

**DRAFT**  
**TOWN OF DARIEN**  
**COMMISSION ON AGING**  
**REGULAR MEETING**  
**JUNE 16, 2010**

**ATTENDANCE:** Joseph Pankowski, Chair; Jennifer Geddes, Vice Chair; Charlie England, Ron Heinbaugh, Mary McCarthy, Pat Morgan, Amy Squyres, Tom Valentino

**ABSENT:** Robin Woods

**OTHERS:** Beth Paris, Senior Center Coordinator; Olive Hauser, ex-officio/Social Services Director

**CALL TO ORDER**

Mr. Pankowski called the Regular Meeting to order at 9:03 a.m.

**APRIL MINUTES**

**\*\* MR. HEINBAUGH MOVED TO APPROVE THE APRIL MINUTES.**  
**\*\* MS. McCARTHY SECONDED.**  
**\*\* MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY.**

**MAY MINUTES**

**\*\* MS. MORGAN MOVED TO APPROVE THE MAY MINUTES.**  
**\*\* MS. SQUYRES SECONDED.**  
**\*\* MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY.**

**SENIOR CENTER REPORT**

Ms. Paris reported that 60 people attended the *Home Safety for Seniors* program on June 8. Mr. Pankowski inquired about the turnout by the Board of Selectmen and Board of Finance members, as they were sent an invitation by e-mail. Ms. Paris said that while she received a few reservations, no one attended from either the BOS or BOF. Ms. Hauser said the program was noted on the June calendar. She also mentioned that a Channel 79 representative filmed it. Mr. Pankowski asked if Jim Cameron could get a DVD for him, as it will be useful later on. Ms. Hauser said she will contact him.

Ms. Paris said that Mr. & Mrs. Woods donated a camera. She now can take pictures at events. Two Darien students, who have returned from college, are giving computer classes. One class will teach basic computer skills, and the second class will teach how to download free games from the

internet on cognitive exercises. Mr. Pankowski mentioned that a course on helping seniors pay their bills on line could be beneficial.

A silver B Weber Propane Grill in new condition was donated to the Senior Center.

A conference table set, as well as file and storage cabinets will be delivered toward the end of June.

The bingo room has been cleaned and is ready for the delivery. Ms. Paris said there were many new Darien faces at the *Body and Brain* program. At the *Health and Safety* program, fifteen new people came.

#### June May Highlights:

2<sup>nd</sup> - High Tea

7<sup>th</sup> - Feeding Body and Brain

8<sup>th</sup> - Home Safety Program

15<sup>th</sup> - Caregiver Support Group

16<sup>th</sup>, 17<sup>th</sup> - AARP Driving Course

22<sup>nd</sup> - Medicare Changes for 2010

Ms. Paris said in July a Japanese author, Mihoko Kawada, who is visiting a Darien resident, will be giving three programs. On July 20, an overview of Japanese culture; on July 21, there will be a traditional Japanese tea ceremony; and on July 27, a session on the art of origami and calligraphy.

On Friday, July 2<sup>nd</sup> is an Independence Day Celebration cookout with 'make your own sundae'. There will be Patriotic songs with musical entertainer, Bonnie Leitner.

#### Building Projects

Vent has been closed up near the propane tank area for safety

#### Works in Progress

Monthly newsletter

Policy Manual

Connecting with other Agencies and Senior Centers

Quarterly report for Ms. Swiatek

Attended SWCAA meeting on June 9 and gave a report.

### **SOCIAL SERVICES REPORT**

Ms. Hauser said that some seniors were of the belief that having a medical exemption qualifies them to not have to pay their power bill. Those who stopped paying are now in a position of having to pay large, outstanding balances. Some seniors also need guidance in prioritizing their bills.

The transportation grant for half-price taxi rides and trips could stop by the end of the month. Ms. Hauser said she is waiting to hear. Any unused dollars will need to be returned which will be minimal. She said the program has been a success. The Gallivant grant was turned down to replace this grant.

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Gallivant had a fund raising effort for donations. They are now a 501(c)(3). The organization is looking for another vehicle that is pre-owned and preferably a minivan. They are hoping to get support from a local dealership. A driver is needed to drive the van. She spoke highly of Drivers Unlimited, as there is a good dispatcher, receipts are brought in daily, and the van has a Nextel phone.

Aging in Place – The Committee is in the process of soliciting members for their permanent board. They received a \$2500 grant from People’s Bank.

Mr. Pankowski made a Motion to thank Mr. Heinbaugh for the use of his 1931 ‘Model A’ car in the Parade.

**\*\* MS. SQUYRES MOVED TO APPROVE A THANK YOU TO MR. RON HEINBAUGH FOR THE USE OF HIS 1931 ‘MODEL A’ AT THE PARADE.  
\*\* MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY.**

The Antique Car Show takes place this Sunday, Father’s Day, at Tilley Pond Park from 10 a.m. to 2 p.m. Mr. England gave his report and said that Tilley Pond Park is the perfect location for this event. Admission will be charged and Aging in Place is the beneficiary. Ms. Hauser commented that the signage at the Park is very good, and the advertising is prominent.

### **OLD BUSINESS**

Ms. Morgan asked if there is an update on the Senior Center’s new location. Mr. Pankowski said no.

### **NEW BUSINESS**

The move of the Senior Center to Leroy Avenue vs. Town Hall is still undecided. There are some who want it to remain at its present location. Ms. Squyres said it is very important that the COA plays a major role in the decision. Pictures, publicity, a PowerPoint presentation should be organized for upcoming meetings. Ms. Hauser asked if the BOF members had a tour of the Senior Center. Ms. Squyres said no.

Ms. McCarthy inquired about the focus of opposition. Ms. Squyres said cost. Some have a different priority list. The plan to have the Board of Education move to 35 Leroy does not meet with everyone’s approval. Ms. Geddes said there are many who feel that only about twenty people go to the Center daily. Ms. Hauser said that this thinking needs to be changed. She suggested letters to editors on programs along with the turnout numbers. Ms. Paris says she sends articles and pictures to editors regularly. Ms. Geddes mentioned that the *Daily Darien* has a new editor and probably would be interested in senior news. Since the Senior Center has multiple rooms, when one walks in and sees a handful of people in the first room, it can be presumed that no one is at the Center.

Mr. Pankowski suggested putting together a video on “A Day in the Life of the Senior Center”. Ms. Hauser thought it an excellent idea. It can be shown to the BOS, BOF, newspapers, and others. Ms. Squyres said that Jim Cameron can run a Senior Center segment on Channel 79. Mr. Pankowski asked Ms. Paris to gather statistics for neighboring towns on the percentage of seniors that use their Center. Ms. Morgan said that our Senior Center offers a wide variety of fitness and informational

programs and if there was no Center, people would just sit home. Ms. Squyres said that the Depot had to overcome negativity. A new location caused people to think differently. She believes that the same will happen here after the Senior Center moves to a new location.

**ADJOURNMENT**

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

There being no other business, the meeting was adjourned at 10:00 a.m.

*Next scheduled meeting is Wednesday, July 21, at 9:00 a.m., Room 119, Darien Town Hall.  
There is no meeting in August.*

Respectfully submitted,

Anne Hohlweck,  
Recording Secretary