

MEETING OF APRIL 13, 2010

The meeting was called to order at 6:30 p.m. by Commissioner Earl Temchin.

Members present: Ben Cammuso, Marlene Carbone, Marjorie Chase, Susan Locks, Lynn Maschi, Sandra Micalizzi, Guss Nevelos, Michael Rossi and Earl Temchin.

Commissioner Ben Cammuso was formally welcomed back following recent surgery. A thank you note was circulated from Mr. Cammuso, who also personally expressed his appreciation for all the support and concern that he received.

Commissioner Ben Cammuso led the **Pledge of Allegiance** to the American Flag.

The minutes of the March 9, 2010 meeting were presented to the Commission. A motion was made by Guss Nevelos to accept the minutes as presented; seconded by Michael Rossi; all were in favor.

The Treasurer's Report was given by Commissioner/Treasurer Susan Locks reporting that of the FY 2009/2010 \$509,025. revised budget, (which includes \$44,016 in Transfers/Adjustments), \$362,113.23 (73.6%) has been expended; \$12,532.30 remains encumbered, leaving \$134,379.47. A transfer of funds in the amount of \$900. into the Binding/Microfilming/Printing line item has been requested. Earl Temchin noted that we are approaching the end of the fiscal year, and Executive Director Robert Verderame remarked that we are running very well. We should be able to have the ducts cleaned using building maintenance funds not needed for snow removal. Mr. Verderame attended the April 5th public hearing. The Board of Finance will meet April 14th. The recent newspaper article that caused considerable concern has been found to be unfounded. Mr. Temchin was asked to assure everyone by stating publicly that it is not the intention of anyone to take away funding for the transportation program. A motion was made by Guss Nevelos to accept the Treasurer's Report as presented; seconded by Michael Rossi; all were in favor.

Executive Director Robert Verderame presented the **Director's and Program Coordinator's Report for March 2010**. Mr. Verderame noted that the Dial-A-Ride Program provided 986 one-way rides, with 488 medical runs.

Inquiries regarding the Medicare Savings Program continued. We responded to numerous requests for assistance relating to problems with Medicare D and/or ConnPACE application process. The AARP TCE Income Tax Assistance Program – (Tax Year 2009) came through the busiest month with a few challenges that were all met and handled by our incredible volunteers! Over 179 individuals were assisted in March. Federal and State returns were completed and e-filed. All e-filed returns were acknowledged and accepted.

A sensitivity training class was held on March 23rd for Calendar House staff and Town of Southington employees. Wheeler Clinic facilitators Mary Garofalo and Dallas Savard gave an excellent presentation that was both informative and interactive. Participants expressed interest in future educational opportunities on related topics.

Legislative Bill 5278, an act concerning Senior Centers and the Freedom of Information Act was unanimously passed by the General Administration and Election Committee. We receive requests from insurance companies, etc. for lists of individuals. Information collect at the Center is for a specific purpose and should not be disclosed for any other purpose. Specific requests should be immediately referred to the town attorney.

Senior Citizen Commission Meeting

April 13, 2010

Page two

The Executive Director participated in a Connecticut Association of Senior Center Personnel (CASCP) Roundtable Transportation Forum on March 9, 2010. Representatives from 27 Senior Centers were present. Topics included: parameters of service, policies, training, and addressing special assistance requests. Commissioner Sandra Micalizzi raised a question regarding transportation for long term residents of care facilities. None of the participating centers provide service from care facilities. This would be an issue for the Commission to decide. Commissioner Lynn Maschi inquired if the other towns have public transportation, and in fact most do. There are three communities who do not, and we are one of them. Mr. Verderame felt that the meeting was very informative, especially regarding policies, etc. He obtained information that he will pass on to the transportation committee. Commissioner Earl Temchin took exception to the three-strike rule that seems to be adversarial, undermining the relationship between bus riders and the Senior Center. There is a need for rules and regulations, particularly regarding verbal abuse, alcohol, etc., but the emphasis is that we are to provide a service and to serve the seniors. Question was raised if other communities have Commissions. Depending upon the form of government, some do and some do not but the assumption is that most towns have regulatory boards of some type.

Under Bus Maintenance: All buses are running well.

Under Building Maintenance: On March 3rd, a vehicle driven by the parent of a DePaolo student struck a light pole in the parking lot. Police and emergency vehicles responded. The driver and student were uninjured. The vehicle was towed. There was no discernable damage to the light pole. The garden area has been cleared in preparation for roto-tilling. Allstate Fire Equipment inspected and replaced three outdated fire extinguishers. A second story window that rain water had leaked through was re-caulked.

The Program Coordinator's Report highlighted activities related to the library's "Big Read" town wide programs featuring "The Maltese Falcon". Calendar House sponsored a breakfast discussion, as well as a screening of the black and white version of the movie. Over 100 members attended the DePaolo and Kennedy Middle Schools' production of "Grease" and were treated to a pre-show reception. Due to limited parking at the school, our buses transported members to the event. Student social work intern Rebecca Samela and Program Coordinator Sharyn Murphy are organizing a May Day intergenerational outreach with Plantsville School students and Southington High School VoAg students and faculty with plans to assemble and deliver floral bouquets to homebound senior citizens. Student social worker intern Sara Cruz will be attending a training session for the Renters Relief Program and has been involved with the Grandparents Raising Grandchildren support group.

A motion to accept the Director's Report as presented was made by Ben Cammuso; seconded by Lynn Maschi; all were in favor.

Under Correspondence: At the April 7th Department Heads Meeting, the primary topic of discussion was the budget. Of particular note was Chief Daly's request that the Board of Finance give the departments some idea of how much they might cut. Mr. Weichsel's response was the Board of Finance would not be telling us how much they might cut, so if there is anything you could possibly cut or defer, they would like to know.

Acknowledgment of our notification of disaffiliation with SeniorNet was received, outlining their requirements. Peter Freeman had informed the commission last month of this decision and has communicated to the director that we are in full compliance with SeniorNet's request.

Senior Citizen Commission Meeting
April 13, 2010
Page three

Continuing Under Correspondence: A rental request was received from the American Legion Auxiliary for their annual “program Information Conference” on September 25, 2010 from 7 a.m. to 4 p.m. They held this event at Calendar House last year and it went well. Their hall is not large enough to accommodate this event. A motion to approve this request with the usual stipulations was made by Sandra Micalizzi; seconded by Marlene Carbone; all were in favor.

Several memos were received regarding recent “scam” alerts. This information is communicated to our senior citizens.

Under Old Business: The parking lot “No Trespassing” signs will be installed at the availability of the Southington Police Department. As previously noted, the Sensitivity Training Class was well received by all participants.

Under Transportation Committee: Sandra Micalizzi reported that the committee had been working on the survey, taking into consideration comments made at last month’s meeting. There was some discussion regarding content and distribution. Of particular issue was whether to include the survey in the monthly mailing of the newsletter which involves 2000 plus copies or to mail it directly to the individuals who use the bus service. Also of concern was the number of pages, and a suggestion was made to use 8 ½ x 14 paper rather than 8 ½ x 11, which would reduce the number of pages needed. There was discussion whether or not to enclose a self addressed, stamped envelope, which would involve considerable postage expense. The consensus seemed to be to mail the survey to bus riders, using a data base listing individuals who had used the bus during the last twelve months, and make extra copies available to the general membership. A motion to approve the content was made by Michael Rossi; seconded by Guss Nevelos. There was question regarding the first question on the survey – and the lack of clarification as to whether or not the respondent rides the bus and how often. Mr. Rossi rescinded his motion and re-phrased it making a motion that the first question be amended to indicate frequency and/or usage of the bus service, and approving the amended content; seconded by Guss Nevelos; all were in favor. As to the matter of distribution, Chairman Temchin turned the gavel over to Vice Chairman Micalizzi and made a motion to authorize and entrust the transportation committee to work with the Calendar House staff to determine the most effective and fiscally prudent means to distribute the survey; seconded by Marlene Carbone; all were in favor. Vice Chairman Micalizzi returned the gavel to Chairman Temchin.

Under New Business: The 2011 Matching Grant application has been submitted to the State of Connecticut Department of Public Transportation. With the approval of the Town Attorney, the Custodial Contract may be rolled over for one year if there is no increase in price, since the contract went out to bid last year. A letter from the contractor confirms there will be no increase. The services have been satisfactory. A motion was made by Ben Cammuso to rollover the contract, extending it for one year, with no price increase; seconded by Marjorie Chase; all were in favor.

A proposal was submitted by Mark Modifica for the development of a cardio/weight room at the Calendar House. Discussion covered space considerations, timing, potential grant funds, anticipated usage, significant liability issues and budget constraints. Sandra Micalizzi noted that most senior centers do not have this type of facility. Calendar House member Cliff Snow mentioned there are in-town alternatives available at reasonable cost with professional supervision. It was remarked that the Plainville Senior Center does offer this activity, and several Southington residents are taking advantage of that center. The general consensus is that the idea will be taken seriously, considering it as a possibility, perhaps as a long term goal. Chairman Temchin concluded that no action would be taken by this commission at this time.

Senior Citizen Commission Meeting

April 13, 2010

Page four

Executive Director Robert Verderame informed the Commissioners that he had met with Dan Brick of the Bristol Community Organization regarding transportation possibilities. It was a positive meeting that will contribute to a cooperative association within our local communities.

Congratulations were extended to Commissioner Ben Cammuso on being chosen as the recipient of the UNICO organization's 65th annual Gold Medal of Honor award. Mr. Cammuso is being recognized for his years of tireless devotion to a variety of community service endeavors. The award will be presented on May 19th at the Aqua Turf.

Public Communication: None at this time.

A motion to adjourn the meeting was made by Ben Cammuso; seconded by Michael Rossi. All were in favor. The meeting was adjourned at 7:50 p.m.

The next Senior Citizens Commission meeting will be held **Tuesday, May 11th, 2010** at 6:30 p.m.

Respectfully Submitted,

Cynthia Gilbert
Senior Center Secretary