

COMMISSION ON AGING

June 6, 2022

Minutes

Present: Gayle Kataja, Denise Weeks, Susan Pearlman, Jennifer DiSette

Liaisons Present: Patti White, Senior Services Program Supervisor

Meeting called to order at 5:39 p.m.

MINUTES:

Minutes of the meeting held on May 2, 2022 were accepted as written.

COMMUNICATIONS & ANNOUNCEMENTS:

Patti noted that Liza Zerio and Phillip Markuszka were not able to attend the meeting due to a conflict with the Splashpad opening at Addison Park.

LIAISON REPORTS: Patti reported that the local AARP chapter had met in May and will be meeting on June 7th to determine their future plans.

DEPARTMENT REPORTS: Gayle thanked the staff for their reports and there were no questions raised.

OLD BUSINESS:

Age-Friendly Community Initiative

The group discussed the plan for the June 27th joint meeting of the Commission on Aging and Age-Friendly Core Leadership Team and decided to hold the meeting via Zoom.

The meeting will begin with a general review and update of the Age-Friendly Action Plan with feedback from the AARP review process. Participants will then break into 3 groups to discuss one of each of the three priority Domains, Outdoor Spaces and Buildings, Transportation and Housing.

Each sub group will be tasked with the following:

1. Identify other influencers/stake holders/possible allies
2. Identify next steps and who is going to do what.
3. Begin to look at year 2 goals to assess possible funding/resources needed.
4. Set meeting schedule.

Road Safety Improvements

Gayle informed the members that she attended the May 12th meeting of the Bike Walk Glastonbury group which was a very positive experience. Gayle stated that the group is very supportive of the Age-Friendly Initiative and that Jeff Stein will continue to serve on the AFC Core Leadership Team.

NEW BUSINESS:

Senior Center Reaccreditation

Patti informed the members that it is now time to begin the process to obtain reaccreditation for the senior center which is currently accredited until July of 2023. Patti stated that more details and a timeline for the process would be forthcoming.

The meeting adjourned at 6:38 p.m.

Respectfully Submitted,
Patti White, Acting Secretary

June 2022 Department Report

Social Services Update

- Food Bank and Fuel Bank continue to assist Glastonbury residents in need thanks to generous donations to Glastonbury Gives – there were 146 Food Bank requests during May 2022.

All residents using the Food Bank in May were alerted that Glastonbury Links Together would no longer be able to continue supplementing with additional grocery gift cards. There were very few complaints or concerns voiced about the change

We are in the process of purchasing necessary equipment/technology for the soon to be Self-Select Food Bank which will be paid for with a grant-monies awarded by the Hartford Foundation for Public Giving , in collaboration with Glastonbury Links Together

- The application deadline of 5/31/2022 for the Energy Assistance Program (heating assistance) was extended to June 30, 2022. So far Outreach Social Workers have taken 397 Energy Assistance applications for Glastonbury residents which represents \$283,353.00 in benefits.
- The Homeowners Tax Credit Program ended on 5/14/22 – Outreach Social Workers assisted over 70 residents with their applications and this afforded an opportunity to explore other possible programs or resources. Additional Veteran’s Exemption application period runs through 10/1/2022.
- Social Services began taking applications for the Renter’s Rebate Program beginning in April, 2022. The application period ends on October 1, 2022 (Social Services processed 291 applications for income eligible renters in 2021). Site visits will be done at some of the Elderly/Disabled Housing Sites providing there are no major changes due to Covid-19.

- “Eye Openers,” Low Vision Support Group met **in-person** on 5/27/2022– 7 members were in attendance. There were two speakers this month from the Bureau of Education and Services for the Blind to speak generally about their services and specifically for services/programs for dually diagnosed individuals (legally blind and deaf).
- Planning has begun for the Back to School Program for low-income families. Letters and applications will be going out to residents in the next two weeks so they can register to participate in the program. Last year several town departments collaborated to make the distribution of backpacks and gift cards for school supplies into an event. The hope is to include additional departments and community organizations this year.
- Social Workers continue offering information, referral and assistance regarding many topics including Medicare, CT Dept. of Social Services benefits, housing and homecare.
- Social/Senior Services continues to distribute Test Kits/Face Masks to residents as requested.

Senior Services Update:

- The Riverfront Café opened on May 31 serving hot and cold beverages, snacks, fresh fruit, ice cream and yogurt. Currently the café is being staffed by community volunteers. Plans are underway to offer a wider range of options including sandwiches, wraps and salads.
- Creative Crafters, Ceramics and Jeopardy have resumed regular programming.
- Evening and Saturday programming is resuming on a scaled down basis. Starting June 7th evening programming will include Setback, Mahjongg lessons, and evening concerts. Concerts scheduled for the summer include The First Company Governor’s Foot Guard Band on June 9th and a Classical Pianist on July 21. Dial-A-Ride will be provided.
- Two summer indoor picnics are scheduled for the summer. One on July 7th and the other will be the Annual Parks and Recreation Senior Citizen’s event on August 11, which is always a big draw.
- Several trips are planned for shoreline boat and restaurant outings as well as a chartered trip to Block Island on August 10th. Museum trips include the New Britain Museum of Art, Beyond Van Gogh Exhibit at the Hartford Convention Center and the Katherine Hepburn Museum. And two Yard Goat games are scheduled for Sunday afternoons in July and August.
- Since October, the Chores program has served 51 unduplicated households for a total of 318 hours of service.
- The Senior Golf league is off to a great start with 34 members participating in 119 golf outings in May.
- The Friendship Circle met 9 times in May with an average of 6 participants.
- The summer quarter of exercise classes will open for registration on Monday June 6th. Classes include: Powerful Aging, Fitness is Fun, Intro and Intermediate Tai Chi and Stretcherize. These classes serve approximately 140 seniors each week.