

GLASTONBURY COMMISSON ON AGING

REGULAR MEETING

Minutes

MONDAY, FEBRUARY 5, 2024

5:30 P.M.

In-Person-RCC

Gayle Kataja, Chair
Jennifer DiSette, Vice Chair
Chris Haaf
Beth Hillson
Phil Markuszka
Susan Pearlman
Denise Weeks

1. **ROLL CALL:** Gayle Kataja and Phil Markuszka absent. Lisa Zerio, Director Parks & Recreation, Ronda Guberman, Senior Center Supervisor in attendance.
2. **MINUTES** of the January 9, 2024 meeting were reviewed. Susan Pearlman made a motion to accept and Beth Hillson seconded. Unanimously approved.
3. **DEPARTMENTAL REPORTS:** were submitted in the packets for January 2024.
4. **SENIOR CENTER SUPERVISOR REPORT:**
 - a. Staff Updates: Ronda Guberman reported on staff changes: Faith Killough, Volunteer Coordinator Program Specialist will not be returning from her maternity leave. Interviews continue for the Evening/Weekend Program Specialist. Diana Patterson, Front Desk Customer Service will be out on maternity leave beginning February 16th. Cassidy Nimmons, Park Ranger, has been working at the RCC and training to become familiar with Diana’s duties so she can assist in covering the office.
 - b. LGBTQ+ Staff and COA Training: The CT Healthy Living Collective has on-line training available for Senior Centers. There are three 50-minute webinars. It was decided that, for the next three months, the COA would meet at 5:00 p.m. to watch the webinar and following the training, continue with the COA monthly meeting. A light dinner will be provided. Ronda also reported that a UCONN PhD student reached out to her, as she heard that we are an LGBTQ+ Moveable Senior Center. The student is doing research on health inequalities in this population. She will help us advertise our “Creative Happy Hour” scheduled for February 22nd.
 - c. Accreditation Peer Review: Ronda announced that the NISC Peer Review will be held on Tuesday, February 13, 2024 from 10:00 a.m. – 4:30 p.m. The review will be done virtually. Lisa Zerio, Christine Avery and Geordie Emmanuel worked tirelessly last spring and early summer to get the accreditation paperwork complete. It was an enormous project. The review will include a tour of our building, program observation, visits with members, meetings with COA commissioners, volunteers

and staff. Gayle Kataja, Denise Weeks, Susan Pearlman will attend to represent the COA from 12:30 – 1:30 p.m.

5. Old Business

○ **Age Friendly Community Initiative Sub-Committee Reports**

Lisa Zerio reported that she, Gayle and Ronda met virtually with Bill Armbruster from AARP and we were granted an extension on the Age Friendly initiative until June 1, 2025. Bill shared that there is an on-line Portal that we can access to ask questions, “brag” about progress, etc. The link will be shared with Age Friendly Committee members

Housing Subcommittee: A draft of an Affordable Housing Brochure has been done. Waiting for approval from Neil Griffin, Housing Authority Director.

Transportation Subcommittee: Beth Hillson reported that the committee would like to engage the help of residents to identify and monitor problems with potholes, sidewalks, crosswalk lights, etc. and report to the Town. The idea would be to publicize the Town Q-Alert program and remind residents to use that system when there are concerns. Beth will draft a press release and Lisa will send to Kathryn Paquette and Dan Pennington for their input and approval. The group also wants to produce a brochure about pedestrian and bicycle safety. The Transportation Subcommittee will provide content and a Senior Services staff member will create the brochure. The brochure will be distributed at the Passport To Health Fair.

Outdoor Spaces and Building: Jennifer DiSette will chair this committee. Lisa reported that she is working with the Town Manager and Dan Pennington to apply for a DEEP Trail Grant. Lisa provided an overview of grant ideas and will report back next month.

- **Passport to Health Fair**: March 8th, 2:00 – 6:00. The COA will welcome people to the Fair and give out LED Lanyards imprinted with the slogan: “Visibility is Livability”. We will also give out any remaining light up buttons from last year and the File of Life packets. Schedule:

2:00 – 3:00	Beth & Gayle
3:00 – 4:00	Susan & Gayle
4:00 – 5:00	Phil & Denise
5:00 – 6:00	Jen & Chris

New Business

- **Pavilion/Pickleball Lighting Update**: Lisa reported that she and Dan Pennington met with the Architectural Site & Design Committee and Planning & Zoning regarding the proposed pavilion planned for 300 Welles Street. Although they recommended that the roof of the pavilion match the Riverfront Community Center roof, there was a suggestion from Planning & Zoning that the proposed pavilion match the existing pavilions in the area at Riverfront. The pavilions will be for casual use only. They cannot be “reserved” and are not for large parties. The initiatives are to bid out the pavilion, pickleball lights and the renovation of the parking lot as one

project. Lisa and Dan are going back to ASDRC & TPZ to present other options for approval.

- **Support for CT Energy Assistance Program Discussion:** Susan Pearlman received a call from the East Hampton COA Chairperson (who is a friend of hers) for support in sending a letter to the CT Legislature to increase funding for the State Energy Assistance Program. A newspaper article about the Energy Assistance Program was distributed. Ronda reported that, according to our Social Workers, three non-senior families exhausted their energy assistance benefits and two senior households received funds through either Operation Fuel or our Fuel Bank as one family did not qualify for the state program and one needed assistance prior to the beginning of the program. Households using deliverable fuel (such as oil and propane gas) are at greater risk for having no heat. State law forbids that the electric and gas companies cannot shut off service for customers prior to May 1st for failure to pay. Glastonbury currently has resources to assist families in need thru the Glastonbury Gives program. Susan felt that it was not necessary, at this time, for the COA to submit a letter to the legislature.

6. Adjournment: Motion made by Denise Weeks and seconded by Susan Pearlman to adjourn at 7:09 p.m.

7. Next Scheduled Meeting: Monday, March 4, 2024, 5:00 p.m. (The LGBTQ+ training will begin at 5:00 immediately followed by the COA meeting at 5:50 p.m.)