

Senior Services Commission

November 14, 2022

The meeting was called to order by Anne Kaiser at 10:30 a.m.

Present:	Judy Benvenuto (<i>left at 10:57</i>)	Deirdre Daly	Ann Jordan
	Anne Kaiser	Pat Snow	Linda Worden

Absent:	Bonnie Sprague	Steven Falco	Mertie Terry
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Others: Amy Saada – Senior/Human Services Director
Salvatore Nesci – Director of Public Health

Paula Luna – Town Council

Al Waters – Town Council

Kathleen Cartwright – Cromwell Resident

Approval/Amendment of Agenda

Motion to approve the agenda made by Pat Snow; seconded by Deirdre Daly. All in favor. Motion carried.

Approval of Minutes

Motion to approve the minutes of the October 17, 2022, Regular Meeting made by Pat Snow; seconded by Judy Benvenuto. All in favor. Motion carried.

Senior/Human Services Director's Report – Amy Saada

Amy welcomed Linda Worden, a new member of the Senior Services Commission.

There were no updates for grants/funding since the October meeting.

There are several upcoming November programs:

- November 16th at noon – Lunch & Learn with Dr. Silva of Trinity Health to discuss hypertension, diabetes and other chronic issues.
- November 17th – CRT Thanksgiving meal for seniors age 60 and older; must RSVP by 11/16 at noon.
- November 18th – Reiki sessions begin; must call for appointments; appointments are every half hour.
- November 29th – Tai Chi Quan Classes – this is the second round of grant funding for the 24-week program of Moving for Better Balance.

Upcoming December Activities include:

- December 1st – trip to gingerbread festival
- December 2nd – holiday lantern craft with Cathi
- December 6th at 9 am - coffee with the mayor
- December 7th at 5:30 - KinCare meeting. This program is for seniors raising children and grandchildren. It is an education support group and will include dinner and childcare provided by High School students.
- December 7th – Aqua Turf trip to listen to the Glenn Miller Orchestra. Payments are due by 11/16 and this event is almost full.
- December 8th at noon - Lunch & Learn with Dr. Schmutte, a Psychiatry Professor from Yale. He will discuss suicide prevention efforts for the geriatric population.
- December 14th – Snack & Learn – signs and stages of dementia.
- December 15th at 2:30 - Drama club production of “Scrooge....A Comedy?”

Amy is working with Friendship tours for 2023 trips and tours including day trips, overnight trips, cruises and overseas adventures.

Amy also mentioned the human service programs (Energy assistance, LIWAP, Thanksgiving food baskets, Renters Rebate and upcoming food drives coordinated by the Boy Scouts and the Knights of Columbus). Amy informed the Commission that SNAP cannot be used to purchase toiletries, toilet paper, feminine products, etc. She mentioned that one church in town focuses on those items and another church focuses on high protein foods.

Youth Services is starting a diaper bank which should be up and running in December. Middletown has a diaper bank. The Police Station has a small food pantry for weekend food emergencies. The Animal Control Officer has a small pet food pantry.

Pat Snow inquired about hats, mittens and scarves and Amy explained that there is a program through the Kiwanis Club that provides warm clothing.

Judy Benvenuto inquired about Meals on Wheels. Amy responded that CRT (in Hartford) delivers the meals to Cromwell, but Amy doesn't have enough volunteers to deliver them. Amy advertises for volunteers in the newsletter and e-mail blasts. Linda Worden will post a volunteer request on the River Highlands facebook page.

Director of Public Health Update – Sal Nesci

Tina Bickmore is still the public health nurse. She will be running weekly wellness clinics. She is planning Lunch & Learn discussions on different health topics. Let Sal know if there is a topic you would like to discuss.

Sal anticipated a busy winter with the “triple threat” (COVID, flu and respiratory issues). He mentioned that COVID boosters and initial vaccines are available. The booster is working well to minimize the spread of COVID. He mentioned that the bivalent booster is available from pharmacies.

Sal explained the difference between "fully vaccinated" and "current". Fully vaccinated means that you have only had 2 initial vaccines (or the 1 Johnson & Johnson vaccine). Being "current" or "up to date" means that you have received all boosters available to you.

There were 3 clinics recently (September, October, November) and the following vaccines were offered: flu, pneumonia, shingle, DTaP, COVID and COVID boosters). Over 1,000 vaccines were administered. There was no cost for the COVID vaccines. The other vaccines did not require a copay at the time; individual insurance will be billed.

They will schedule another vaccine clinic if needed. Masks and test kits are available.

COVID vaccines are available to the home bound population. Sal is working with the Capitol Region Medical Reserve Corps, which is a volunteer group of retired doctors, nurses, pharmacists, record keepers and drivers.

November is lung cancer awareness month and diabetes awareness month. There is information on their website about a light lung cancer screening at no cost which includes light radiology work.

Radon kits will be available in January

Sal talked about the importance of the shingles vaccine. He reminded the Commission that anyone over age 50 should receive the pneumonia and shingles vaccine.

Council Liaison Update – Al Waters

Sharon DeVoe, a 7-year town employee, was appointed Finance Director by the Town Manager.

The Council approved \$200,000 for lighting at the little league field. This was ARPA funds.

There was a discussion by the Council to approve 5-days of use of 60 River Road to unload a big spool of wire (coming by train). There will be a charge of \$5000 for this.

The Town approved a \$17,000 grant for the police to have a DUI check point.

Old Business – Amy Saada

a. Community Center Discussion/Updates

Amy reminded the Town Council liaisons to discuss this at the Town Council meetings.

Members of the Senior Services Commission have spoken at several town council meetings.

Amy advised the commission that there is up to \$20 million of Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) money through the USDA. She sent this information to the Town Manager. There was discussion about grant writing and Amy said that Stuart Popper probably should write this grant request as it relates to Community Development and he may have the experience.

b. Senior Vehicle Updates

The 2012 vehicle is now off the road. There are 3 buses and a shared bus (with Portland). They are still not doing day trips weekly.

New Business

a. 2023 Meeting Schedule

Motion to approve the 2023 meeting schedule was made by Deired Daly; seconded by Pat Snow. All in favor. Motion carried.

b. Senate Bill no. 817

As a result of Senate Bill no. 817, the state has created a working group through the Unit on Aging to assist senior centers.

c. ARPA Funds Specifically Designated for Senior Centers

\$10 million of ARPA funds will be disbursed among senior centers in Connecticut.

Citizen's Comments

There was discussion about ITN transportation; Amy advised the commission that she refers seniors to RSVP, which has zero cost or the use of the town senior buses

Linda Worden mentioned that a friend wanted to be on the Commission, but the friend was told that she couldn't because of her political affiliation. Amy said that isn't true. The Commission needs to represent the diverse population of the town (male, female, low income, high income, different races, etc.).

A motion to adjourn the meeting was made by Deirdre Daly; seconded by Pat Snow. Meeting adjourned at 11:41 a.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Nancy Stockman
Recording Clerk