

**COMMISSION ON AGING AND DISABLED  
REGULAR MEETING  
FEBRUARY 5, 2020**

**MEMBERS PRESENT**

Karen Brecher  
Maureen Lynch  
Kathy Sobieski  
Mary Udice  
Chylene Pender  
Terri Lapenta-Duffek

**MEMBERS ABSENT**

Sandy Nafis

**STAFF**

Dianne Stone  
Jaime Trevethan  
Gail Whitney

**TOWN COUNCIL LIAISONS ABSENT**

Gail Budrejko  
Carol Anest

**I. CALL TO ORDER**

Karen Brecher called the Commission on Aging and Disabled meeting to order at 6:03 PM.

**II. PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE**

**III. PUBLIC PARTICIPATION**

The Town Council liaisons were not present.

**IV. CHANGES TO SNAP**

Laura Roberts, Program Coordinator for SNAP will do a presentation at the March meeting. Thank you to Chylene for arranging that. Chylene also works with the Hunger Action Team.

**V. APPROVAL OF MINUTES OF JANUARY 8, 2020**

The Commissioners approved the minutes of January 8, 2020.

**VI. STAFF REPORT**

Dianne reported that the Center was busy during January with a trivia contest, holiday social featuring Richie Mitnick (this was rescheduled from December 3, 2019 due to weather) and had 83 people in attendance. The American History lecture series continues and is very popular; this is a two part class and this month featured The Gilded Age. When people attend this program, they immediately sign up for the next one. As Dianne stated at the January meeting, the CCSU Scholars for Life will hold programs here in the spring. This is a really good connection with CCSU and opens up interest in adult education. A hands-on sculpture program was held on January 10<sup>th</sup>; this was a one-time program and hopefully either the Center or Parks and Recreation will take on these pilot programs and develop them into full time programs. There

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was a four part series on mindfulness with 25 people in attendance on developing new routines for a happier and healthier life in 2020. The winter gardening program was held with 12 people who were invited to start winter lettuces and herbs under the grow lights; these 12 people will be responsible for these plantings on their own time and then they may take them home and enjoy them. Other programs included the Veteran's Coffee Hour, a Middlewoods sponsored paint and coffee (there was a nice article and pictures in the Newington Town Crier about the 17 people who attended that class); a medical marijuana and CBD program was held on January 27<sup>th</sup> with 22 people; and valentines card craft workshop.

Another partnership with CCSU and Connecticut Healthy Living is the Matter of Balance program. These evidence based programs are wonderful but require staffing; Dianne, Jamie, and Teri Snyder are all certified. CCSU has begun a pilot program with student internships of six students who have now been trained to lead the Matter of Balance programs in Newington, Berlin, and Woodbury; two students will be at each town for this program which is usually eight weeks, but will be held for four weeks twice a week. All classes are filled and will be available again in March.

Other programs coming up are Keeping Memory Strong with Patty O'Brien, Coffee Talk with Newington EMS regarding File of Life, AARP caregiver, and Coffee Talk with Town Manager Keith Chapman.

Dianne has reported on the CRT congregate meals in the past regarding their cutting meals. This has begun again and CRT will provide meals Monday through Friday except twice per month on a Wednesday they will not provide meals. The Center will provide meals on those Wednesdays and have commitments from outside resources for some of these meals; today Avery Heights sponsored a pizza party. People still make donations for these meals and there is approximately \$400 available to purchase lunch if there is no sponsor. One Center participant donated \$1,300 to be used for the Wednesdays when CRT does not provide meals. CRT will continue this through the end of their fiscal year which is in September. Dianne stated that nutrition is an ongoing concern with the elderly. Karen asked if there was anything the Commission can do and Dianne responded to make the legislators aware that meals in Newington are being cut. The Center could purchase the meals from CRT at a cost of \$350 but choose not to do that because meals can be provided at less cost, or with the partners/sponsors. The Center's social worker is aware of everyone in the program and keeps track if anyone is at risk.

Dianne was reappointed to the Commission on Women, Children, and Seniors Equity and Opportunity. The transportation task force that she served on held their last meeting and a final report will be coming out soon on that issue.

#### A. Door Counters

Dianne said the count was 8,055 for the month of January which is comparable to last year of 8,543 – 6% difference.

### VII. OLD BUSINESS

#### A. Self-Assessment

Dianne had no new updates.

#### B. Purchase Requests

There were no Purchase Requests at this time. The Town has not had a facilities manager for quite some time so things have been held off on. Dianne believes this may now change and items needed are painting in the building, bulletin boards that are professionally covered, also pricing out some sound equipment

because sometimes speakers are hard to hear, and new water fountains. Karen asked about removing the stage in the auditorium and Dianne responded that there is a master list of things to be done that needs to be prioritized. The Town Manager is presently working on the budget. The Town Manager is taking a proactive approach with meeting with department heads once a week, and one-on-one twice per month. The Community Service team will be reinstated and will begin meetings.

#### C. Policy Regarding Campaign Activity in Senior and Disabled Center

Dianne did not have a draft policy to present to the Commission as she had more questions as to the direction she should take with the policy. She distributed the Town's policy which was written in 1987 and updated in 1994 which really speaks to what should and shouldn't take place in regard to campaigning. However, the Center did take the Town's policy further. Candidates who are members of the Center may continue coming to the Center but cannot be political and seen as campaigning, nor distribute any political literature or paraphernalia. The Center could hold a forum in October with all candidates, however Dianne thought that the policy should reflect the selection of a nonpartisan moderator. Dianne suggested a subcommittee be appointed to plan and organize a bipartisan subcommittee of the Commission as appointed by the Chairperson and place parameters. Dianne will draft something for the March meeting. Mary volunteered to be on the subcommittee, and stated that although Sandy was not in attendance this evening, she felt Sandy should also serve on the subcommittee. Karen will also serve on the subcommittee. Kathy stated that candidates should be allowed to come for a one time forum which will allow people to listen to them in maybe a three minute speech or a question and answer session. Dianne stated that the policy could say that there be one forum for candidates each year and the subcommittee could decide how the forum format should be each year. The Commission can decide then about appointing a subcommittee to review the format.

#### D. Election of Officers

**MOTION: Maureen Lynch nominated Karen Brecher as Chairperson of the Commission on Aging and Disabled, Terri Lapenta-Duffek seconded the nomination.** Karen asked three times if there were any other nominations. **The Commission voted unanimously for Karen Brecher as Chairperson of the Commission on Aging and Disabled with a 6-0 vote.**

**MOTION: Karen Brecher nominated Maureen Lynch as Vice-Chairperson of the Commission on Aging and Disabled, Terri Lapenta-Duffek seconded the nomination.** Karen asked three times if there were any other nominations. **The Commission voted unanimously for Maureen Lynch as Vice-Chairperson of the Commission on Aging and Disabled with a 6-0 vote.**

**MOTION: Mary Udice nominated Kathy Sobieski as Secretary of the Commission on Aging and Disabled, Maureen Lynch seconded the nomination.** Karen asked three times if there were any other nominations. **The Commission voted unanimously for Kathy Sobieski as Secretary of the Commission on Aging and Disabled with a 6-0 vote.**

#### E. Lyft Post Survey

Dianne reported that this is in the process of surveys being collected and coded. The National Council on Aging will have the final report. Of the 130 initial surveys there will probably be about 60 post surveys received. The Lyft and Learn sessions should continue.

A monthly ideas forum will begin so that people who have ideas for programs, activities, or services can be heard. This will take place on the first Wednesday of the month at 10:00 AM and people will be invited.

**VIII. NEW BUSINESS**

Dianne reported that two people who served on the Commission have recently passed away: Tillie DeMaio and Tony Boni. Tillie served for many years. Flowers were sent for both funerals.

CCSU will be holding a community service in April from 4:00 – 6:00 PM and will stay longer to attend the Commission meeting that evening. Dianne asked the Commissioners to come to the Center early that evening at 5:00 PM to talk to students about volunteer work and their involvement in the community.

**IX. AGENDA FOR MARCH MEETING**

Keep Policy Regarding Campaign Activity in Senior and Disabled Center, and remove Election of Officers and Lyft post survey.

**X. PUBLIC PARTICIPATION**

There was no Public Participation.

**XI. ADJOURNMENT**

**MOTION: Mary Udice made a motion to adjourn, Terri Lapenta-Duffek seconded the motion, and the monthly meeting of the Commission on Aging and Disabled adjourned at 7:15 PM with a 6-0 vote.**

**The next meeting of the Commission on Aging and Disabled is Wednesday, March 4, 2020 at 6:00 PM.**

Respectfully Submitted,

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Gail Whitney, Commission Clerk







