

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

MINUTES

Meeting

March 27 2012

A meeting of the Commission on the Aging was held on Tuesday March 27 2012 at the New Fairfield Senior Center. Maureen Salerno called the meeting to order at 7:29pm. Secretary, Laurie Busse, took the minutes.

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

Absent: Katy Johannssen

Guests: Rick Schreiner, HART Bus

MINUTES:

Kathy Hull made a motion to accept the Minutes to the February 20, 2012 special meetings as amended, 2nd by Roberta Ilardo, vote 8-0 unanimous.

CORRESPONDENCE/ANNOUNCEMENTS:

OLD BUSINESS

1. Transportation:

Rick Schreiner of the HART Bus discussed the HART bus schedule in New Fairfield. Currently there are 3 busses for New Fairfield. Bus 1 runs Monday through Thursday from 7am to 4:30pm. Bus 2 runs from 9:30am to 10:30am. Bus 3 runs from 3pm to 4:45pm, noting bus 2 and 3 are primarily for the Senior Center. On Fridays there is a bus that runs from 7am to 2:45pm a second bus that runs from 3pm to 4:45pm. Saturdays there is one bus from 9:30am to 4:30pm. Due to increases in union salaries and insurance the HART bus has had to reduce the number of busses it runs in New Fairfield. If there are any further budget reductions or budget freezes they may have to eliminate the Saturday bus. Currently only New Fairfield and Newtown pay for Saturday service. The past two fiscal years were discussed. HART charges \$1.00 each way on advance fares and \$3.00 for a same day emergency ride. They prefer a 2 week advanced notice on medical visits and 1 week notice on other business. Discussion focused on advocating for the transportation that exists. There are grants available for Towns to purchase their own bus, however in order to apply for the grants there must be a budget in place for things like maintenance, salary, dispatch etc.

The Commission discussed currently patrons cannot get from Danbury Hospital to home because the HART bus will not go past CVS on Route 37 and it is difficult to get a cab from this location. This also holds true for Danbury residents that utilize the New Fairfield Senior Center. New Fairfield residents receive a free transfer to the Danbury system, but once they are in Danbury they cannot get back home. The Commission inquired if the HART bus could be regionalized. Discussion followed, Sherman and Bridgewater operate their own bus and HART acts as a consultant to New Milford. If the HART bus was to be regionalized it is possible that because Danbury is so large most of the benefits would go to them and not so much to the smaller towns. The Commuter Shuttle from Company A Fire House and Ball Pond Fire House to Southeast Train Station were discussed. For this service the one way fare is \$1.25 and 60 cents for senior citizens. Uni-passes which cover the bus and train fare are available. On Wednesday April 4 the HART bus will be discussing their services to seniors.

2. Spring Community Forum:

Maureen Salerno has heard from Jeanette Perlman and she would like to bring the Sherman COA, Housing Committee, and her consultant with her. So far only Geron Nursing has showed an interest in sponsoring the forum. Kathy Hull announced The Friends of the Senior Center have offered to sponsor this event as well. Some of the local churches have offered to put ads in their bulletins. There are some color flyers available to local organizations. Jeannette Sweeney will contact the Lions Club and Kathy Hull will contact the Service Club. Cindy LaCour will contact the Post-Grad Party. The post office & library will be asked to put flyers up. Tom Ashton and Clare Luks will also be contacted. A program for the event needs to be made up. Light refreshments such as iced tea, coffee, bagels, and donut holes will be served. Kathy Hull will look into televising the event on channel 17.

Maureen Salerno met with John Hodge regarding the Dunham Ponds property and he suggested she call the bank. Maureen Salerno has also written a letter to Mr. Santomero requesting a donation of land but has not yet heard back from him. If she does not hear back, she will send a letter to his office and possibly follow up with his sons. Discussion focused on the New Fairfield Housing Trust. The Commission felt that it would be best if it was a private non profit committee rather than a political one.

NEW BUSINESS

1. Senior Center Report:

Kathy Hull handed out and discussed the Senior Center Report. Some of the highlights are the Tax Aide program sponsored by AARP as well as the computer courses. The average daily attendance for February 2012 was 84 vs. 61 in 2011, noting in 2011 the Senior Center was closed for 2 snow days and in 2012 they were only closed for ½ a snow day.

Cindy LaCour made a motion to adjourn the meeting at 8:40pm 2nd by Bob Alberetti. Vote 8-0 unanimous.