

## MEETING OF MARCH 10, 2009

The meeting was called to order at 7:02 p.m. by Commission Chairman, Earl Temchin.

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

Members absent: Susan Locks and Marlene Carbone.

The minutes of the February 10, 2009 meeting were presented to the Commission. A motion was made by Guss Nevelos to accept the minutes as presented; seconded by Lynn Maschi; all were in favor.

In the absence of Treasurer Susan Locks, the Treasurer's Report was given by Executive Director Robert Verderame. He reported that of the \$520,585. revised budget, \$311,746.34 (64.3%) has been expended, \$22,951.46 has been encumbered, leaving \$185,887.20 remaining. An additional line item has been created by the Finance Department to reflect Grant funds. A transfer request has been submitted to supplement the Building Grounds Maintenance Line Item in the amount of \$7,700. Snow removal expense has been significant, but it was noted that the contractor is doing a great job. In response to a question concerning weekend snow removal, Mr. Verderame replied there is no additional charge regardless of the day of the week. Line items that we are closely monitoring include Building, Grounds, Maintenance and Printing of the Bulletin. Mr. Temchin commended Mr. Verderame and the entire staff for their successful efforts in obtaining the grant funds. A motion was made by Ben Cammuso to accept the Treasurer's Report as presented; seconded by Guss Nevelos; all were in favor.

Robert Verderame presented the Director's and Program Coordinator's Report for February 2009. He noted that the Dial-A-Ride Program provided 814 one-way rides. We are carefully monitoring the number and destinations of requests in an effort to coordinate the routes, in an attempt to save driver time and gasoline expenses, while continuing to meet the transportation demands. In light of the economic conditions, and the uncertainty of state grant revenue, we may find it necessary to turn down some requests. Social Service requests were relatively light, although many phone inquiries were fielded, especially regarding the Renter's Rebate program which does not begin until May 15. The Income Tax program began on February 24 with a full schedule of appointments. Economic stimulus checks will automatically be mailed to Social Security recipients. No filing is required. Mr. Verderame has contacted our legislators regarding the Matching Grant and the NCAA Choices funding issues. (The Choices program is funded with Federal (50%) and State (50%) funds. There is a hearing scheduled regarding the Matching Grant program on Wednesday, March 11. Mr. Verderame submitted letters outlining the positive results and the need to continue this program.

The Executive Director reported that our buses continue to be running well. New tires were installed on the 2000 bus. In response to last month's inquiry regarding the gas mileage for the new bus versus the older models, Mr. Verderame responded that the new bus is the same model, size, engine and style as the 2006 and the gas usage should be basically the same.

In regards to Building Maintenance, the Executive Director reported that ceiling tiles were replaced. Ed Knapp and Joe Angelillo repaired the band saw in the workshop donating their time and expertise. Electrician Bob Tonor donated his services in fixing the receptacles in our kitchen. And the Lions Club donated a 36 x 24 " flat grill with cart. These donations are much appreciated; our thanks to these individuals and organizations.

The Program Coordinator report included a Nurse Clinic on February 2<sup>nd</sup>; the Intergenerational Valentines Day Dance at Kennedy Middle School (110 attendees); a Tri-Town Conference for "Grandparents Raising Grandchildren", held in Farmington; and our monthly membership meeting on February 26<sup>th</sup>, featuring RSVP's Diane Briggs speaking on the Volunteer Driver Program, followed by the movie, "Young at Heart", (35 attendees).

Central Connecticut State University student and intern, Mikayla Holcomb, has provided welcome help at Calendar House, focusing on assisting with the development of an intergenerational outreach program, GRO, (Generations Reaching Out), a collaborative effort between Calendar House, The Southington Housing Authority and Southington school students targeting the homebound population. As previously noted, the Valentine Day Dinner Dance was extremely successful and thoroughly enjoyed. A letter to the editor from Guss and Margaret Nevelos was read, expressing their appreciation for the event. Mr. Verderame expressed personal thanks to DJ Jerry Limmer, Kennedy teachers Karen Sciota and Cynthia Peruta, the members of the Junior National Honor Society, TOPS Market, and the Calendar House staff. School Superintendent, Dr. Erardi attended and was impressed with the level of enthusiastic interaction between the senior citizens and the students, and commended the staffs of both the Calendar House and Kennedy Middle School for their efforts.

The Tri-Town "Grandparents Raising Grandchildren" conference, planned by Program Coordinator Sharyn Murphy and Youth Services Sue Saucier was very well attended and included Keynote Speaker, Elby Gonzalez-Schwapp, breakout workshops and various activities for both grandparents and grandchildren. Health Net's Bob Mel entertained, and "make your own sundaes" were enjoyed by all. Calendar House received a \$250. grant from Health Net towards this program, through Sharyn Murphy's efforts. Mr. Verderame expressed his appreciation to Sharyn for a job well done.

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

Under Correspondence: Minutes from Department Head Meetings held on 2/11/09 and 3/3/09 were reviewed, with mention made of Chief Daly's remarks on the possibility of town wide contracts for landscaping and mowing services; Susan Saucier's comments on evaluations; and a reminder that the Board of Finance Public Hearing on the Budget is scheduled for Monday, April 6<sup>th</sup> at DePaolo Middle School. Mr. Weichsel reiterated that he is very proud of the overall budget, which shows a 2.9% overall increase, the lowest budget ever presented as far as he could remember.

Also, under Correspondence: Letters were sent to Town Manager John Weichsel regarding the Matching Grant Program; and regarding the next steps needed to proceed with the purchase of a new bus for our Dial-a-Ride Service, with DOT Grant funding. A thank you letter was received from the staff and tenants of the Southington Housing Authority for assistance with the good-bye party for Helen Archangelo, held at Calendar House. We provided transportation for 34 residents. A thank you note from Helen was also received. The American Legion Auxiliary submitted a rental request for Saturday, September 26, 2009. Following a brief discussion, Michael Rossi made a motion to approve this request, with the usual stipulations, seconded by Lynn Maschi; all were in favor.

Under Old Business: The Town Manager's cuts to our 2009/10 Budget reflected an expected zero percent salary increase. The Commission will recall that the two percent increase submitted was an arbitrary figure provided by the Town Manager in the initial budget process. The Board of Finance has not requested a department workshop session with Calendar House. However, attendance is required at the Public Hearing on April 6, 2009, 7:00 p.m. at DePaolo Middle School.

Mr. Verderame will be contacting Dlugos to schedule the work on the Pavilion, which must be completed by the June 30, 2009 deadline.

Under New Business: Calendar House Lawn Maintenance will be included in the town wide bid that Mark Sciota will be preparing. Specifications and relevant information relating to the Calendar House Custodian Maintenance Contract has been provided to the Commissioners for review and discussion at next month's meeting. A request for approval of minimal staff overtime pertaining to the annual Fine Arts Exhibit was approved by a motion made by Guss Nevelos; seconded by Marjorie Chase. This event, normally held on a Sunday, has been tentatively scheduled for Friday afternoon, May 1 and would extend approximately one hour later than normal closing time. A similar request for the annual Health Fair, scheduled for May 20, which would require early opening for set up, was approved on motion made by Lynn Maschi; seconded by Michael Rossi; all were in favor. All overtime requests are subject to approval by the Town Manager as provided under the Town Council's Budget Containment Policy.

The Commission welcomed Senior Center Secretary Cynthia Gilbert back on the job. Mrs. Gilbert thanked the Commissioners for their individual and joint expressions of concern and care. A discussion concerning anonymous letters received by members of the Commission concluded with the fact that this particular matter has been referred to the proper authorities and it is the opinion of the town attorney that "a response is not required to anyone who does not identify themselves." Furthermore, this Commission does not have the authority in this instance.

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Under Public Communication: Membership Association President, Ray Fecteau and Board Member Cliff Snow were present. They expressed considerable concern about scheduling the Fine Arts Exhibit on a Friday afternoon as opposed to Sunday afternoon. The Sunday event has been very successful, enabling family and friends of Calendar House students to attend. Most of them are unable to attend during the week due to work and other obligations. The event provides considerable publicity and good will within the community.

With all due respect to their concerns, the Executive Director communicated the current economic situation within the town and the budget process, with the need to scale back and cut expenses wherever possible. The Commissioners concurred and offered various suggestions which were not favorably received.

The next Senior Citizens Commission meeting will be held Tuesday, April 14, 2009 at 7:00 p.m.

A motion to adjourn was made by Ben Camusso; seconded by Guss Nevelos; all were in favor. The meeting adjourned at 8:08 p.m.

Respectfully Submitted,

Cynthia Gilbert  
Senior Center Secretary