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1.1. October 2018 COA Minutes

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**COMMISSION ON AGING  
MINUTES  
OCTOBER 17, 2018**

Attending: Commissioners: Patricia Burns, Presiding; Francis (Kip) Burgweger; Carol Burns; Ann Marie Hynes; Steven Katz; Ellen Wolfson.  
Staff: Lori Contadino, Laurette Helmrich

Unable to Attend: James Dougherty;

Call to Order: Patricia Burns called the meeting to order at 8:35 a.m. A quorum was present.

Approval of September 2018 Minutes: The minutes of the September 26, 2018 meeting were approved as submitted.

Reports:

Department of Human Services: Carol Burns reported that at our last meeting she advised us that she had conflicts which interfered with her attendance at meetings of the DHS, and she could no longer cover the DHS meetings.

Friends of the Greenwich Senior Center: There was no report on the Friends.

Senior Center Administrator: Laurette Helmrich reported on this item. She stated that the Senior Center is finishing the first phase of the Total Brain Health program. The second phase will be held next spring. Additionally, 299 on the Ave is undertaking the Connecticut Aging Mastery Program which is a comprehensive program that is just beginning now. This program will have eight-week sessions. The Senior Center is presently training for this program.

Sponsors will teach some of the sessions in accordance with the program's curriculum. Participants will be registered. The cost is \$60.00 per person which is being paid for by a grant. This program has been available for a few years, and in order to present it we need to comply with its requirements. The Connecticut Healthy Living Collaborative runs the program. We comply with the curriculum and perform the required action steps.

The Senior Center is now working on the website and preparing a pilot of the new newsletter. The Senior Center is starting slowly. The first piece will be on Medicare D. The Town wants the Senior Center to undertake the pilot.

The new website is tough to navigate, and under the way it currently functions, all telephone calls come directly to Patricia. This will need to be corrected.

Additionally, 299 on the Ave is getting ready for the holidays.

Commission on Aging Director: Lori Contadino reported on this item. The Greenwich Health & Wellness Expo had a lot of energy and good responses. Lori thanked members of the Commission who helped at the Expo. Small changes that were made from last year, especially regarding the set-up, made for a more successful Expo than last year. The Zumba dancing

resulted in four new Senior Center members. The food was the best that had been for a Health & Wellness Expo in the last 20 years. The coffee was removed too soon. Use of trays and carts was beneficial. The settings looked beautiful. The Senior Center was closed during the Expo. The sponsors were pleased with the entire program. A \$2,500 sponsor who missed this Expo wants to come aboard in the future.

Two programs are coming up. One is a lecture by Aubrey De Grey entitled *Living Long And Prospering – The Breakout Science of Aging and Its Reversal* which will be held Monday, October 29 at 6:30 P.M. in the Cole Auditorium at the Greenwich Library. The other is a film entitled *Lives Well Lived* and a Skype Q & A with the director on Thursday, November 8 at 7:00 P.M. in the Cole Auditorium at the Greenwich Library.

The program on Medicare D Open Enrollment wedge launched October 15. Savings as of this past Monday total \$40,743. The program has some one-half day sessions and some full-day sessions.

Lori and Patricia met with Mary Lee Kiernan and staff of the Greenwich YWCA to explore possible collaborations. The YW was excited by five or six of our initiatives. Approximately 250 members of the YW are seniors. Lori and Patricia discussed an older adults conference that interested the YW. The YW has its own network that could provide new names for the Commission. It might also provide a venue for an Aging Mastery program in the spring. The YW is interested in activities that seniors want, such as swimming at the YW.

Steven Katz arrived at this point.

The YW has been relatively insular but is now reaching out to broaden its community connections. The YW has a program on elderly abuse. We can also hold distinguished lectures at the YW although some of our other lectures are held at the Town Library.

Lori and Steve reported on Age Friendly Greenwich. We have drafted invitation letters for the community walk-about. These are being sent to potential volunteers who would lead the walks. If several persons volunteered for one area, one of the volunteers would be appointed the captain. Raw data will go to the Columbia team. This is a continuation of our action plan.

The POCD consultants did a community walk-about. It may serve for an Age Friendly report. Lori passed out a copy of the Age Friendly walk-about questionnaire.

It is now budget season, and the budget is due November 19. We are requesting two additional days to allow the Commission to meet and vote at its November 21 meeting. Otherwise, we would have to have a special meeting at which the Commissioners could review and approve the budget. We are requesting an additional staff member. We do have salary savings based on replacement personnel. The Commission needs the additional staff member because we have more items in play now. The October-November period is crunch time. The new staff member would work part-time, with an hourly wage up to 15 hours per week. There would be no benefits or union membership. This hiring is to respond to our own peak period. The RTM Health & Human Services Committee has responsibility for reviewing the Commission's budget, and we are working with four members of that committee on the Commission's budget.

On a motion to authorize members of the Commission to vote on whether to approve the Operating Plan by email, the vote in favor of the motion was 7-0-0.

Kip Burgweger reported on Senior Property Tax Relief. He had distributed a proposed form of the revised ordinance for consideration. The current ordinance contains a five-year sunset clause, and the decision was made to provide in the new ordinance that the sunset clause would expire after 10 years rather than not have any sunset clause at all. Kip will talk to the Tax Collector regarding methods of notifying residents of the availability of Senior Property Tax Relief.

Lori reported on Transportation. The Greenwich Taxi process has been reviewed, and we can now move forward with that program. We will be able to accept credit cards soon. This program is being put together by Melinda Frame, the Town's internal auditor, and by Megan Damato, the Town's risk manager. The Town is trying to streamline the verification of identity for Share the Fare. The Town's most rigorous progress is used for beach cards. We are working on getting access to that process for other activities.

There was no meeting at Witherell.

Lori reported that an older adult woman collapsed and was taken from the Senior Center to the hospital by GEMS. She passed away, and another woman who was here when the incident happened contended that the Senior Center did not do all it could have done to help the lady. The complaining person argued that the Senior Center should have had the victim's complete health history. Megan Damato, on the other hand, felt that the Senior Center did everything in its area of responsibility. The complainant then sent inflammatory emails. Lori invited her to discuss the matter, but she rejected the invitation and claimed she had alerted the authorities and the First Selectman. Patricia and Lori met again with risk management regarding this incident. Megan invited the woman to meet. She was scheduled to meet last Friday, but we have not heard whether there was a meeting and, if so, how did it go. We have a defibrillator on the premises. We have incident report forms that are sent to our risk manager. There is no police report on the incident although both the police and the fire department were here.

Adjournment: The meeting was adjourned at 9:52 A.M.

Respectfully submitted,

*Kip Burgweger*

Kip Burgweger  
Acting Secretary