

MEETING OF FEBRUARY 5, 2008

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

Members present: Earl Temchin, Susan Locks, Lynn Maschi, Sandra Micalizzi, Guss Nivelos, Connie Proll and Michael Rossi.

Members absent: Ben Cammuso and Ruth Riccio

The minutes of the January 8, 2008 meeting were presented to the Commission. A motion was made by Guss Nivelos to accept the minutes as presented; seconded by Susan Locks; all were in favor.

The Treasurer's Report was given by Connie Proll. She reported that of the \$437,058. current budget, \$242,313.67 (55.4%) has been expended, leaving \$194,744.33 remaining. A transfer is needed for the depleted Part time Bus Drivers Line Item in the amount of \$2,631. from the following line items: \$1,631. from Longevity and \$1,000. from Pavilion Repair. It was noted that we are anticipating receipt of funds from the DOT Matching Grant, which will be infused into the Drivers Line Item and other transportation line items. A motion was made by Connie Proll to request the transfer and to accept the Treasurer's Report as presented; seconded by Sandra Micalizzi; all were in favor.

Robert Verderame was asked to present the Director's and Program Coordinator's Report. He noted that 726 one-way rides were provided. November and December are historically our busiest months and requests decline slightly around Christmas and January. However as the statistics indicate we provided 726 rides in January, a month when usual requests range 350-400. Social Services requests continue to increase in numbers and in scope. Several individuals in Southington had reported that an insurance agent had solicited them and fraudulently switched them from their traditional Medicare Supplement to a Medicare HMO. Sharyn worked very closely with two clients in particular. The Commission noted that they had heard of these flim flam scams, also called "flipovers". We have been publicizing these scams. Sharyn has been doing an excellent job dealing with the seniors affected.

Regarding our Income Tax Assistance Program, ten individuals have taken the test and been certified by AARP/TCE, qualifying them to provide assistance. Mary Robarge, a volunteer has been working diligently to install and update the necessary software program (TAX-WISE) and has conducted several in house training sessions to familiarize the volunteers with the software. Cynthia Gilbert has also taken the test, been certified and will continue to oversee the program, addressing any problems that arise.

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Regarding Bus Maintenance, Vinny Morelli, along with Ed Pocock and Mark Azklar are doing a great job keeping the buses in good working order, with regular, routine maintenance being done on all buses. Mileage is adding up on the 2002 and 2000 buses but so far we have not had any major problems. Mr. Verderame is approximately 90% done with the grant application for a replacement bus and it will be submitted shortly.

At a January 24th meeting with members of Southington's Commission on Disability, it was noted that the demand for transportation is only increasing – fifteen additional individuals have been identified as potentially needing transportation. At their invitation, Bob will be attending a Commission on Disability meeting.

Highlights of the Program Coordinator's Report included the Flu Immunization Clinic on January 3rd; the Broadway Trip Sale which sold out quickly, with an extensive waiting list; and the Installation of Membership Association Officers at the January Membership Meeting. Also noted was the Grandparents raising Grandchildren Support Group on January 24th attended by 14 adults and seven grandchildren. Although January activities were on the light side, that certainly wasn't evidenced by the increased transportation service.

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

Under Correspondence: Memo from Finance Director advising of the bid acceptance for gasoline at a 40% increase to \$2.86 per gallon. It was noted that this rate is for the entire town including the Calendar House. Michael Rossi thought the price sounded high for bulk purchase, noting the taxes assessed significantly contributes to the cost. Connie Proll remarked that the markup is not really high.

Considerable discussion regarding the transportation request proposal from SHS Special Ed Teacher Nancy Chiero included questions on liability issues; frequency and extent of use; reimbursement by Board of Ed; possible conflicts affecting service to seniors, which is our primary obligation; overtime concerns; wear and tear on drivers and buses; etc. Bob remarked that he felt it might be a worthwhile undertaking provided the parameters were clearly set forth from the beginning, and noted it is a limited program, one hour per month, taking place during the day, not incurring overtime. The purpose is to enable special education students an opportunity to get out into the community to places like town hall, a grocery store, a drug store, etc. They would be accompanied by para-professionals one-on-one. Two of the students are wheelchair bound. Earl noted that he did not feel there would be a liability issue; and remarked that we have a mandate to provide transportation for disabled individuals. Bob pointed out that providing this program might be advantageous with future grant applications. Connie expressed concern that these are minors, wondering why the school was not providing transportation. The consensus of the Commissioners

Correspondence: (continued)

was that more information was needed to make a decision. Specifically Bob was requested to: 1) clarify the amount of time involved – exactly one hour, or more in terms of pickup and return; 2) consult with the town attorney regarding liability; 3) determine our ability to terminate or limit the commitment if the frequency or number of rides gets out of hand in terms of affecting our ability to meet the needs of the senior citizens; 4) question why the school is not providing transportation and if re-imburement is possible. A motion to table decision on this request pending additional information was made by Connie Proll; seconded by Sue Locks; all were in favor.

Continuing under Correspondence: The letter regarding the transition from analog to digital is informational only, not requiring any action by the Commission. As is the memo from the Town Manager's office regarding scams and fraud alerts. This information is also assimilated to the senior citizens by way of press release, bulletin board postings and newsletter blurbs.

A number of building rental requests were submitted. With favorable recommendations by the Executive Director based on previous experiences, a motion was made by Connie Proll; seconded by Michael Rossi; all were in favor to approve the request by Engine Co. No.1 with the usual stipulations. Noting that Sgt. Lowell DePalma was involved with the Police Explorers group, this request was approved with the usual stipulations on a motion made by Connie Proll; seconded by Lynn Maschi; all were in favor. Likewise both requests made by the UNICO organization were approved, with the usual stipulations, by a motion made by Connie Proll; seconded by Sandra Micalizzi; all were in favor. The request from the Orchard Valley Garden Club involves the pavilion for the third year and was approved with the usual stipulations with a motion made by Connie Proll and seconded by Lynn Maschi. The commissioners were pleased to accept their offer to provide and plant trees on the property.

With regards to the rental request by Carol Grant for the Kid's Day Event, the consensus of the Commission is to respectfully deny the request, based on the number of projected attendees, lack of restroom facilities and the event focus; suggesting that the organization pursue other more appropriate venues such as Dernyoski School or Recreation Park.

The Commission also respectfully denied the request for a car show to be held in the parking lot.

Connie Proll made a motion to accept the revised Commission Meeting dates as submitted; seconded by Sandra Micalizzi; all were in favor.

Under Old Business: The Finance Department issued the 2008/09 Budget Schedule; the Board of Finance submitted a schedule of Budget Workshops with various departments and public hearings. We have not been scheduled for a workshop, which is very good. There will be a Public Hearing at 7:00 p.m. on April 7, 2008 at Derynoski School. Congratulations to the Budget Committee and Commission for their work on our Budget. We will await the determination by the Finance Board and the Town Council.

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Continuing under Old Business:

Regarding the PerfecTemp quote, this work was not included in our budget proposal because we did not receive it in a timely manner. The expected quote amount was \$5,000.; the quote as submitted is \$8,700. This includes the two-zone heating plus replacement of duct work that dates back to 1969. In the next budget year, we should go out to bid for this work. Connie commented that going forward we should require itemized bids, rather than lump dollar amounts, which should not be acceptable.

Pertaining to the damage to the pavilion caused by vandalism, the insurance deductible is \$5,000. Upon inspection, Bob feels that repairs can be made in house at a minimal expense.

As to the parking lot, Bob has been in contact with Jim Grappone and Tony Tranquillo at the Engineering Department. We expect to be able to schedule a date within the next month for the application of the second coat after the plants open in April. We anticipate scheduling this work during the month of June. The process should take two days. Benny Cammuso and Bob Verderame have been looking at the lines and will redesign the way they are configured especially the handicap spaces.

Under New Business: Connie Proll made a motion to authorize closing the Center early on March 13th so the staff may attend a CASCP training session; seconded by Michael Rossi; all in favor. The Center will close at 11:30 a.m.; notification will be made through the newsletter and posted signs.

Lynn inquired where the buses were kept when not in use. Bob responded that one is garaged here; the others are parked at Azklars. It was remarked that the issue of bus storage might be a consideration in the next budget, with the possible addition of a garage.

There were no comments under Public Communication.

Connie Proll made a motion to adjourn, seconded by Guss Nevelos; all were in favor. The meeting was adjourned at 8:05 p.m.

The next scheduled meeting is Tuesday, March 11, 2008 at 7:00 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Cynthia Gilbert
Senior Center Secretary