

MEETING OF MAY 13, 2008

The meeting was called to order at 7:00 p.m. by Chairman Earl Temchin.

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

Members absent: Guss Nivelos

The minutes of the April 8, 2008 meeting were presented to the Commission. A motion was made by Michael Rossi to accept the minutes as presented; seconded by Lynn Maschi; all were in favor.

According to the charter, Commission officers are elected in May of each year. Mr. Temchin asked the nominating committee for their recommendations. Spokesperson Lynn Maschi expressed appreciation for the way the existing officers have fulfilled their responsibilities, and noted that each individual was willing to continue or to step down. The committee nominates the following: Chairman - Earl Temchin; Vice-Chairman – Sandra Micalizzi; and Treasurer – Susan Locks. The committee requests that the Senior Center Secretary continue to fulfill those responsibilities. Mr. Temchin asked if there were any other nominations. None were presented. A motion to accept the recommendation of the committee and fill those positions accordingly was made by Lynn Maschi; seconded by Michael Rossi; all in favor. Mr. Temchin thanked nominating committee members Lynn Machi, Michael Rossi and Ben Cammuso for their efforts.

Newly elected Treasurer Susan Locks gave the Treasurer's Report, noting that of the \$474,585. current budget, \$364,510.21 (76.8%) has been expended, leaving \$110,074.79 remaining for the next two months of the fiscal year. A transfer request in the amount of \$200. from Program Activities/Supplies to Travel/Dues/Meetings in order to cover staff mileage reimbursement; and the distribution of the \$12,508.75 fourth quarter DOT grant payment was discussed. Ben Cammuso made a motion to approve both items; seconded by Michael Rossi; all were in favor.

In the absence of the Executive Director, delayed by attendance at the Commission on Disability, Senior Center Secretary Cynthia Gilbert was asked to present the Director's and Program Coordinator's Report. She noted that 917 one-way rides were provided in April, including 131 out of town medical runs and 230 in town medical runs.

Under Social Services, we completed the official 2007 Income Tax Assistance Program with a final total of well over 400 individuals assisted; including 199 e-filed returns; 5 paper returns; and 180 economic stimulus forms completed. Volunteer Dean McGahey has offered to be available two mornings a week to address and provide assistance to individuals who have not yet applied for the economic stimulus payment which can be filed through December 2008. Thanks to all the volunteers who did an excellent job!

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The Renter's Rebate Program begins on May 15th. We are currently scheduling appointments. Dates for the Housing Authority sites have been set, and as in previous years, volunteers will go to these sites to assist those residents.

Under Bus Maintenance, all three buses were serviced. New rear brakes were installed on the 2006 and the 2002 buses.

Under Building Maintenance, several columns in the pavilion have split and will be checked out by Assistant Town Engineer Jim Grappone.

On Thursday, April 24, a crew from Quality Construction of North Haven showed up unannounced and unscheduled to elevate the catch basins in the parking lot in preparation for the final coat. The Executive Director spoke with the foreman indicating something needed to be placed over the raised catch basins to alert drivers and pedestrians. They did not place any cones or warning indicators. The Director contacted the Engineering Department requesting they contact the contractor.

Application of the final coat on the parking lot has been scheduled for May 22 – 26, with pavement markings and signage also to be done at that time. The building will be closed on May 22 and May 23 to accommodate the work. The building will also be closed on Monday, May 26 in observance of Memorial Day, which will provide a sufficient time frame for the work to be completed.

Health Director Charles Motes and Executive Director Robert Verderame have finalized plans with Laurie Barrett of Ovations to have Laura Minor of Wheeler Clinic Employee Assistance Programs present a seminar entitled "Humor in the Workplace" at the Calendar House as part of the employee Health, Wellness and Education initiative. Sessions will be held at 7:45 a.m. and 8:45 a.m. on Thursday, May 8 and Tuesday, May 13 to accommodate all of the town employees.

Highlights of the Program Coordinator's Report include the Foxwoods Casino trip that featured a presentation of "Love, Sex and the IRS" at the Garde Arts Theatre; UConn School of Pharmacy program on arthritis; the ongoing and well attended "Grandparents raising Grandchildren" support group; and the monthly membership meeting on April 24. The seniors enjoyed the Hot Dog Special and Bingo on April 25. The Men's Golf League meeting was attended by 25 golfers. The trip to NYC to see "Jersey Boys" was enjoyed by 26 passengers. Sharyn Murphy was able to book an additional date in March 2009 accommodating the folks on the waiting list for the original trip.

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

Executive Director Robert Verderame arrived and joined the meeting at 7:20 p.m.

Under Correspondence: Earl Temchin noted that the Department Head Meetings Minutes are provided as a courtesy to the Commissioners for informational purposes. Cynthia Gilbert was asked about the Health Fair, (scheduled for Wednesday, May 21, 8:30 am -2:00 pm), and responded that preparations are being made, pre-registration for several screenings is going well, and that participation in previous years has been great. The Commissioners are more than welcome to attend. Robert Verderame remarked that the NCAA memos included the history of "Older American's Month" and reported additional scams. Sandra Micalizzi mentioned that UConn Co-Op can provide speakers to inform our seniors regarding various scams.

Our request to DePaolo for the use of their parking lot was approved. Regarding the Lions Club rental request, it was noted they have used the facility in the past. Mr. Temchin informed the new commissioners that we entertain facility rental requests from civic and local organizations, usually approving them. Occasionally the commission turns down a specific request for various reasons. A member of the staff is required to be present and available for all rentals. Michael Rossi made a motion that upon the recommendation of the Director, we grant the Lions Club request with the usual stipulations; seconded by Susan Locks; all were in favor. A request was made by The Orchards for the use of our parking lot on June 5, between five and eight p.m. Their shuttle bus would provide to transport attendees of their 10th Anniversary celebration to and from their facility. This would not require the building to be opened, but Mr. Verderame was asked about the parking lot lights. He stated that the timers would be adjusted and lights kept on during that time frame. A motion was made by Sandra Micalizzi to approve this request; seconded by Lynn Maschi; all in favor.

AARP requested permission to continue holding their board meetings in our building. They have been doing so for a number of years. Fifteen to twenty people meet once a month in room 2 during normal operating hours. Sandra Micalizzi made a motion to grant permission for them to continue meeting as they have been; seconded by Ben Cammuso; all in favor.

Mr. Verderame stated that the Food Service License Renewal Application was all set. No action is required by the Commission.

Under Old Business: The Board of Finance made several cuts to our budget including an additional cut to the part time driver line item, which may become a problem. This line item was significantly reduced in our budget request, with the expectation of the additional full time bus driver. Part time drivers fill in during vacations, sick leave and utilize our third bus at times of peak demand. There was some concern that our transportation items were being cut in anticipation of the matching grant funding. However, Mr. Verderame explained to the finance director and members of the finance board that this is a "matching" grant. Should the town reduce funding, the state would reduce the match amount. The intention of the grant is to supplement not replace municipal funding. The addition of a full time driver does appear favorable at this time, and would enable the use of two buses full time. The Director is considering mixing up the hours – having one driver start at 8 am and the second at 9 am, but will need to review union requirements. Sandra Micalizzi expressed concern over the cut in the gasoline item, and wondered if the printing of the bulletin cut would be a problem.

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Continuing under Old Business: Earl Temchin remarked that overall our budget request has fared pretty well. The Finance Board meets next week; Bob will be in attendance. The Commissioners were especially appreciative of the probable approval of an additional driver, noting that while cognizant of concerns over the current economic conditions, it is a much needed position.

The parking lot work should be completed by the end of the month. Mr. Verderame stated that we are just going to make it with the funding. The speed bumps will have to wait for the next budget. The engineer said we were "on our own". There are two types to consider – portable and permanent. Trees have been planted along the perimeter. We expect to receive evergreen trees shortly which will be planted in the garden area this year, and eventually replanted.

The memorial plaques are presenting a problem in terms of installation. Earl Temchin commented that he has an idea, a person in mind to contact and will be in touch with the office.

Under New Business: On April 28th during a heavy rain storm, an unfortunate incident occurred in the parking lot. One of our seniors tripped on a catch basin, falling forward and breaking her wrist. An accident report was completed, and the injured party was transported to the hospital. The previous week, on April 24, a crew from Quality Construction of North Haven arrived unscheduled and unannounced during one of our busiest days, and proceeded to raise the catch basins in preparation for the parking lot's final coat, scheduled for May 22 and 23. The Executive Director spoke with the foreman, indicating that cones or warning devices needed to be placed over the raised basins to warn pedestrians and drivers. They did not place any warnings. Mr. Verderame called the Assistant Town Engineer, asking him to contact the contractor. Following the incident, Mr. Verderame had an orange traffic cone and makeshift sawhorse placed. Sometime later that day, the contractor came and placed small cones over the catch basins.

Also under New Business: A memo from Jim Grappone regarding the pavilion columns noted that several columns are split including cracking of the concrete slab beneath them. Mr. Grappone will be consulting with Town Engineer Anthony Tranquillo before making a recommendation. Mr. Temchin noted that these columns have had cracks or splits in them for a couple of years. Mr. Verderame commented that we do have some money set aside for repair. Various options were discussed by the Commissioners. The primary concern is for the safety of the participants, and whatever steps need to be taken to insure that. A motion to delay the use of the pavilion for any and all activities until the columns can be evaluated and documented specifically regarding safety concerns was made by Sandra Micalizzi; seconded by Michael Rossi; all in favor.

Further discussion regarding the columns included the possible cost of steel beams, the fact that the contractor is no longer in business, and that from day one the columns have been an issue as two columns had to be replaced shortly after installation. Splits in the wood have been monitored and measured. Lynn Maschi asked how long it would take to get the structure evaluated. Bob Verderame assured her that it would be done quickly.

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Continuing the discussion: We currently have \$3,000. set aside to replace one column. This amount will need to be appropriated and carried into the new fiscal year. Since the architect is still in the area, a meeting will be set up with Tony Tranquillo. Earl Temchin inquired as to available resources - stating that one column should not be replaced until the full extent of the repairs is known. Bob Verderame will make the appropriate contacts, keeping the commission informed.

Regarding the estimate from F. J. Hubeny for a new sink, the expense to be generously donated by UNICO, with appreciation to Ben Cammuso for his efforts, the consensus of the Commission is to go ahead with this improvement. Since a formal bid will be required for next season's snow removal after the completion of the parking lot project, the notice of bid will be published in August, and placed on the September agenda.

Concerning the Parking Lot lights: motion detectors have been placed on the pavilion and garage. Two lights are left on between 8:00 and 9:30 p.m. Since the timing was reduced, there have been incidents of vandalism including broken bottles, damage inside the pavilion, and damage to equipment left on the property by a contractor. Lynn Maschi asked if the timing could be extended, keeping lights on longer over the weekend. Bob Verderame responded that we have been instructed to limit the time the lights are on.

Lynn Maschi asked for an update on the request for transportation of special education students. Bob Verderame replied that the DOT has informed us that they will not permit this request on the buses acquired through their grants. Transportation of individuals with severe handicaps requiring full-time caregivers mandates specifically equipped vehicles, including restraints and tie-downs. During the Commission on Disability meeting he attended, Bob Verderame was able to outline the services we provide, and explain some of the limitations. Sandra Micalizzi asked if an individual requesting transportation is required to become a Calendar House member. Bob Verderame stated that all passengers are asked to provide basic information including emergency contacts. Town residents over the age of 55, as well as handicap persons can become members at no cost.

Under Public Communication: Cliff Snow remarked that everyone had a great time at the recent High School Sock Hop sponsored by the FBLA and FCCLA Clubs. On behalf of the membership, he congratulated the newly elected officers and thanked all the commissioners for their efforts benefiting Southington's senior population.

Ben Cammuso made a motion to adjourn, seconded by Michael Rossi; all were in favor. The meeting was adjourned at 8:03 p.m.

The next scheduled meeting is Tuesday, June 10, 2008 at 7:00 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Cynthia Gilbert
Senior Center Secretary