

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

ATTENDANCE: Joe Pankowski, Chair; Amy Squyres, Robin Woods, Mary McCarthy, Ray Slavin, Gennifer Genovese (9:08 a.m.)

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

OTHERS: Karl Kilduff, Town Manager; Jayme Stevenson, First Selectman

CALL TO ORDER

Mr. Pankowski called the meeting to order at 9:05 a.m. A quorum was not present.

SENIOR CENTER REPORT

Ms. Paris reported that the Senior Center was closed for a week during the storm. There were 120 calls on voice mail, most of which were simply for reassurance. The phones and computers were working, but there was no heat and sparse lighting. There was some food loss. The freezers have now been completely cleaned.

Thanksgiving lunch has 121 people participate. The Holiday Boutique is open and everything is hand made.

The boiler problems continue.

Ms. Genovese joined the meeting at 9:08a.m. A quorum was present.

The Fairfield University nursing students will be providing free blood pressures, cholesterol, and blood glucose readings for free on November 27th from 9:30 a.m. – 12:30 p.m.

MINUTES OF OCTOBER 18, 2012

**** MS. MCCARTHY MOVED THE MINUTES OF OCTOBER 18, 2012.**

**** MS. SQUYRES SECONDED.**

**** THE MOTION TO APPROVE THE MINUTES OF OCTOBER 18, 2012 AS SUBMITTED PASSED UNANIMOUSLY.**

SOCIAL SERVICES REPORT

Ms. Hauser said that the EOC (Emergency Operations Center) was fully operational and worked well. Calls were made before the storm, during the storm and afterwards to elderly residents on

the list. If there was no answer, someone went to check on the resident. There was a post storm meeting that also went well.

The holiday program is in full gear. The gingerbread trees will be up on Monday at different locations. A new program will be starting where individuals who are willing to supply a gift for a specific senior will be receive a name.

The Budget season is starting and more than three quarters of the funding has already been allocated due to an increase in cases.

The Medicare Part D's deadline is December 7th.

Fuel assistance applications are being taken. The Budget remains at 70% less than previous years. The tracking of the applications by the Social Service Office is working well.

Mr. Pankowski said that there had been a discussion at the Board of Selectmen about having a generator installed at the new Senior Center. Ms. Stevenson said that according to FEMA, the building would have to withstand a Category 3 hurricane, which means that even the high school would not qualify. So, the high school and the new Mather Center would be more of a comfort center. She said that the staff is looking at the cost of having a generator for the annex, but it is not currently part of the budget.

Ms. Hauser said that there had been a long standing request for better cots because the current ones are too low, thinly padded and difficult for seniors to use. It was discovered that there were 20 cots that were better designed with thicker mattresses and had hand rails.

TAX DEFERRAL

There was an unanimous vote on the Tax Now it goes to the Board of Finance. Mr. Kilduff then reviewed the upcoming process for the request. After the Board of Finance approval, resolution will be going to the RTM for approval.

OLD BUSINESS

Ms. Woods reported that the demolition of the interior at 35 Leroy has been underway and may be completed very soon. The gas line work has been completed. The moving date has been pushed back to April 15th break because of the storm. This will move the Community Center move in date back to October.

Regarding the Mather Center, the committee is still waiting for hazardous materials report. Once that is done, a bid will go out for a contractor.

Mr. Kilduff said that the abatement report has been received by the Town and the project is moving forward. Ms. Stevenson said that some of the equipment can start to be moved off site to be permanently stored elsewhere.

A brief discussion followed about the relocation of the Gallivant van and sedan since the Town garage will be reconfigured for the Board of Education.

Ms. Squyres said that the Board of Aging in Place were very pleased with the progress of the program and that many people were pleased with updates that were issued by the First Selectman during the storm.

Discussion followed about having seniors signing up their cell phones for Code Red and how this could be done. Many of the seniors have stated they will be dropping cable because the problems with lack of phone service during power failures.

NEW BUSINESS

Ms. Woods then spoke about elder abuse and how care givers can gain access to credit card information. Ms. Hauser said that she now cautions all family members that it is important to remove all financial information from residence. Another issue is the unauthorized use of the elderly client's vehicles. Ms. Stevenson said that at some point, the State wants all health care workers and child care workers to be unionized. Ms. Paris said that there have been clauses in the contracts that family members are not allowed in the elderly client's home. Ms. Squyres said that because of the issues that had been discussed she was able to take preventative steps. Mr. Pankowski pointed out that because the staff are often poorly paid, temptation is high.

Ms. Woods said that there was also a problem in that the care givers are putting pressure on the client to give to the care giver's church or other causes is often happening. There has also been cases where the seniors have been asked to sign time slips where the hours are not even filled in or the times are filled out incorrectly.

The discussion then moved to reaching out to the community and how to make people aware. Ms. Stevenson said that she found that addressing the general public just before the weekly movie at the Darien Library. Discussion followed about the Senior Center Caregiver program and expanding it to include information about fraud. Ms. Paris pointed out that the police also have excellent resources about this topic. It was decided that there would be a presentation scheduled at the April Caregiver's program.

Ms. Stevenson said that there was a group in Ridgefield that was working on making people aware of direct mail scamming. She said that she would provide people with information about this student's contact information.

ADJOURNMENT

**** MS. WOODS MOVED TO ADJOURN.
** MS. MCCARTHY SECONDED.
** THE MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY.**

The meeting adjourned at 9:55 a.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Sharon L. Soltes
Telesco Secretarial Services

**Commission on Aging
Senior Center Report**

November 21, 2012

Respectfully Submitted: Beth Paris, Coordinator

It has been a difficult month at the Center considering the damage of Hurricane Sandy. The Center was without power from **Monday to Saturday Nov 5th - 9th**. On Wednesday we had phone/computer and a limited amount of lights no heat. I answered 120 calls in those 3 days and met Seniors who ventured out in our parking lot to check if the Center was open. Much of our conversation was just to reassure, connect folks with current accurate information regarding power outages and making referrals to Dept of Human Services when needed.

We lost approximately \$500.00 worth of food. Tom cleaned out refrigerator and freezers disinfected and had them inspected for opening on Monday. We trouble shot the building and kept in contact with Public Works and Town Hall.

We had to cancel a much anticipated Halloween Celebration. When we reopened the following week brisk attendance and participation in the lunch program.

The heating system took a hard hit. 2 of our 3 circulator pumps were non operational and the one that was working had a leak. We had to make adjustments to how the heat was regulated in order to keep the system limping along. A pipe connection failed in the dishwasher –we are waiting on a part and redirecting dishwasher water drainage directly in the floor drain to keep operational. At this date we even with servicing we have no heat in gym, library or movie room.

We were able to have our **Annual Thanksgiving Luncheon** with 121 folks participating. For the first time we have converted the **Gift Shoppe into a Holiday Boutique** for a month...most items are hand made and reasonably priced. We have been enjoying a steady stream of visitors.

The **Matter of Balance Program** is doing well with consistent participation.

Monthly Caregiver Education Program: 8

Caregiver Options Counseling: 7

Referrals to Human Services: 6

EMS calls: 0

AIP+Gallivant assists: 14

Ongoing Work in Progress: Building damage control

Newsletter

Statistics

Program Planning Spring

Building Use and Scheduling Mather's

Staff Meetings

November Highlights:

2nd AARP Meeting (closed storm)
5th Blood Pressure
5th Aetna Medicare Advantage Presentation
6th French Literature
6th Historical Series Art Gottlieb
7th Darien Garden Club Flower Arranging
8th Veteran's Day Celebration Sedgwick Sisters
9th Holiday Crafts with Kim
13th & 27th Rummikub
14th Pre-Thanksgiving Celebration
15th Bingo Plus w/ Pam James
16th Ask a Lawyer (by appointment)
19th Let's Reminisce with Gerri
20th Caregiver Education Support Group
22nd & 23rd CLOSED Thanksgiving Holiday
26th Downton Abbey Series Starts
27th Connecticare: Medicare Advantage Presentation
28th Darien CORE Group Crafts and Conversation

Building Issues:

Circulator Pumps 2 out 1 running Center leaking
Dishwasher connecting pipe to drain rupture
Mice still being managed bait in other areas
Winterizing windows in office area
Limb removal of various trees for safety

Meetings: Did not attend SWCAA this month because of Pre-thanksgiving celebration;
met with Sue Swiatek Building Issues; AIP+Gallivant Support weekly;