

Senior Services Commission
September 14, 2020

The meeting was called to order by Chairwoman Luella Landis at 10:32 am.

Roll Call:	Luella Landis	Ann Jordan	Madeline Lowry
	Paula Luna	Linda Polke	Mertie Terry

Absent:	Shirley Banic	Patricia Sienna	Helen Zalewski
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Others: Amy Saada, Senior/Human Services Director
Nick Talbot, Senior Services Outreach Coordinator
Pat Ahlquist, Council Liaison

Amy introduced Nick Talbot, the new Senior Services Outreach Coordinator. He is a graduate of Central Connecticut State University and was previously employed at Heritage Commons. Gabriella Brown, a recent Trinity College graduate, has been hired as the Human Services Assistant. The Commission members introduced themselves.

Approval/Amendment of Agenda

Motion to approve the agenda to include discussion about the October meeting date (per Luella's request) was made by Linda Polke; seconded by Mertie Terry. All in favor. Motion carried.

Approval of Minutes

Motion to approve the minutes of the June 8, 2020, Regular Meeting made by Paula Luna; seconded by Linda Polke. Mertie Terry abstained. All in favor. Motion carried.

Senior/Human Services Director's Report – Amy Saada

The AARP Challenge Grant was not awarded to Cromwell. Amy has until the end of the year to purchase listening devices from the AARP Livable Community Grant.

Programs are still running virtually.

Transportation is running, however only two people are allowed on the bus at a time. Pre-screening is required. Seniors are reminded to make transportation appointments early.

Congregate meals are being delivered once a week and currently they have delivered 5,611 meals.

Both "in person" and virtual classes may need to be offered in the future. Through the addition of virtual classes, the Senior Center is reaching residents who are unable to attend in person. The newsletter is still being created, however LPI is not printing at this time. The 26-page newsletter is being printed in the office by request. Newsletters are being put in the food bags.

Paperwork for Renter's Rebate (age 65 and older) can be dropped off.

The Food Bank is providing prepacked bags only (no shopping). There is a collection bin in the front lobby. There has been an increase in the number of clients (not just seniors). The food bank is currently serving 160 families. There was discussion about summer meals for children and Amy told the commission that "Grab and Go" meals were available during the summer in Middletown.

Anyone interested in Energy Assistance needs to go through CRT. The program is open until May and funds will be disbursed in May, 2021.

Director of Public Health Update

Amy advised the group that there will be five upcoming flu clinics, with special hours for seniors.

Council Liaison Update - Pat Ahlquist

Money has been approved for an outside firm to review job descriptions and compliance for all full time and part time positions.

The mill rate was not increased. Previously, the Council had agreed to support a surplus fund (which would be able to fund the town for 90 days).

The Council would like to hire a full time grant writer to be used by all departments.

There are two years left on the Town Manager's Contract.

The Outboard Motor Boat Club wants to extend their lease and do some improvements. This is under review by the Town Council.

Seniors are reminded to complete the census.

Luella Landis asked about a feasibility study for a new senior/community center. Pat responded that they will go out to bid for a firm to review all municipal space.

Old Business – None

New Business

a. Re-Open Sector Rules for Senior Centers

People age 65 and older should continue to stay home. There are still a lot of issues with cleaning, touch screens, space issues, etc. The senior center can handle one-on-one appointments.

Linda Polke inquired about the Backpack program and Amy responded that there was a collection bin at Walmart and 68 students received backpacks and school supplies.

b. Staffing Updates

Amy is looking for two part time drivers.

c. Re-opening Survey

A survey has been created to determine seniors level of interest in coming back to the Senior Center. The survey has been e-mailed and put into meal bags. Amy has received at least 30 responses. About half of the people responded that they will come back when the doors open.

The Senior Donation Account balance is \$ 22,051.11.

The next meeting will be October 19, 2020.

Citizens Comments

Mertie Terry talked about the Cromwell Children's Coalition. "Pumpkins in the Park", a drive through event, will be held on October 18, 2020. She would like some seniors to decorate pumpkins to be on display at the event or to donate pumpkins for the children. Amy will purchase some pumpkins for seniors to decorate for the event and she will include this in the newsletter.

A motion to adjourn the meeting was made by Madeline Lowry; seconded by Linda Polke. Meeting adjourned at 11:44 am.

Respectfully submitted,

Nancy Stockman
Recording Clerk