4<sup>th</sup> Darien Garden Club Winter Project
- 6<sup>th</sup> AARP Chapter 972 Meeting
- 9<sup>th</sup> Blood Pressures
- 9<sup>th</sup> Met Life Pros and Cons of Reverse Mortgages
- 10<sup>th</sup> Take Shape for Life
- 10<sup>th</sup> Hoot OWLS-Musical Entertainment
- 10<sup>th</sup> French Literature
- 11<sup>th</sup> So I had my Surgery NOW WHAT-complimentary Lunch

13<sup>th</sup> Ask the Lawyer  
13<sup>th</sup> CRAFTS with "Little Miss Acorn"  
16<sup>th</sup> CLOSED MLK Day  
17<sup>th</sup>, 24<sup>th</sup>, 31<sup>st</sup> Historical Series "Air Wars"  
18<sup>th</sup> High Tea Laughter is the Best Medicine"  
18<sup>th</sup> Lecture: Nutritional Needs-Complimentary Lunch  
19<sup>th</sup> 60 plus gathering w/Pam James  
24<sup>th</sup> The Games We Played-Darien Library  
25<sup>th</sup> Safe Steps: Fall Prevention Program  
30<sup>th</sup> January Birthdays

**Building Issues:** Covered windows in offices with plastics to cut down on cold air  
Boiler was services need a part replaced  
Phones/Computers still cutting off and on no resolution in site  
on list for cable replacement  
Dump run for closet between art room and card room  
Still bucketing leaks in woodshop and library areas during storms

**Meetings Attended:** Jan 9<sup>th</sup> Tom Heckel Harvard Pro Bono Group survey for Waveny Care Center; Jan 11<sup>th</sup> SWCAA Advisory Board; January 12<sup>th</sup> AIP+Gallivant Program Committee meeting; AIP+Gallivant bi-monthly meeting; Social Service monthly and as needed. Jan 23<sup>rd</sup> Advisory Board AIP+Gallivant