

MEETING OF JULY 8, 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, Sandra Micalizzi, Guss Nevelos, Michael Rossi and Earl Temchin.

Members absent: Lynn Maschi

The minutes of the June 10, 2008 meeting were presented to the Commission. A motion was made by Sandra Micalizzi to accept the minutes as circulated; seconded by Michael Rossi; all were in favor.

It was noted that Kiwanis members were holding an organization meeting in the Main Hall this evening. As they have previously been granted the use of the facility, a motion was made by Ben Cammuso; seconded by Marlene Carbone to approve this usage; all were in favor.

Treasurer Susan Locks gave the Treasurer's Report, noting that of the \$486,791. current budget, \$460,410.02 (94.6%) has been expended, leaving \$26,380.98 remaining for the balance of the fiscal year. Earl Temchin inquired if there were any special issues. Robert Verderame referred to transfers that will be presented at the Finance Board's July 23rd meeting, which he will attend. The consensus of the Commission is that we finished FY2007/08 in good order. Sandra Micalizzi noted that the grant funds were especially beneficial in the gasoline line item. Robert Verderame noted that the state was later than expected with payment, which left us with some surplus. Monies will be carried forward into the Pavilion Repair line item to enable that work to be completed. There being no further comments, a motion was made by Guss Nevelos to accept the Treasurers Report; seconded by Ben Cammuso; all were in favor.

Executive Director Robert Verderame presented the Director's and Program Coordinator's Report, highlighting the 1060 one-way rides provided in June, that included 124 out-of-town medical runs and 402 in-town medical runs. This is an all time high! The question was asked what constitutes a "one-way ride", to which the Director replied, "point-to-point". Michael Rossi asked if the energy crisis has impacted the number of rides. Robert Verderame replied, "somewhat, but the actual need for transportation for medical appointments, etc. for those who cannot drive seems to be more of a factor."

Under Social Services, 188 Renters Relief applications were processed, with 215 phone inquiries regarding this program. This year, for the first time, the Program was downloaded from a special website enabling the claims to be electronically submitted and faxed to the Office of Policy and Management, eliminating the need to mail large numbers of paper documents.

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The frustration and harm to individuals due to scams and identity theft continues to plague our community. One individual came to the Executive Director for assistance after being victimized and suffering financial loss. In conjunction with the Southington Police Department, the Director has done everything that can be done to this point, and will certainly follow up on this and other related matters.

Our annual Fine Arts and Crafts Exhibit held on Sunday, June 8th was very well attended by family and friends of our exhibiting students. The quality and quantity of the featured paintings, drawings, quilts, and folk art pieces continues to be amazing. A booklet highlighting poems written by our students was printed for distribution. As an added attraction to the woodcarving display, Sam Brown set up an incredibly detailed "camp" diorama, complete with outbuildings, etc. that he carved. Special thanks to Pat Mottola and Cynthia Gilbert who coordinated the event.

The Town of Southington Finance Department is implementing a new accounting system, using a software program, MUNIS, effective July 1, 2008 for the FY 2008/09. The Executive Director, the Senior Center Secretary and the Clerk Typist attended training sessions.

Under Bus Maintenance, mileage on the 2002 and 2000 buses continues to reflect they are being equally utilized. Six (6) new tires were ordered. Tie downs for 2006 bus were ordered. Exhaust pipes were re-directed from rear to sides of 2000 & 2002 buses, in compliance with state inspector's guidelines, with stipulation that the rear window must be kept closed to avoid fumes. (Pipes had been scraping pavements in certain entrances/exits, i.e. BMH). A Nextel phone system has been incorporated into our buses and office communication to upgrade and hopefully resolve some of the problems that have been experienced over the past year.

Under Building Maintenance, repairs were done on the damaged picnic table, Men's Restroom urinal, and the two fifteen year old roof top HVAC units. The kitchen sink faucet and sprayer donated by UNICO was installed. The pavilion columns were inspected. Research is being done on the replacement of the broken lectern and the woodshop doors. Simplex Fire Alarm passed inspection in good working order. The memorial plaques were installed in the entrance hallway by Joe Angelillo and Ed Knapp.

Highlights of the Program Coordinator's Report included: Bagel Breakfast on "How To Have A Good Doctor's Office Visit"; Country Western Night with entertainment by DJ Jerry Limmer; "Grandparents Raising Children" Support Group with guest speaker AARP's Claudio Gualtieri; 55 Alive Safe Driving Course; and our monthly Membership Meeting featuring an Ice Cream Social and entertainer Ron Casasanta.

Earl Temchin thanked Bob Verderame for his report. A motion to accept the Director's Report as presented was made by Michael Rossi; seconded by Guss Nevelos; all in favor.

Under Correspondence: Within the minutes of the July 2nd Department Heads Meeting, it was noted that Town Manager John Weichsel commented on a recent Worker's Compensation settlement relating to a back injury. Acknowledging the devastation to an individual that can result from back injuries, he encouraged all department heads to do whatever they can to prevent incidents that could result in injury. Mr. Weichsel also introduced representatives from Ovation Benefits. They are coordinating the Southington Health Awareness Council (SHAC) wellness programs for town employees. The turnout at a recent program was somewhat disappointing, and any suggestions on how participation and awareness of the wellness program could be increased would be welcomed. Also of note, is the change in the town's insurance carrier. After a bidding process, CIRMA continues with our worker's comp insurance while H.D. Segur is the agency for property, auto and liability insurance. Mr. Weichsel also stressed the need to reduce costs, specifically mentioning lights and air conditioners being left on when the building is closed.

Mr. Verderame assured the commission that we are already in compliance in this area, turning off lights and air conditioning when not needed. Michael Rossi asked about changing light bulbs and disposing of them. Mr. Verderame referred him to the article outlining the proper handling of light bulbs that had been included in the Commissioners packets, posted on bulletin boards and publicized in our newsletter. Mrs. Micalizzi asked if an energy audit by CL&P was possible, and Mr. Verderame replied that we have already had an audit done.

Continuing under Correspondence, yet another "scam" alert was issued by NCAA. This information is communicated to our senior population via newsletter, postings and press releases. Mr. Rossi offered as a point of information the fact that people have been siphoning off gasoline. The commission inquired as to where the buses are parked. They were assured that one is locked in the garage, and the other two are parked at Azklar's within a secure, locked, fenced area. It was reported that gas had been siphoned from town vehicles parked in the municipal parking lot behind Town Hall.

On a positive note, award letters were received advising us of successful grant applications, including the Department of Transportation's Matching Grant for Elderly and Disabled Demand Responsive Transportation, (\$50,035.) and the Section 5310 Program to enable the purchase of a new wheelchair accessible vehicle for the transportation of the elderly and/or disabled, (\$40,000.) Also a memo was received noting the status of expected funds, (\$5,000.) from the Municipalities 2008 Special Funding and Senior Center Funding Initiatives that we were granted for our "Grandparents Raising Grandchildren" support group. The Commission again expressed appreciation for the outstanding efforts that the Executive Director and his staff put forth in researching, applying for and obtaining grant funding.

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Under Old Business: The final paving of the parking lot has been completed, as well as signage, pavement striping and marking. The backfilling and seeding was done quickly but somewhat unsatisfactorily. Funds have been held back from final payment. The front bed will be addressed by Commissioner Cammuso with the help of Len Martin and Frances Fiondella. Considerable feedback has been received regarding the parking lot – all positive. There was a minor incident; an intruder did “donuts” with his vehicle in the lot, marring the pavement and striping. Also, another picnic table was broken. In minor cases of vandalism, we report the incident to Mark Sciota, and make the repairs in house.

Regarding the HVAC units, Mr. Temchin remarked that one of these years we need to look into replacing them; it will be an item under consideration for next year’s budget.

The new Bus Driver position has been posted according to union guidelines and will be submitted to the appropriate newspapers as prescribed. There was discussion pertaining to enhancing the job description to reflect current state mandated requirements. A motion was made by Mr. Rossi, that subject to the approval of the Town Manager and the Town Attorney, the job description to be placed in the newspaper include current state mandated requirements; seconded by Marjorie Chase; all in favor.

Under New Business: At a recent United Way meeting, Mr. Verderame was approached by Jeff Krug, a representative of Target, who inquired as to the possible use of our facility to conduct a hiring event for the store opening on West Street. This would involve three days, August 15, 16 and 17, but would not significantly impact regularly scheduled activities in the building. The Town Attorney had no objections. The consensus of the Commission was that as long as the event had a significant purpose or benefit for our seniors, in this case possible employment opportunities, there was no objection. Mr. Rossi noted that from the standpoint of the United Way and the community at large, it is always beneficial to put our best foot forward welcoming new business and employment opportunities. Mrs. Micalizzi echoed the sentiment of “being a good neighbor”. Target is known for its support of worthy causes and positive involvement in local communities. Sandra Micalizzi made a motion to allow them to use the Calendar House for the purpose stated; seconded by Michael Rossi; all in favor.

Regarding the HVAC Contract and Snow Plow Contract Bids, it was noted that Mark Sciota is going out to bid town wide for HVAC units, and he may decide to do the same with snow removal. Mr. Temchin noted that would be a savings. Mrs. Micalizzi asked if that would create a mandate that new HVAC units be made through that vendor. Mr. Verderame responded the contract would only apply to service, not new equipment purchases.

The Plainville Senior Center has received funding to renovate their facility, which will involve closing their building in September or October through December. They have requested that their members be permitted to come to Calendar House for lunch and bingo. They would provide the transportation. They allowed our seniors to use their facility similarly when we were closed for the parking lot project. Guss Nevelos made a motion that we approve their request; seconded by Ben Cammuso; all in favor.

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There was some discussion regarding the lunch program. Question was raised if consideration was ever given to cooking in house as opposed to outside contract. Mr. Verderame reminded the Commission that the meal program is provided by a federal grant under the Older Americans Act at no cost to us. Monday through Friday, a site manager is present between 10 am and 1 pm; food arrives around 11 am; the consensus is to let them do the job. Earl Temchin remarked that while we have heard of a few "bumps" regarding the food, they seem to have generally been straightened out. Mr. Verderame noted that on the occasions when CW Resources is closed for a day, Calendar House provides a meal.

Under the 2008/09 budget, estimates have been received for the floors and tree removal and trimming. The cost to have the floors cleaned and waxed would be \$2,000., the same as last year. Mr. Verderame would schedule the work over a weekend. Tree removal without stump grinding, would be \$450. Estimates need to be obtained for tree limb removal and stump grinding. A motion was made by Michael Rossi for approval to proceed with these projects; seconded by Marlene Carbone; all in favor.

Under Public Communication: Ray Fecteau noted that the Garden Club has planted flowers. Mr. Verderame added that they had also planted four trees and plan to get perennials from the VoAg to plant in the fall. He also remarked that Mary Savage of Planning and Zoning wants more trees planted, specifically on the islands. Ben Cammuso strongly objects to that plan, pointing out that eventually the roots would damage the parking lot surface and also create visual impairment. It was noted that no additional trees will be planted this year.

Mr. Temchin asked the Commissioners what plans should be made regarding the plaques. Mrs. Micalizzi said a letter should go out to the families of Mr. Della Vecchia and Mr. D'Angelo noting that the plaques have been placed and inviting them to a brief ceremony in September, once a date and time has been set.

Ben Cammuso made a motion to adjourn, seconded by Susan Locks; all were in favor.
The meeting was adjourned at 7:55 p.m.

There is no scheduled meeting in the month of August. The next scheduled meeting is Tuesday, September 9, 2008 at 7:00 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Cynthia Gilbert
Senior Center Secretary