

MEETING OF JULY 14, 2009

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

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

Members absent: Susan Locks, Guss Nevelos.

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

The minutes of the June 9, 2009 meeting were presented to the Commission. A motion was made by Lynn Maschi to accept the minutes as presented; seconded by Ben Cammuso; all were in favor.

The Treasurer's Report was given by Executive Director Robert Verderame in the absence of Treasurer Susan Locks. He reported that of the FY2008/2009 \$533,394. revised budget, \$474,954.62 (90.2%) has been expended; \$6,075. has been encumbered, leaving \$52,354.38 remaining. Several continued appropriations have been submitted to the Town Manager, and will be addressed at the next Board of Finance Meeting, which the Executive Director will attend. We were advised by CT DOT that unspent matching grant funds could be carried over and spent in the next FY. The Finance Department is running slightly behind, and not all submitted bills/invoices have been posted or reflected in the summary budget statement. Due to prudent expenditures in adherence to the "cost containment program", we will be leaving approximately \$25,000. to be returned to the Town's General Fund. He also reported that of the FY-2009/2010 \$465,009 budget, \$11,992.23 (9.4%) has been expended; \$31,750.29 has been encumbered, leaving \$421,267.48 remaining. A motion was made by Ben Cammuso to accept the Treasurer's Report as presented; seconded by Marlene Carbone; all were in favor.

In presenting the **Director's and Program Coordinator's Report for June 2009**, Mr. Verderame noted that the Dial-A-Ride Program had another active month, providing 977 one-way rides, with over 430 medical runs. Social Services included over 170 Renter's Relief applications completed. Sharyn Murphy scheduled sessions at several Southington Housing Authority sites. With the assistance of several volunteers, this program is going smoothly.

With June 12th marking the transition from analog to digital broadcasting, no problems were encountered. Multiple phone inquiries regarding various programs continue to be received daily, as well as attention given to walk-ins and scheduled appointments.

Under **Bus Maintenance**, the buses are running well. With the loss of Matching Grant funds, the part time dispatcher position was eliminated. Sandra Micalizzi asked who picks up the work load, to which Bob Verderame replied, "the staff, whomever is closest to the phone at any given moment." He is looking for a volunteer to fill in especially during vacation times. In addition, the loss of grant funding may result in a shortfall in the gasoline and vehicle maintenance line items. We will watch closely and consider transferring funds from other line items mid-year if necessary.

Regarding **Building Maintenance**, it was noted that the pavilion columns were completed, on time and on budget, and look great! The refurbishing of the second floor multi purpose room is going very well. The purchase of a television is next on our wish list, so that the Wii game can be used in that area.

The **Program Coordinator's report** included: Renters Relief applications taken at Calendar House and at Housing sites; Country Western Night, (120 attendees); Golf League Picnic; Reception held for participants in GRO program; CASCAP All Staff Training; "Rail and Sail" Trip Departure to NY & VT; Membership Meeting followed by Movie (37 attended); and Bingo with Hot Dog Special (24 participants).

"With reference to the "GRO" reception, over 40 people attended this event held at 43 Academy Street for the participants and recipients of our May Day "Generations Reaching Out" outreach program. Guests included: Superintendent of Schools Dr. Erardi; Plantsville Principal Patricia Corvello; SHS Director of Agriculture & Technology Marion Stannard, with 20 of her students; Calendar House Executive Director Robert Verderame; Southington Housing Authority's Gail Castiola, CCSU Social Work Intern Mikayla Holcomb, and senior volunteers: Jean Toscano, Helen Archangelo, Terry Denorfia and Joan Bauder. It was most gratifying to observe the interactions between homebound seniors and students. Our hope is to involve more schools and senior volunteers in the future."

Executive Director Verderame noted that pictures of the elementary kids and the seniors interacting were shown at the last Board of Ed meeting. Dr. Erardi was very impressed with the program. Mr. Verderame commended Program Coordinator Sharyn Murphy on a fantastic effort.

Commissioner Earl Temchin remarked that the Renter's Relief Program was by far the leading social services program of the month. Commissioner Lynn Maschi expressed her appreciation for the opportunity to attend CASCAP meeting, remarking that she enjoyed the seminar. Commissioner Sandra Micalizzi also thanked the Executive Director for that opportunity.

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

Under Correspondence: A memo outlining procedures for "Closing of the Town Books for the 2008/2009 fiscal year" was received from Finance Director Emilia Portelinha. We are in compliance with all requirements. Regarding the memo from Tony Tranquillo listing Energy Committee Guidelines, it was noted that we have already been following the "best practices", and will continue to do so. All building thermostats have been programmed to the Heating and Cooling Standards of: 74° cooling, (85° unoccupied); 70° heating, (60° unoccupied). Department Head Meeting Minutes from June and July highlighted: the "Budget" with Town Manager Weichsel reminding of the difficult times and tough budget just passed, noting that everyone must learn to live within their budgets; progress of the Denitrification Facility; Town Fair Tires' town employee discount: an insurance issue if a town employee should have a DUI arrest; and Executive Director Verderame's comments on the Dial-A-Ride program. Noting that the tight budget will directly impact services, he requested more frequent gasoline/diesel reports currently received quarterly. Highway Department Steve Wlodkowski assured him that monthly reports will be made available to Calendar House. Also, of note was the Budget Containment Policy, lifted on June 30th; and the July 31 due date for the Annual Report.

Also under Correspondence: A rental request was received from the Southington Historical Society for use of the building and pavilion on August 1, 2009 from 9 a.m. to 3:30 p.m. for an “Antiques Road Show”. Noting this is a new request, several questions were raised and discussed. Of particular issue were the benefit to our seniors, safety and parking issues, clean up, and the number of persons attending. All issues addressed, the Commission agreed that it was an appropriate event of interest to senior citizens, benefiting a local society, with expected compliance to stated rules and regulations. A motion was made by Michael Rossi to approve this request with conditions of compliance with attendance limited to building codes, and the normal stipulations outlined by contract. Lynn Maschi seconded; all were in agreement. Facility rental was requested by ARC for use of the building on Friday, December 4th from 3:30 – 10:00 p.m. for their annual agency Holiday Party. This is an annual request, with history of positive experience. Mr. Verderame stipulated a time change from 3:30 p.m. to 4:00 p.m. to avoid conflict with Calendar House activities. Sandra Micalizzi made a motion to approve this request with the usual stipulations; seconded by Marjorie Chase; all were in favor.

The Executive Director sent a memo to the Town Manager enclosing a copy of the letter sent to Dial-A-Ride participants informing of the funding reductions and subsequent curtailing of most out-of-town transportation. Mr. Verderame advised the Commission that transportation for two out-of-town dialysis patients is continuing, as are appointments for wheelchair individuals, since no other options are currently available. R.S.V.P. with United Way funding uses individual volunteers unable to transport wheelchair or walker dependent individuals.

Considerable discussion ensued involving the anticipated arrival of a new vehicle, number of individuals served, number of out-of-town requests and number of requests that might be denied. The loss of the \$50,036. Matching Grant combined with the stringent budget significantly reduces funds available for gasoline, vehicle maintenance, driver back up, etc. The Commission feels that transportation issues present a huge challenge. It is a major issue particularly for the senior population. Mr. Temchin requested specific figures of out-of-town transportation expenses be given to the Commission. Mrs. Micalizzi asked that a log be kept of out-of-town requests and denials. Research and inquiries will be made as to available or potential grant applications that can be pursued. The Executive Director will be submitting a grant application to the Main Street Foundation within the week, specifically requesting transportation funding. A request has been made to the Calvanese Foundation for consideration of funding for the monthly newsletter publication. Mr. Temchin recommended appointing a transportation sub-committee at the September Commission Meeting to evaluate funding and services. Chartered and required to provide transportation for senior citizens and handicap individuals, out-of-town transportation is an essential service. The entire transportation issue is and will continue to be a big and developing concern.

Under Old Business: As previously mentioned, the pavilion work was completed. At the recent CASCP meeting an award was presented to the Calendar House in the category of “Collaboration and Community Development” for the intergenerational conference, “A Message of Hope: You WILL Survive the Second Time Around” (A Tri-Town Grandparents Raising Grandparents Conference). The final audit was submitted for the \$5,000. Grant received last year for “Grandparents Raising Grandchildren” support group.

Under New Business: The Executive Director was advised by DOT'S Ellen Lawrence of a new process including a required "CT Summary & Processing Report" to be submitted after the new bus is received. Concerning Building Maintenance issues, request for funding for the basement/facility ductwork repair, cleaning, insulation, joint taping, etc was cut from the approved budget. At this point the stop-gap measures in place (i.e. duct tape) are holding. The Executive Director requests that the floors be professionally cleaned, waxed and polished at a cost of \$2,000. as preventative maintenance. Usually done annually due to the high traffic in these areas, postponing creates additional expense in repair and restoration as experienced when skipped one year. A motion was made by Michael Rossi to go ahead and schedule the cleaning; seconded by Marlene Carbone; all were in favor. The Commissioners concurred that should funds be available at the end of the year, consideration would be given to having the ductwork cleaned and/or repaired.

Under Public Communication: Calendar House Member Walter Kizilski mentioned an energy audit done by CL&P and Yankee Gas at his residence, and wondered if a similar audit might be available to the Calendar House. Mr. Verderame will consult with the Engineering Department. Mr. Kizilski commended Mr. Verderame for turning money back to the town general fund, remarking that an excellent job has been done in conserving resources. He also complimented the appearance of the grounds, flower beds and parking lot islands. Work done by the Orchard Valley Garden Club and Commissioner Ben Cammuso has greatly contributed to the pleasant landscaping. Calendar House Member Cliff Snow thanked Mr. Verderame for his efforts in getting the pavilion fixed, and expressed appreciation to the Commission for all their efforts.

Commissioner Michael Rossi remarked that when dropping him off, his daughter's reaction to the facility was, "*Oh Dad, how beautiful the flowers are.*" Sandra Micalizzi mentioned the much appreciated art classes Calendar House offers, stating that Ray Fecteau, a Calendar House member was currently exhibiting as the Library's featured artist of the month.

A motion to adjourn the public meeting and move into Executive Session was made by Ben Cammuso; seconded by Sandra Micalizzi; all were in favor. The meeting adjourned at 7:50 p.m.

There will **not** be a Senior Citizen Commission in August. The next Senior Citizens Commission meeting will be held **Wednesday, September 9, 2009 at 7:00 p.m.**

Respectfully Submitted,

Cynthia Gilbert
Senior Center Secretary