

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

MINUTES

Regular Meeting

May 25, 2010

A regular meeting of the Commission on the Aging was held on Tuesday May 25, 2010 at the New Fairfield Senior Center. Maureen Salerno called the meeting to order at 7:33pm. Secretary, Laurie Busse, took the minutes.

Present: Maureen Salerno, Chair, Cindy LaCour, Vice Chair Kathy Hull, Janet Loya, and Katy Johannssen

Absent: Jeannette Sweeney, Roberta Ilardo, and Bob Alberetti

Guests: Alex Messerle of the Senior Center Advisory Committee

Elevation of Alternates:

Katy Johannssen was elevated to full voting status.

MINUTES:

Kathy Hull made a motion to accept the Minutes to the April 27, 2009 meeting as presented, 2nd by, Janet Loya vote 5-0

CORRESPONDENCE/ANNOUNCEMENTS:

OLD BUSINESS

1. Joint Meeting with the Friends of the Senior Center and Senior Center Advisory Committee

Alex Messerle was representing the Senior Center Advisory Committee. Kathy Hull reported the Senior Center is still in the process of doing self assessments, which is a slow process. When everything is in order they will request a peer review. The application fee for the peer review is \$1,000.00. The Friends of the Senior Center may help them cover this cost. If all goes well the Senior Center will have National Certification which needs to be reviewed every 5 years. The Commission on the Aging members discussed the Survey done in 2004 which shows seniors want to age in place. Based on that survey they have put together educational community forums on how this can be achieved. Most recently they put together a Handyman Booklet. The RSVP has

the “Mr. Fix It” program where seniors can sign up to volunteer to help other seniors make small repairs around their homes.

The Area Agency on Aging is sponsoring training programs to help answer Medicare questions. Alex Messerle will be attending these training sessions and will be in the Senior Center at set times to answer any Medicare questions seniors may have.

Discussion focused on the need for Senior Housing and perhaps a housing authority. Maureen Salerno spoke with Tom Dube of the Lutheran Church and inquired about the Church’s quest to purchase land to build senior housing. The Lutheran Church has been unsuccessful in their quest. The last offer that was made on a parcel of land was declined because the offer was too low. One of the drawbacks to the stipulations the Lutheran Church is working under is that they cannot make an offer that exceeds the assessed value of the land. Another drawback is that the current zoning regulations stipulate senior housing can be not more than 1,500 feet from a commercial property, noting they are trying to revise them to get a floating zone.

2. Meeting Dates for June, July, and August

Maureen Salerno stated she would reverse the order of the Agenda. The summer month’s people are busy with graduations and vacations. Discussion followed. The June 22 meeting will be rescheduled to Tuesday June 29 at 7:30pm. July and August will remain the same.

3. Community Forum with Dr. Jack Gesino

Maureen Salerno spoke with Jack Gesino, he is not available on Saturdays. Discussion followed perhaps a Wednesday in August. 2pm works best into the Senior Center schedule, noting the HART Bus leaves at 3pm and the Senior Center closes at 4pm. Discussion followed if this would allow sufficient time.

4. Discussion on the Cost of Aging, Who Pays and How, Sponsored by the Ridgefield VNA

The Cost of Aging, Who Pays and How, is a round table composed of Town specific panelists from elder law attorneys to financial advisors. The purpose of the round table discussion is to target seniors and their adult children to sign up for the program know as Quality Living at Home. The idea of this program is to have a coordinator on call 24/7. You can seek advice or make arrangements to receive help on almost any topic, except 911 calls. The New Fairfield Commission on the Aging will give the Ridgefield VNA names and contact info for panelists. The Ridgefield VNA will then contact the panelists and pay for all advertising costs. Light refreshments are usually served. It is too late to get into the fall round tables, however we can still get into the spring time frame. Discussion followed, the regular meeting in April 2011 will be dedicated to the round table, The Cost of Aging Who Pays and How.

NEW BUSINESS

1. Senior Center Report

The Senior Center report was distributed and discussed as outlined. The attendance continues to be higher than in 2009. June 5 is the Friends annual tag sale and it will be held at the Senior Center this year. The “Mr. Fix It” Program is doing very well.

The “My Senior Center” Report was handed out and discussed. The volunteer rate has increased. The gender gap has made some progress with more men attending senior centers, and the senior center members are getting younger.

Alex Messerle challenged the COA to address the needs of the upcoming “baby boomers.”

PUBLIC COMMENT:

Vinny Mancuso will attend the June 29th meeting to discuss transportation needs. The Planning Commission is not ready with their presentation. Secretary Laurie Busse will advise the Planning Commission to attend a later meeting.

ADJOURN:

Cindy LaCour made a motion to adjourn at 8:45pm 2nd by Katy Johannssen vote 5-0