

MEETING OF SEPTEMBER 9, 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, Guss Nevelos, Michael Rossi and Earl Temchin.

The minutes of the July 8, 2008 meeting were presented to the Commission. A motion was made by Guss Nevelos to accept the minutes as presented; seconded by Ben Cammuso; all were in favor.

Treasurer Susan Locks gave the Treasurer's Report, noting that of the \$482,958. current budget, \$9286.54 (5.1%) has been expended, \$15,527.38 encumbered, with \$458,144.08 available. It was noted that first quarter payment of the State Matching Grant Program for Elderly and Disabled Demand Responsive Transportation in the amount of \$12,508.75 has been received. Request has been made for these funds to be placed in the Part Time Drivers Salary and will be presented at the Board of Finance Meeting on September 10 which the Executive Director will attend. Secretary Cynthia Gilbert was asked to briefly explain the new MUNIS system, specifically detailing the procedures for approval. All amounts require Department Head approval; up to \$500. only require Department Head approval; all amounts over \$500. also require the Finance Director's approval; amounts over \$1000. require two commissioner's signatures in addition; and amounts over \$5,000. require the Town Manager's approval as well. There are requisition and purchase order procedures, as well as encumbrances for items such as contractual amounts, (i.e. Waste Removal; Lawn Care; Snow removal, etc.). The new system is going well, with the advantage of real time access to budget summaries.

There being no further comments, a motion was made by Guss Nevelos to accept the Treasurers Report; seconded by Michael Rossi; all were in favor.

Executive Director Robert Verderame presented the July and August Director's and Program Coordinator's Reports. Highlights of the July report included the Dial-a-Ride numbers: 1061 one way rides provided, including 358 in town and 108 out of town medical runs. Asked the geographic parameters, Mr. Verderame noted that we currently provide service to New Britain, Bristol, Plainville, Cheshire and Meriden, but not Waterbury or Hartford. The governor has proposed additional funding for the fuel assistance program.

Regarding Bus Maintenance, registrations have been renewed, up-to-date insurance cards were issued and Handicap lifts were serviced.

Under Building Maintenance, the kitchen floor was painted; we passed the annual Health Inspection; the pine tree was removed and tree limbs trimmed. Mulch was applied and front flower

beds were repaired, weeded and spruced up by Commissioner Ben Cammuso, Figi Fiondella and Len Martin, who did a great job.

The Director met with Sue Saucier, Sharyn Murphy and John Meyer of the YMCA to work on new programs for the "Grandparents" support group. Mr. Meyer was asked to set up a young adult free babysitting service using qualified young adults, in order to provide respite for the caregivers.

The first nurse clinic was held on July 14, under a grant from MidState. Clinics will be held once a month, offering consultations and education, but not permitted to dispense any medications.

Under Programming, Off site Renters Relief applications were taken at Housing Sites; a one-day Oil painting seminar was offered; 27 seniors enjoyed a Hot Dog Special with Ice Cream Sundaes and 101 attended an "Aloha Hawaii" Dinner Dance. The Membership Meeting featured visits from Marilyn Monroe and Elvis Presley impersonators to the delight of 103 seniors.

The August Director's Report noted 1005 one-way rides provided by Dial-a-Ride that included 120 out-of-town medical runs and 367 in-town medical runs. Under Social Services, applications taken for Renters Relief during this program included some 50 - 60 persons that had not previously applied. The governor has called for a special session of the General Assembly on August 22 to consider her proposal for additional funding of the Fuel Assistance program. As a result of the increased oil prices, various news articles and incomplete information, we have been inundated with phone calls and inquiries from panicking senior citizens, as well as individuals who have never sought assistance before. This program will undoubtedly present challenges this year, with new guidelines and asset requirements. Program Coordinator Sharyn Murphy and several volunteers will be attending training sessions. Updated information should be available by next month.

Scam alerts continue to come into our office from various reliable sources.

Under Bus Maintenance all buses had oil changes; the 2002 bus also had the battery changed. Mileage readings for the 2000 and 2002 have been kept consistently close.

Regarding Building Maintenance the Perry Room HVAC compressor needed to be replaced. This is one of the newer units. In May there was a problem with the unit servicing the Main Hall areas. As previously stated, the HVAC units will be a budgetary consideration in the next fiscal year. Motion sensors were ordered, and the pavilion was cleaned. Calendar House members again participated in the Southington Smart Start Program collecting donations of school supplies.

Under Programming, the Wii Bowling challenge has been enthusiastically received by the seniors; Southington Care Center presented a Holistic Health and Wellness Program that 30 seniors attended; and our annual Pig Roast was enjoyed by 160 folks.

Earl Temchin asked if there were any questions or comments. There being none, a motion to accept the Director's Reports as presented was made by Ben Cammuso; seconded by Guss Nivelos; all in favor.

Under Correspondence: Within the minutes of the September 3rd Department Heads Meeting, it was noted that Town Manager John Weichsel reminded everyone that the town has gone to an outside consultant, Ovation Benefits, for help in keeping our health costs down. The town spends over 10% of the total budget on employee health costs. Needless to say, that is an area where the leaders have wanted us to try to do something to reign in the high insurance costs. He introduced Laurie Barrett from Ovation to speak about some plans they have. These include health screenings, blood pressure screenings, providing information and stressing the importance of preventive medicine to avoid illness. In an open discussion, suggestions were made to address smoking cessation, exercise, stress management, nutrition, etc. Also possible consideration to various types of incentives. Also noted, the Board of Finance has requested they be alerted of any anticipated major breakdown involving a large expense, particularly if it involves an unbudgeted large expense, defined as \$50,000.

Requests were received from the Southington High School Band Backers for the use of the parking lot on Saturday, October 18; from the UNICO of Southington for two events (Big Breakfast on Sunday, November 9, and Christmas Party on Saturday, December 13); from the ARC of Southington for Christmas Party on Friday, December 5; and from Southington Community Services for Christmas Party on Thursday, December 11. Question was raised as to what the Band Backers request required as far as staffing, lighting and liability. Mr. Verderame answered that no staff is required, parking lights would be left on until 11 p.m. and the liability is assumed by the Town. This request has been granted in the past. Commissioner Michael Rossi made a motion to approve this request, seconded by Marlene Carbone, all in favor. Commissioner Sandra Micalizzi made a motion to grant permission to the UNICO for both dates, with the usual stipulations, seconded by Lynn Maschi, all in favor. Motion was also made by Sandra Micalizzi to allow the ARC to use the building with the usual stipulations, seconded by Marjorie Chase, all in favor. Michael Rossi inquired as to a previous issue thought to have occurred with the Community Services event involving cleanup. Mr. Verderame clarified that it had not been with that group, and that the issue had been satisfactorily resolved with the organization involved. Michael Rossi then made a motion to approve the rental by the Community Services in conjunction with the Rotary Club, with the usual stipulations, seconded by Marlene Carbone, all in favor.

With reference to the notification of additional scam alerts, the Commissioners asked if the Calendar House has offered any seminars or educational programs to the membership on this topic. Mr. Verderame informed them that we had had Sgt. Lowell DePalma of the Southington Police Department at one time, and that it probably would be advantageous to have him back. He does an excellent presentation on "Scam Alerts and Identity Theft".

A letter received from an individual expressing gratitude for the transportation provided for his parents, specifically praised part time bus driver Paula Ofiara-Pocock. Paula has been driving for the Calendar House on a part time basis for the past three years. The Commission wondered if this type of commendation is or should be recognized by the Commission.

Under Old Business: Thirty applications were received for the Full Time Bus Driver position. Deputy Town Manager Mark Sciota has narrowed the selection to three, and Police and FBI checks have been ordered. The Commission questioned the decision being made outside the Commission, asking if this was a new procedure. Mr. Verderame responded that it is now part of Mr. Sciota's responsibilities involving personnel.

Concerning the plaques, with the approval of the Commission, we will schedule a brief dedication at 6 p.m., prior to the next commission meeting on October 15. Mr. Verderame will contact the families of Mr. Della Vecchia and Mr. D'Angelo to determine if they would be able to attend. A motion to proceed with this date was made by Michael Rossi, seconded by Ben Cammuso, all in favor.

The parking lot continues to present an issue in that the backfilling and seeding was not done satisfactorily. As previously mentioned, funds have been held back from the final payment. Town Engineer Tony Tranquillo is waiting for a response from the contractor. The grant funds revert back to the state if not used by December 31. Earl Temchin asked if the Commission could expedite the matter with phone calls or letters. The concern is that we would lose the unused portion of funding, and be left with a mess to clean up at our expense. Sandra Micalizzi asked if we could hire another contractor to do the work, and Lynn Maschi inquired if there is anything we could do. Earl Temchin responded probably not, there are legal steps that would need to be taken. Mr. Verderame will find out the time line. Ms. Maschi commented that in light of the entire project, this should be a relatively simple matter but has become very frustrating.

With regards to the pavilion issue, the reporter also called Mr. Temchin at his home. The published article implied that this Commission was somehow lax or negligent in its oversight. The matter has been remanded to the Town Attorney. As a point of record, a letter was received from R.K. White Associates, Structural Engineering Consultants, assuring the safety and stability of the columns in question. Mr. Verderame informed the Commission that only three columns, not six, need to be replaced or refaced. As there are a number of ways to address it, he has been consulting with the Assistant Town Engineer. Mr. Temchin noted that the work would be done before next summer when the pavilion would again be utilized.

The Murder on the Menu literary series, in conjunction with the Southington Public Library, will involve approximately thirty individuals. In its second year, it has proven to be a successful cooperative venture. Sandra Micalizzi also suggested a specific title, My Mother/Your Mother, that deals with issues facing senior citizens and their families, as a possible community project involving the Senior Center, the Library and Central Connecticut Senior Health Services.

It was noted that Jeff Krug of Target has decided to use the Southington High School rather than our facility for their hiring event.

Under New Business: The required paperwork for the State of Connecticut Department of Transportation Grant, for the purchase of a new vehicle, has been submitted to Town Manager John Weichsel for review and signature. The Annual Report was submitted to the Town Manager as required. Upcoming events were noted and the Commissioners are more than welcome to participate and attend any/or of them.

Concerning the Snowplowing Contract: The bid opening was conducted in the Town Manager's office at 4 p.m. on September 9. Four bids were received; one was discarded for lack of compliance to the requested insurance verification. Of the three remaining, Schmidt Lawn Care was the low bidder. In reviewing all three bids, the Commissioners questioned several specifics, requesting Mr. Verderame to obtain clarification from the contractor. A motion was made by Sandra Micalizzi to award the contract to the lowest bidder, Schmidt Lawn Care, subject to clarification of terms, seconded by Michael Rossi, all in favor.

Discussion ensued regarding the curbing that had been ruined last year during snow plowing. Mr. Verderame gave assurance that this matter has been discussed and steps will be taken to ensure there is no repeat of damage.

Under Public Communication: Mr. Cliff Snow reported that no communication had been forthcoming from Membership Association President Ray Fecteau. Mr. Snow welcomed the commissioners back from summer break.

Ben Cammuso made a motion to adjourn, seconded by Michael Rossi; all were in favor. The meeting was adjourned at 8:05 p.m.

The next scheduled meeting is **WEDNESDAY**, October 15, 2008 at 7:00 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Cynthia Gilbert
Senior Center Secretary