

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

MINUTES

Special Meeting

December 9, 2014

A special meeting of the Commission on the Aging was held on Tuesday December 9, 2014 at the New Fairfield Senior Center. Maureen Salerno called the meeting to order at 7:37pm. Secretary, Laurie Busse, took the minutes.

Present: Maureen Salerno, Chair, Roberta Ilardo, Kathy Hull, and Katy Johannssen

Absent: Cindy LaCour, Vice Chairman, Janet Loya, Stephanie Shaughnessy, Jeannette Sweeney, and Julia MacMillan

MINUTES:

Katy Johannssen made a motion to accept the Minutes to the October 28, 2014 meeting as presented, 2nd by Roberta Ilardo, vote 4-0.

CORRESPONDENCE/ANNOUNCEMENTS:

OLD BUSINESS

1. On Going Senior Needs Assessment:

o Elderly Tax Relief

Maureen Salerno attended the last Board of Finance (BOF) meeting and asked them to revisit elderly tax relief. After some discussion it was noted that the Town currently has an elderly tax relief program in place based on State recommendations. The BOF asked her to come back to them with income limits. Janet Loya contacted the Assessor's Office and received a copy of the State's qualifying income guidelines. The benefits range from \$150 to \$1,250. The Assistant Assessor noted that for 2011 and 2012 there were 151 people on the program which is a 2 year program. In 2011 out of the 82 applicants 15 of them were disallowed due to over income. If the income limits were raised from \$44,000 to \$51,000 11 out of those 15 that were ineligible would now be eligible. Discussion followed on suggesting the Town raise the income limits to \$47,000 for a single person and \$57,000 for a married couple. It was the consensus of those present that Maureen Salerno should present an income limit of \$51,000 to the BOF. Further discussion focused on how many people in Town know about the elderly tax relief. Maureen Salerno stated that there were some people present at the BOF meeting that would have qualified for the last few years, but did not know about the program. Some members of the COA did not know about the program either. There was discussion if this was a well-kept secret. The Town does try to get the word out. If you go to the Assessor's page on the Town website you will find a link there out lining the Town's

elderly tax relief program and Veteran's tax exemptions program. Kathy Hull noted the Senior Center has a program to help seniors with their income taxes. Years ago, the Assessor's Office had a table set up in the Senior Center that same day. After having help on their income taxes, if their income fell within a certain range, they were told to go over to the Assessor's table and speak to her about their eligibility for the elderly tax relief program. Since that Assessor has left her position with the Town, there is no longer a representative from the Assessor's Office at the Senior Center when they run the program to help patrons complete their tax forms. Social Services is also aware of this program.

o **AARP Article**

Maureen Salerno discussed an article she saw in the December issue of AARP magazine which reads as follows: "AARP Connecticut has a robust legislative agenda lined up for the session that begins on Jan 7. AARP is advocating a payroll retirement savings plan for workers who do not have access to an employer sponsored plan. The state office also is pressing for Caregiver Advise, Record, Enable (CARE) Act, which requires hospitals to show family caregivers how to provide follow up care such as managing medications or dressing wounds before a patient goes home. AARP will continue to fight for affordable utility rates and consumer protections in the deregulated third party electric market. And AARP aims to ensure that Connecticut residents can continue to rely on dependable telephone landlines, which are necessary to monitor medical equipment such as pacemakers. To find out how you can help advocate for these issues, contact Elaine Werner, AARP Program Specialists at 866-295-7279 toll free or ewerner@aarp.org." Discussion followed if they should have an AARP representative come to one of our meetings.

NEW BUSINESS

1. 2015 Meeting Dates:

The 2015 meeting dates were discussed. The date will remain the 4th Tuesday of the month except as noted. Kathy Hull made a motion to accept the 2015 meeting dates as presented, 2nd by Roberta Ilardo, Vote 4-0 unanimous.

2. Senior Center Report:

Tabled.

PUBLIC COMMENT

Maureen Salerno and Cindy LaCour will both be away for the January meeting. Kathy Hull will chair the meeting.

ADJOURN:

Kathy Hull made a motion to adjourn the meeting at 8:25 p.m., 2nd by Roberta Ilardo, Vote 4-0 unanimous.