

**TOWN OF ENFIELD COMMISSION ON AGING  
MINUTES FOR WEDNESDAY, JANUARY 12, 2022  
VIRTUAL MEETING**

**Attendance**

**Present:** Mayor Bob Cressotti, Council Liaison; Pauline Devino; Alice Egan, Howard Florian, David Goyette; Cynthia Guerrerri, Staff Liaison; Mary Ann Harris, Marlene Hoginski, Marie Pyznar, Council Liaison; Tim Slade, Will St. George and Kay Tallarita.

**Absent (Excused):** Mike Arnone Jr. and Priscilla Linehan.

**Guests:** Mary Keller, Senior Center Manager and Jennifer Switalski, LMSW, Elderly Services Care Coordinator – Enfield.

**I. Welcome**

David Goyette, Chairman, opened the meeting at 2:05 p.m. and thanked those members who were able to attend funeral services for Marguerite DuPrey, Commissioner Emeritus. Dave mentioned that the first order of business is for the election of officers. Will St. George made a motion to re-elect the following individuals and Marlene Hoginski seconded. All were re-elected unanimously:

Dave Goyette, President; Alice Egan, Vice President; Pauline Devino, Secretary; Tim Slade, Treasurer.

**II. Secretary's Report:**

Dave Goyette asked if there were any corrections to the minutes. Mary Ann Harris asked that her comment in the Symposium section regarding the availability of the Asnuntuck Conference Center be amended, to read that tax preparations will be held on Saturdays only until after April 15<sup>th</sup>. With this correction to be made, Howard Florian made a motion to accept the minutes with the correction noted and Mary Ann Harris seconded the motion. The motion passed (12,2,0).

**III. Treasurer's Report:**

Tim Slade commented that a correction will be made to the donations section since a typographical error was made to the total. He also commented that with six months left in the budget, perhaps we should begin thinking about what billable initiatives should be considered for the remaining budget period. Tim suggested that we talk about any new initiatives at the next meeting and get figures in place. Mayor Bob Cressotti and Marie Pyznar stated that it would be helpful to have budget projections by April for the town budget preparations. With the correction to the donations section to be made, Marlene Hoginski made a motion to accept the report and Mary Ann Harris seconded. The motion passed (12,2,0).

**IV. Committee Reports**

**A. SMHR - Senior Minor Home Repair Program**

Tim Slade reported that the repair program for 2021 has been completed. Until the program resumes, Tim said that he has been conducting an inventory of tools and supplies and has been making necessary purchases in addition to continuing work on program guidelines. He wished to express his appreciation to Jim O'Neil, the head custodian at the Annex, who has been very helpful in getting access for Tim to the SMHR storage closet on off scheduled hours. Tim explained that although requested, obtaining a key to open the storage closet has been denied for security reasons since Tim is not a town employee. Mary Keller commented that there used to be a phone number to call to get access from the on duty custodial staff. She will look for this number and contact Tim when found. Mayor Bob Cressotti thanked Tim for this year's SMHR service and said that he will look into whether a key can be obtained. Tim also mentioned that a press release scheduled for April is being held for distribution due to Covid Omicron concerns.

## **B. Symposium**

In Pat Linehan's absence, Dave Goyette reported that Bill Kiner would like to assist the Symposium group, however, planning is not being held at this time due to Covid concerns.

## **C. Senior Living TV Program**

In Pat Linehan's absence, Dave Goyette commented that Marilyn Cressotti's December 9<sup>th</sup> interview regarding Adult Educational Recreation was well presented and very informative. He explained that in January Jennifer Switalski of DSS was to be interviewed, however, with Jenn's leaving DSS, a new program needs to be planned or Mark Warnock may need to schedule a rerun of an older program. The next planning meeting of Senior Living volunteers will be on January 19<sup>th</sup>. Will St. George made a suggestion that a rerun of the program addressing holiday blues may be suitable for the January program slot. There was general agreement that this would be a good alternative. Dave asked Will to contact Mark Warnock of Cox Cable to discuss.

## **D. Grandparents Raising Grandchildren**

Kay Tallarita reported that unfortunately due to Covid concerns, this year's Christmas party had to be cancelled. However, work still continues with families and meetings are conducted via Zoom. Kay reiterated the importance of outreach regarding this program and reported that work continues to begin and/or continue distribution of brochures to churches, schools, pediatricians and medical/dental practices. She commented that this is a hard project to get started since participants have concerns about State involvement and may feel anxiety or shame over the necessity to participate.

## **E. Triad**

Marlene Hoginski reported that there is nothing to report since it has been hard to meet virtually with the members. Mary Keller mentioned that she has not heard from Officer Mark Rochette of the Enfield Police Department about any new programs he would like to present at the Senior Center.

## **F. Choices**

Jennifer Switalski reported that she would like to thank Will St. George for having reached out to her, as she leaves her position, to volunteer to continue providing Medicare counseling. Beginning in February on Fridays Will St. George will be providing Choices information to interested seniors at the Senior Center. Tim Slade asked if any funding is needed to continue this program. Will responded that a phone may still be needed, but that he can assess this in March. He did say that it would be helpful to get a larger laptop for display of Medicare information. Mary Keller said that she can work with Will and town IT to get a desktop computer and dual monitors for data display.

## **G. Nursing Home Project**

Dave Goyette expressed Kudos to Alice Egan for a successful holiday project. He thanked her for her tireless efforts in shopping, wrapping and delivering gifts for project participants. Dave explained that thank you letters were received from Saint Joseph Residence and Parkway Pavilion in appreciation for the gifts presented. Alice again restated that it was marvelous to have the town credit card to Walmart to complete the purchases in a timely manner.

## **V. Old Business**

### **A. Social Services Update**

Cindy Guerrerri reported that about 90% of the department move has been completed with the Lamagna staff effectively moving last week. She stated that the move and renovations went smoothly. The posting for Jenn's position has been completed and resumes are being received. Dave Goyette asked about the Senior Care Coordinator posted position. Cindy explained that this is not Jenn's position, but a new position due to the reorganization that was approved by the Town Council. This position has no impact on the COA.

Jennifer Switalski reported that in December 76 units of service was provided with 55 seniors receiving some of this service for Choices, mental health and Medicare/Medicaid issues. Jennifer commented that DSS continues to reach out to seniors after inclement weather to assess anxiety levels over food, healthcare and safety issues.

Dave Goyette thanked Jennifer on behalf of the Enfield seniors for the outstanding service she has provided during her employment at Enfield's DSS. He continued that the Commission on Aging has been impressed with the work that Jennifer has done on behalf of seniors and that everyone on the Commission wishes her well in her new State job. Mayor Bob Cressotti also thanked Jennifer for her excellent service and noted that she has been an asset to the town.

## **B. Senior Groups**

### **i. Friends of the Senior Center**

Marlene reported that meetings have been suspended until March due to Covid concerns, however, the group has asked Mary Keller, manager of the Senior Center, to prepare a "Wish List" for the Friends group to be considered when they meet in March.

## **C. Senior Center Focus**

Mary Keller reported that the Senior Center remains open although attendance numbers went down over the holiday. For example, yesterday's total was 170 (down from an average of 200). She noted that a mobile vaccine clinic hosted by Griffin Hospital is scheduled for January 28<sup>th</sup> and February 18<sup>th</sup> to facilitate Covid testing. Will St. George will resume Choices counseling in February and appointment scheduling for the annual AARP TaxAide program will begin on January 20<sup>th</sup> for tax preparation from February 7<sup>th</sup> through April 15<sup>th</sup>. Mary Ann Harris will be facilitating the AARP TaxAide program. 36 appointments will be scheduled each Monday only for tax preparation. Mary Ann thanked Mary Keller for her help in preparing for the TaxAide program.

## **VI. New Business**

### **A. Community Builder**

Dave Goyette reported that Community Builders is working on a new proposal that will be presented in the future. We will continue to follow this project as it directly affects senior services.

## **VII. Announcements**

Kay Tallarita asked if anyone can provide some advice on how to hire someone to help seniors at the Saint Francis Residence clear snow from their cars. They have asked the service hired to plow their facility, but they commented that they are short-handed. Suggestions included boy scouts and high school students working for graduation credits, but each of these options carries liabilities. Finally, a suggestion was made that contact be made with a lawn service company. Kay will pursue this suggestion.

## **VIII. Adjournment**

With no further business to discuss, a motion to adjourn was made by Will St. George and seconded by Marlene Hoginski. It passed unanimously. Dave Goyette adjourned the meeting at 3:15 pm.

**Next Meeting** Wednesday, February 9, 2022 at 2:00 p.m. at the DSS Alcorn School.

Respectfully Submitted by Pauline Devino, Secretary

Cc:

Ellen Zappo, Acting Town Manager

Mayor Bob Cressotti, Council Liaison

Cindy Guerreri, Staff Liaison & Director of Social Services

Mary Keller, Enfield Senior Center Manager

Marie Pyznar, Council Liaison

Jennifer Switalski, LMSW, Elderly Services Care Coordinator – Enfield.