

**TOWN OF ENFIELD COMMISSION ON AGING
MINUTES FOR WEDNESDAY, FEBRUARY 8, 2023 – 2:00 P.M.
DSS, ALCORN SCHOOL, 1010 ENFIELD STREET**

Attendance

Present: Mike Arnone Jr., Pauline Devino, Howard Florian, Dave Goyette, Cynthia Guerreri, Staff Liaison, Marlene Hoginski, Mary Ann Harris, Justin Lopez, Elderly Care Services Coordinator, Marie Pyznar, Council Liaison and Tim Slade.

Absent (Excused): Mayor Bob Cressotti, Council Liaison, Alice Egan, Mary Keller, Enfield Senior Center Manager, Patricia Linehan, Will St. George and Kay Tallarita.

I. Welcome

David Goyette opened the meeting at 2:10 p.m. and welcomed everyone.

II. Secretary's Report:

Dave Goyette asked if there were any corrections to the minutes. Tim Slade requested that the name of Audra Laff in the section on Senior TV Living be corrected to Audra Lauf. Dave Goyette also requested that the names for the offices of President and Vice President be changed to Chairman and Vice Chairman. With these corrections to be made, Marlene Hoginski made a motion to accept the minutes with corrections to be made, and Howard Florian seconded. The motion was carried (7,4,0).

III. Treasurer's Report:

Tim Slade provided the treasurer's report and noted that this month there were minimal expenses. He also commented that until invoices are received, paid expenses will not appear on the financial report. With no questions or discussion about the report, Mary Ann Harris made a motion to approve it and Marlene Hoginski seconded. The motion passed through a show of hands.

IV. Committee Reports

A. SMHR - Senior Minor Home Repair Program

Tim Slade reported that the move to the new space is nearly completed and that it is a pleasure to have access without calling the custodian. He noted that due to injuries and health concerns, at this time the team is short by two volunteers. Cindy Guerreri asked if the shortage of volunteers will affect the workload once the program begins. Tim said that he has workaround solutions that should not affect the team's ability to complete requests, but that he would keep Social Services informed should there be a back log. He also reported that requests will begin to be taken beginning on March 14th with the start of the program on April 4th.

B. Symposium

Pat Linehan was absent so there was no report this month.

C. Senior Living TV Program

In Pat Linehan's absence, Dave Goyette reported that taping has been completed with Audra Lauf from All American Assisted Living and Thomas Burr on mental health issues. Tim Slade reported that the program is taking a hiatus at this time to decide whether 2 tapings a month are preferred. Although invited, Cindy Guerreri expressed that she feels that taping of the Gatekeeper program is not appropriate at this time. Tim Slade asked if better contact information can be provided on the graphic for the program. He noted that it is difficult to reach the COA with the information provided. Cindy reported that the Town website is being redesigned by the new Public Information Officer and that Tim's concerns would be conveyed. There was clarification that the following Social Services phone numbers are being reassigned for services: extension 6395 for more information on the COA and extension 6396 for the minor senior repair program.

D. Grandparents Raising Grandchildren

Kay Tallarita was absent so there was no report this month, however, Marie Pyznar reported that \$4,000 was transferred to the Grandparents program from proceeds from the program's Golf Tournament. These funds will be used for summer camp expenses.

E. Triad

Marlene Hoginski reported that the Triad group will not be meeting again until February 14th.

F. Choices

Will St. George was absent so there was no formal report, however, Justin Lopez reported that activity has been quieter. He noted that new clients continue to need counseling on finding medication insurance choices and that a few town employees who are turning 65 are being advised via notices to explore Medicare options.

G. VITA/AARP

Mary Ann Harris reported that tax season opened last Wednesday with AARP tax preparation at the Enfield Senior Center and on Saturday at Asnuntuck Community College with VITA preparations. She commented that great Tech Support has been received at both facilities and that with more preparers the teams are doing well. At the moment there is space available in April for VITA filings.

V. Old Business

A. Social Services Update

Cindy Guerreri reported that a new bilingual social worker, with good experience on the clinical side, will be starting in March to provide support for the Early Childhood and Grandparents programs. She also reported that there is a grant application for the Gatekeeper and Enfield Nutrition programs and that the WIC program is resuming for about 300 to 400 families. Justin Lopez reported that Gatekeeper training will be conducted on February 13th, 16th and 17th for two of the town fire departments.

B. Friends of the Senior Center

Mary Keller was absent so there was no report for this month.

C. Senior Center Focus

Mary Keller was absent so there was no report for this month.

VI. New Business

Volunteer Tax Relief

Dave Goyette reported that the plan for volunteer tax relief is done and will be presented at the March 6th Town Council meeting for approval. If approved the plan will provide an exemption of \$400 to town property taxes effective for 2024 for 50 volunteer hours of service beginning in January 2023. To qualify, volunteers must be 65 years of age, own their home and have lived in Enfield for at least 5 years. This benefit will be extended to 60 volunteers at a cost of \$25,000 for the first year. A partial list of eligible volunteer organizations was read, but not yet completed. Volunteer hours will be maintained by each approved volunteer organization.

VI. New Business (continued)

New COA Magnets and Pens

Dave Goyette reported that 2,500 purple and white town phone informational magnets are being ordered as approved via an email to COA members at a cost of \$1,500. In addition, 250 COA logo pencils are also being ordered at a cost of \$250 plus shipping and handling. Payment for these items will be made through the Missions and Outreach account with some being used for the upcoming Triad Wellness Fair.

VII. Announcements 10 Year Plan for Conservation and Development

Marie Pyznar, Council Liaison, reported that a new state requirement for a 10 year plan for conservation and development for the Town will be presented at the March 20th Town Council meeting. She discussed some of the plan details and expressed concerns at the lack of inclusion of planning for elderly housing. Marie noted that the plan gives an inclination of moving from a small town feel to a more urban direction with more affordable apartments planned (although the Town has already met a State goal of 10% for low income housing) and a moratorium on condominium construction. Marie indicated that there will be a public hearing on Monday, February 13th to present the plan at JFK at 6:30 p.m. She invited all COA members to attend and comment on the plan which will set the direction for the Town for the next 10 years. Marie commented that regarding elderly housing a more congregate living plan should be considered along with planning for housing appropriate for first time home buyers rather than an emphasis on more apartment dwellings in locations that currently have no local transportation availability.

VIII. Adjournment

With no further business to discuss, a motion to adjourn was made by Marlene Hoginski and seconded by Mary Ann Harris, it passed unanimously and Dave Goyette adjourned the meeting at 3:15 p.m.

Next Meeting Wednesday, March 8, 2023 at 2:00 p.m. at the DSS Alcorn School.

Respectfully Submitted by Pauline Devino, Secretary

Cc:

Mayor Bob Cressotti, Council Liaison
Cindy Guerreri, Staff Liaison & Director of Social Services
Mary Keller, Enfield Senior Center Manager
Marie Pyznar, Council Liaison
Ellen Zoppo-Sassu, Town Manager