

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

MINUTES

Meeting

January 24, 2012

A regular meeting of the Commission on the Aging was held on Tuesday January 24, 2012 at the New Fairfield Senior Center. Maureen Salerno called the meeting to order at 7:30pm. Secretary, Laurie Busse, took the minutes.

Present: Maureen Salerno, Chair, Cindy LaCour, Vice Chair, Stephanie Shaughnessy, Kathy Hull, Bob Alberetti and Roberta Ilardo

Absent: Janet Loya, Katy Johannssen, and Jeannette Sweeney

MINUTES:

Cindy LaCour made a motion to accept the Minutes to the December 6, 2011 meetings as amended, 2nd by Bob Alberetti, vote 6-0 unanimous.

CORRESPONDENCE/ANNOUNCEMENTS:

- 2012/2013 Budget Preparation
- Letter to BOS regarding Winter Storm Alfred

OLD BUSINESS

1. Housing:

Stephanie Shaughnessy reported she met with Jeannette Pearlman regarding Sherman's Senior Housing Project. A survey had been done regarding housing and transportation. After going through a process the Commission on Housing was formed and they visited other towns that had senior housing. David Burdos and Leslie Biddee acted as consultants and guided them through the grant process. The Housing Commission formed a 501 C3 and decided to build 24-36 units. They found Town owned land and are interested in leasing it, which must go through a referendum. The Sherman Housing Commission feels very strongly that the senior housing stay private so as not to tax the town. In the November elections a new 1st Selectman was elected and he has no interest in senior housing and has used his vetoing powers attempting to derail the Senior Housing Project. The Housing Commission is focusing on ways to work around the 1st selectman and move forward with senior housing.

The Commission discussed that perhaps our motto should be "The Time Has Come". Discussion focused on the best way to move forward would be to have a dedicated separate committee to look into senior housing. This committee would have to be ready to answer questions relating to fears of stereotypes moving into New Fairfield. It appears

that there would be town support for this project. Maureen Salerno reported she never heard back from the Lutheran Church but she did have a conversation with John Hodge about converting blighted homes and buildings into affordable senior housing; however there aren't very many blighted homes or buildings in Town. The motel on Route 37 near Candlewood Corners was discussed as well as the Dunham Ponds Property. Perhaps Claire Luks would know of available property.

2. Spring Community Forum:

The next community forum will be on senior housing. The date will be Saturday April 14, 2012 from 10:30am to 12:30pm. Possible titles include: "The Time Has Come; Its Now or Never", "20 Years and Counting; The Time Has Come", "Will There Ever be Senior Housing in New Fairfield?", "Affordable Senior Housing—Why Not?" Maureen Salerno requested everyone brainstorm for a title by our next meeting date.

3. Transportation:

Kathy Hull reported she has received minimal complaints regarding the increase in the Sweet Hart Bus fare. Last year the Sweet Hart Bus requested an increased budget from the Town which they did not receive; as a result Sweet Hart reduced their services and patrons who utilize the bus cannot stay at the Senior Center after 1pm on Tuesdays and Fridays.

NEW BUSINESS

1. Senior Center Report:

Kathy Hull handed out the Annual Senior Center Report for 2011, noting the numbers are down due to the excessive amount of weather related closings. Some highlights are:

- A total annual attendance of 16,881
- 4,742 meals served
- 7, 579.75 volunteer hours reported
- 1,310 registered patrons
- 107 programs are offered

Kathy Hull discussed her budget presentation with the BOS and based on the above numbers urged them to give her a full time support staff. She compared the Senior Center to other Town agencies such as the Library and the Town Clerk's Office, noting she is the only one without full time support and a full time program coordinator. The Senior Center cannot continue to flourish without sufficient support personnel.

Maureen Salerno and Cindy LaCour will not be here for the next meeting. The February meeting date has been changed from Tuesday February 28 to Monday February 20.

PUBLIC COMMENT:

Holly Murtha was present.

ADJOURN:

Cindy LaCour made a motion to adjourn the meeting at 8:45pm 2nd by Bob Alberetti , vote 6-0 unanimous.