

MEETING OF APRIL 12, 2011

The meeting was called to order at 6:33 p.m. by Chairman Earl Temchin.

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

Members present: Ben Cammuso, Marjorie Chase, Susan Locks, Len Marcheselle, Lynn Maschi, Sandra Micalizzi, Connie Proll, Michael Rossi and Earl Temchin.

Chairman Temchin congratulated Commissioner Marjorie Chase on her reappointment to the Commission, thanking her for the past three years of service. He congratulated and welcomed newly appointed Commissioners Constance Proll and Len Marcheselle. He assured them that the entire commission would be happy to provide any assistance or information that might be helpful. Earl publicly thanked Mrs. Marlene Carbone and Mr. Guss Nevelos for their dedication and commitment in serving the senior citizens of our community during their terms as commissioners.

The minutes of the March 8, 2011 meeting were presented to the Commission. Michael Rossi made a motion to accept the minutes as presented; seconded by Lynn Maschi; all were in favor.

The **Treasurer's Report** was given by Commissioner/Treasurer Susan Locks who reported that of the FY 2010/2011 \$476,244. revised budget, \$342,078.44 (73.8%) has been expended; \$9,377.95 remains encumbered, leaving an available budget of \$124,787.61. Executive Director Bob Verderame reported that with the snow season over, hopefully, building maintenance funds are in good shape, noting that it includes lawn care. He would like to use available funds to address several repair items, specifically the skylight. Len Marcheselle asked if there had been any leakage. Bob responded that there was minimal leakage resolved by covering the skylight with a tarp. Sandra Micalizzi asked about the parking lot curbing; Bob replied it is in good shape. Sandra inquired about insurance coverage; Bob responded that our deductible is \$5,000.; needed repairs are not expected to come close to that amount. A motion was made by Sandra Micalizzi to authorize a request to make repairs necessary for the safety of the building; seconded by Marjorie Chase; all were in favor. Bob will obtain estimates.

Continuing under Treasurer's Report, Bob noted that third quarter Matching Grant funds were released by the Board of Finance and applied to gasoline and other designated line items in compliance with grant stipulations. With regards to the 2011/12 budget, the BOF did not request an additional meeting with the Executive Director. The expense for fencing was cut as expected, and the funding for the SEC5310 Bus Grant was removed from our budget request, with the understanding that with approval of the grant, funds would be made available. The consensus of the commission was that our submitted budget was lean and cost effective. Michael Rossi observed that considering the rising cost of energy, the Town did well in obtaining a favorable gasoline quote to lock into. A motion was made by Ben Cammuso to accept the Treasurer's Report as presented; seconded by Lynn Maschi; all were in favor.

Senior Citizen Commission Meeting

April 12, 2011

Page two

Executive Director Robert Verderame presented the **March 2011 Director's and Program Coordinator's Reports**, noting that Dial-a-Ride provided 1232 one way rides on 23 days, including 554 in town medical rides and 69 out of town medical rides. Our major activity involved the income tax program assisting over 190 individuals in March! AARP/TCE Coordinator/Senior Center Secretary Cynthia Gilbert reported that the troublesome computers in the Perry Room were very generously replaced by the Membership Association. This very welcome technology update greatly reduced the stress levels of our volunteers and enabled significant improvement in the services provided. These computers will also aid greatly with other social service programs such as energy assistance, renter's rebate and club activities. We are very grateful! Chairman Temchin echoed that sentiment, publicly thanking the two Calendar House members present, and requesting that they communicate the Commission's appreciation to the membership association. Lynn Maschi remarked that previously mention was made that without improvement, some programs might have to be cut. Bob Verderame gave assurance that the replacement of these computers eliminates that possibility.

Continuing with the Director's Report, Bob reported an effort to explore a significant cost saving alternative to the publication of our monthly newsletter. This publication which is our primary communication tool with the town's senior population currently requires considerable financial and staff resources. Priority Graphics LLC, a local company, has presented an option that would produce and deliver a publication similar to those currently in place in area senior centers, such as Wallingford, at zero cost to the Calendar House, by utilizing advertising revenue. There was considerable discussion by the commission expressing concerns regarding the profit involved, the advertising and information content, the transition process, etc. Bob noted that the staff would provide the information content, the company would obtain the advertisers, other centers have used this method for more than two years successfully. Sandra Micalizzi stating that we are different than Wallingford questioned whether we were allowed to do this. Earl Temchin asked that it be cleared with the Town Attorney. Sandra inquired regarding the bid process. Bob responded that bids are required for projects over \$10,000. Connie Proll expressed that this is an excellent idea, the more we can do to stabilize costs the better. She also remarked that only advertisers providing products or services to seniors would participate, as that is the newsletter's target audience. She noted that Priority Graphics is a local business and Dave Zoni does the best job. Len Marcheselle remarked that it is important to keep it "local", supporting town businesses. A motion was made by Connie Proll to proceed in this direction. A stipulation was added by Sandra Micalizzi to obtain an additional bid. The motion with stipulation was seconded by Susan Locks; all were in favor.

Earl Temchin asked if there were any further questions or comments. Ben Cammuso made a motion to accept the Director's and Program Coordinator's Report; seconded by Marjorie Chase; all were in favor.

Under Correspondence: Minutes from the March and April Department Heads Meetings were available. It was observed that the new Town Manager is gathering information, requesting the involvement of all departments in determining capital improvements, coordination and communication. He is focused on getting the town out of the Stone Age in terms of IT. Earl remarked that the goal is a town wide consistent and compatible system. Bob noted that currently our server is down almost every day. Referring to the minutes, Bob highlighted the budget process, the recent confusion at the transfer station with expired permits, updates on the cost containment policy, workers compensation communication and other items. Also under communication was the approval of upcoming events and activities at Calendar House requiring overtime. Of special note, was the return of the Fine Arts and Crafts annual exhibit to a Sunday. This had been the tradition, enabling family and friends to attend. An attempt to hold the event on a Friday afternoon was disappointing to the membership, especially the students and instructors who had worked very hard on their projects.

Senior Citizen Commission Meeting

April 12, 2011

Page three

Under Old Business: Regarding the D.B.S. project, Bob reported that it is 98% completed with a minimal amount of curbing and flashing to be completed. For the benefit of the new commissioners, Earl explained the project involved lighting upgrade and the installation of two new HVAC units via an interest free loan and 48% grant funding, resulting in a significant savings in our capital improvement expense. Bob noted that we literally got in under the wire, as the State has changed the terms going forward to a 70/30 percentage. Bob also reported that the SEC5310 Bus Grant application and the 2012 Matching Grant applications have been submitted. A new resolution was required because we have a new Town Manager, and was obtained from the Town Clerk. Lynn Maschi asked what the chances of losing the grant funds were. Bob replied that conversations with Rep. Markley and Rep. Zalaski gave assurances that the grant funds had been cut 25% but would not be eliminated. The SEC5310 grant is a federal grant, with 37 buses available. Not being on a transit line increases the need and improves the possibility of a favorable determination. Earl noted that technically nothing is absolute, but the expectation is positive.

Under Transportation Committee: Earl remarked that the Transportation Committee had been appointed a year ago, consisting of Marlene Carbone, Lynn Maschi and Sandra Micalizzi. Now they are a committee of two. Sandra inquired about the potential donation of the older bus to the police department. Bob responded that they are interested and further action is dependent upon the outcome of the bus grant. Earl noted that the 2000 bus is running about 400 miles per month. Bob reminded the Commission that it only has one wheelchair position. Sandra asked if there was any stipulation or restraint against providing transportation to Waterbury, acknowledging one rider-one bus would not necessarily be cost effective. She noted that the staff has a list of alternate transportation including R.S.V.P.'s service and AMR's free transportation for Medicaid patients. Bob noted that there is no restriction against Waterbury; that case by case decisions are made upon requests, and that other senior centers such as Cheshire designate one day to transport to a specific out of town location, such as Waterbury, Southington, etc. and ask participants to make their appointments accordingly. It was remarked that the number of seniors needing transportation is and would only continue to increase and it is important to plan how to meet the need. One issue concerns having the bus remain at the out of town destination and wait for the rider, or return to Southington requiring an additional trip to return the rider home. Sandra requested consideration be given to scheduling short, day trips within the state to various locations of interest. Presenting the Wolcott Senior Center's schedule, she noted that it is half the size of Southington and dedicates one bus to medicals and one to day trips. We need to think about meeting the needs of our seniors and keeping them happy, healthy and busy. She suggested the Mark Twain House, Warner Theatre, Palace Theatre, and 7 Angels. Connie Proll remarked that there are a number of enjoyable shows at community theatres. Earl noted that it would be less expensive to use our bus rather a charter. Bob noted that currently trips to Westfield Mall and Manor Inn are scheduled. Sandra inquired if an Excel program or other software had been located for dispatching. Bob responded "not yet".

Lynn Maschi provided a detailed, informative report on her recent experience spending an entire day riding the bus. She highlighted rave reviews from the seniors that mirrored the feedback from the survey; meeting and talking with the seniors, some who wondered who she was; the appreciation and emphasis on the importance of the bus service; and Paula's great rapport with the riders. Her observations included the need for flexibility particularly with health issues, assistance with walkers, wheelchairs, etc.; noting that flexibility with pick-up/drop-offs, etc is required within the routine, that a concrete schedule is not viable, and that much relies upon judgment calls. Lynn felt it was a great experience and very enlightening. Earl thanked Lynn for taking the time to spend the day on the bus, going "way above and beyond the call of duty". Sandra elaborated on the survey for the benefit of the new commissioners noting that it was sent out to over 200 individuals and responses indicated a very high level of satisfaction with the Dial-a-Ride program. Earl remarked that it is a very complex system addressing medical, social and other transportation needs. Connie noted that with extended families far away, the service is more crucial than ever. She wondered if local papers carry information about the service and consideration had been given to submitting articles. Bob replied that the online "Patch" and the Observer publications include information as well as the cable access channel 14. Len Marcheselle suggested Lynn submit a written article "A Day on the Bus". Earl thanked the transportation committee for their continued work.

Senior Citizen Commission Meeting
April 12, 2011
Page four

Under New Business: The Custodial Contract is due to go out to bid this year, having been rolled over last year. Bob has notified four vendors and scheduled a walk through on May 3rd. Earl asked if the specifications had been reviewed and if any changes were needed. Having been reviewed by the Executive Director and the Town Attorney, no changes are needed. A motion to proceed with the bid process was made by Lynn Maschi; seconded by Michael Rossi; all were in favor.

Public Communication: Mark White noted the installation of the new computers, remarking that he was pleased to offer assistance in this area and will continue to work with the staff to install software for specific programs, such as energy assistance, renter's rebate, etc. On behalf of the Membership Association, Cliff Snow offered congratulations to Marjorie Chase on her reappointment; a welcome back to Connie Proll and welcome to Len Marcheselle on their recent appointments to the Senior Citizen Commission.

Sandra Micalizzi mentioned the upcoming Medication Disposal Program for the collection of old medications that the Water Department has scheduled on April 30, 2011 from 10 am – 2 pm . Lynn Maschi requested clarification on a time frame for a follow up meeting with the bus drivers to be scheduled as discussed at last month's Commission meeting. It was decided that September would be a good choice. Bob remarked that the drivers would like to meet with the Commission again.

Earl Temchin requested that in lieu of a nominating committee, the election of officers be included on the agenda for the next meeting.

A motion to adjourn was made by Ben Cammuso; seconded by Michael Rossi. All were in favor. The meeting was adjourned at 7:42 p.m.

The next Senior Citizens Commission meeting will be held **Tuesday, May 10, 2011** at 6:30 p.m.

Respectfully Submitted,
Cynthia Gilbert
Senior Center Secretary