

DRAFT
TOWN OF DARIEN
COMMISSION ON AGING
REGULAR MEETING
DECEMBER 21, 2011

ATTENDANCE : Joe Pankowski, Chair; Thomas Valentino, Ron Heinbaugh,
Ray Slavin, Jennifer Geddes, Robin Woods, Mary McCarthy,
Geri Genovese, Pat Morgan

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

CALL TO ORDER

Chairman Pankowski called the meeting to order at 9:03 a.m.

APPROVAL OF PREVIOUS MONTH'S MINUTES

**** MS. GEDDES MOVED TO APPROVE THE NOVEMBER 16, 2011MINUTES.**

**** MR. SLAVIN SECONDED.**

**** THE MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY.**

SOCIAL SERVICE REPORT

Ms. Hauser then presented her report to the Committee.

It has been a busy Christmas season. This year Social Services was able to distribute some gift cards thanks to the Darien High School students, who donated the proceeds from their concert.

The fuel assistance program is underway. The allocations this year are very minimal. Fortunately, the warm weather has kept fuel costs down.

The Housing Authority is currently doing renovations at Allen O'Neill. Some of the residents have been moved to other locations while the construction is underway. Mr. Campbell then gave an overview of the project timeline. Phase 1 will be very disruptive for the residents since the buildings will be demolished. Ms. Hauser pointed out there will be seniors who will be severely impacted by this, which has increased referrals.

Ms. Hauser spoke about the Christmas Store which is in Room 119A. The Senior Center collected hats, scarves and gloves that were hand made. Residents who qualify can go in and chose two presents for each one of their children.

The discussion then moved to N.E.O.N.'s handling of the energy assistance and the matching grant program. N.E.O.N is now requiring residents to come in to fill out the applications.

SENIOR CENTER REPORT

Ms. Paris gave an overview of the various programs underway at the Senior Center. 108 residents came in to the Center for information about the shuffle and several of the older residents joined the Center during their visits.

Copies of the January newsletter were handed out.

Ms. Paris then reported that there were two post-stroke residents who have responded extremely well to the knitting class run by a retired doctor.

In February, a belly dancer will be performing at a Middle Eastern event for the Seniors. There has been strong interest expressed by numerous members about this event.

OLD BUSINESS

Mr. Pankowski announced that the referendum had failed to pass. It is likely the BOE will move in December 2012, which will delay the Senior Center moving in until the summer of 2013.

The Edgerton Housing Group has met and will be meeting on January 23rd with the neighbors for their input. Discussion followed about the potential construction of senior housing at the site.

NEW BUSINESS

Ms. Geddes said that there has been a major initiative for Tax Abatements for both the seniors and the Assessments for veterans. She said that she had contacted the neighboring towns and Darien is the lowest amounts for both the veterans and the seniors. Mr. Pakowski asked Ms. Geddes to create a proposal for the January meeting. This will allow it to be on the Selectmen's February agenda.

ADJOURNMENT

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

The meeting adjourned at 9:47 a.m.

Respectfully submitted,

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Sharon L. Soltes
Telesco Secretarial Services

Commission on Aging Report

Darien Senior Activities Center

December 21, 2011

Respectfully Submitted, Beth Paris Coordinator

December is always a very special month at the Center. Because the holidays can be a challenge we scheduled more light hearted and inspirational entertainments rather than lecture series. All entertainments will culminate with the **December 21st Circle of light Celebration** which is an opportunity to share with friends wishes for the Holiday Season and New Year to come. (120 have signed up and we are expecting a few more)

We also have scheduled **several school groups'** visits and continue with our regular schedule events. **DHS CORE** group will be back for a collaborative sharing program about the holidays

We will be introducing **2 new Programs** a monthly **Weight Loss Seminars** and monthly **Craft Class** facilitated by a local **Darien Business Fun Craft**. **Themed event for December- Winter Fest 70 folks attended lunch and entertainment.**

The **Holiday Fair** held on November 19th made approximately **\$1500.00** a drop from last year but it seems to be the trend in the area.

Donated a basket of home made hats, scarves, gloves and socks to Social Services and participated in the Cops and Kid's Drive.

102 different residents came in for information regarding the Center

Ongoing Work in Progress: Monthly Newsletter

Quarterly Report for BOS preparations

Daily Statistics

Collaborative Meetings with other Agencies

AIP+Gallivant Support and collaboration

Instructor Agreements revised for 2012

Program planning and development Spring

Building management

Budget Sessions and Preparation

Social Service referrals

December Program Highlights: 1st Ron Spatoro Holiday Music

5th Blood Pressure

6th Mummies Play-New Canaan Country Day

6th French Literature

7th Darien Garden Club

7th New Computer Classes

7th Park Street Singers Performance

12th Bonnie Leidner Sing-a-long

13th Noroton Presbyterian Nursery Scholl
13th Take Shape for Life
14th Fun Craft Projects
14th DHS CORE Holiday Program
15th Winter Festival w Frank Billowitz
21st Santa Visits-Circle of Light Celebration
CLOSED 23rd, 26th and Jan. 2nd

Building Projects: Cleaned out back closet area-all that remains are plastic boxed
Decorations for the year
Identified new roof leaks shared with Public Works
Requested boiler maintenance and clean up request
OCON placing bait outside building for rodent control
Cable phone line is sinking-every rain storm loss of phone and
Computers for part or the entire day. On list for cable
Replacement.

Meetings Attended: Dec 1 AIP+Gallivant Program Committee meeting; AIP+Gallivant
ED weekly; Budget Meetings w P&R Director Dec 1st and 2nd; **Hosted** AIP+Gallivant
Annual Meeting 12/12/11; **SWCAA Advisory Board Meeting** 14th **Hosted**; COA
meeting Dec 21st : Monthly Social Services Updates with Olive