

**COMMISSION ON THE AGING
4 Brush Hill Road
New Fairfield, CT 06812**

MINUTES

Regular Meeting

January 23, 2007

A regular meeting of the Commission on the Aging was held on Tuesday January 23, 2007 at the New Fairfield Senior Sunshine Center. Maureen Salerno called the meeting to order at 7:30pm. Secretary, Laurie Busse, took the minutes.

Present: Maureen Salerno, Chairperson, Cindy LaCour, Vice Chairperson
Kathy Hull, John Brennan, Katy Johannssen, Janet Loya, Jeannette Sweeney,
and Roberta Ilardo,

Excused: Diane Giardina and Bob Alberetti

Guests: Caryn Reilly, and Bob Rawlings

MINUTES:

Janet Loya made a motion to accept the Minutes of the November 2006 meeting as amended, 2nd by Kathy Hull, all in favor.

CORRESPONDENTS/ANNOUNCEMENTS—None Heard

OLD BUSINESS:

1. Networking Meeting/COA's Involvement with the New Senior Center

Minutes: The Minutes to the Special Meeting on January 6, 2007 were discussed. Maureen Salerno stated that up until now there hadn't been a reason for the COA to take a position on the new Senior Center. The last page of the Minutes reflects questions that needed to be asked to the Board of Selectman (BOS). Maureen Salerno attended the last advisory council meeting and John Hodge and Bob Rawlings answered these questions at the last advisory council meeting as follows:

1. What is the intended use of the new Senior Center?
 - A. This will be a Senior Center and a community center; both the seniors and the Town Boards and Commissions will use it, perhaps even a TV

station so the Boards & Commissions that are now televised at the High School can come here.

2. If other groups use the Senior Center on a regular basis what provisions will be made for wear and tear?
 - A. Right now there is no answer, but the BOS have been made aware that the Senior Center should not have to pay out of their budget for wear and tear caused by other Town Boards & Commissions. The discussion included putting money into another budget line to assume some the burden of maintaining and replacing the equipment/furniture.
3. How will the Senior Center and the youth center mesh?
 - A. The youth center will be in the existing house and use the upstairs. They will not be entering into the Senior Center, although there will be a breezeway that attaches the 2 buildings. They will be considered 2 separate buildings.

The #1 concern for the Senior Center is the room use policy. There was discussion that there are a lot of Town Boards and Commissions and the Senior Center would be in use almost every day of the week for these Commissions. Kathy Hull stated the current Senior Center Room Use Policy states the Senior Center is not to be used by any groups for their regular meeting. It should only be used for special events or if a large crowd is expected at a regular meeting. The only exceptions to this policy are the COA, The Friends and the Advisory Council to the Senior Center. Kathy Hull would like this policy to stay in place for the new Senior Center. John Hodge has told Kathy Hull that it would not remain the same but a compromise would have to be found, perhaps giving the Senior Center 1st priority over the Town Boards and Commissions. There was further discussion that the words "Community Room" would give the idea that the room is available for regular Scout meetings, or by any resident wishing for a large facility to have a party in.

The COA discussed the new plans with Bob Rawlings. The new Senior Center will be 8,400sqft with a slab on grade, there maybe a partial basement for a mechanical room. There was discussion on storing mechanical items above the ceiling. There will be sufficient parking within easy walking distance however; the parking will not be as convenient as it is now due to the slope of the property and the layout of the parking lot. The difference in grade is about 10'-11' from one side of the building to the next. The closer spots will be dedicated has handicapped. There will not be a portico on the new Senior Center and Kathy Hull would like a covered entrance. All fire exists must go to the public way. Maureen Salerno suggested Commissioners take turns going to the BOS meetings to receive updates on the Senior Center. The Permanent Building Committee (PBC) is trying to finalize the plans and the project still needs to go back to Inland Wetlands and Zoning as well as a referendum.

There was discussion that the grant money the Town received must be dedicated to the Senior Center for 10 years. The shared space in the Community Room/Senior Center includes the multipurpose room, the great room, restrooms and kitchen. The areas dedicated strictly to the Senior Center are the game room, library, craft and computer room and the offices. The Town has received \$1.3 million in grants and \$650,000 from DECD (Dept. of Economic Community Development). There was discussion if the DECD money was a grant or a loan. Maureen Salerno wants everyone to keep a positive tone. Roberta Ilardo will contact the grant administrator to request copies of the grants. The purpose is to know the amount of money received and the purpose for which they were intended. John Brennan said he would look the grants over.

2. Budget

Maureen Salerno requested the secretary's salary be upgraded and the supply line increased by \$200.

3. Citizen News COA Column:

Ellen Burnett said she would like to have a regular COA column called Aging in Place. Maureen Salerno drafted a column that she read into the meeting stating that the tone of the article is very important. This article touched on all aspects of what the COA has been doing and the feedback from the Commissioners was positive. Jeannette Sweeney is having a fund raising breakfast and would like to use the Aging in Place title and put some of the proceeds towards COA events. Maureen Salerno stated that Letters to the Editor is not the forum for the new Senior Center. Janet Loya will call Ellen Burnett to let her know that Maureen Salerno will be contacting her.

New Business:

Kathy Hull distributed the yearly Senior Center Reports going over some of the highlights from 2006. This included a chart of how often other Boards and Commissions use the Senior Center. The utilities and floor cleaning are under the Senior Center budget.

Cindy LaCour made a motion to adjourn at 9:03pm, 2nd by Jeannette Sweeney, all in favor.