

COMMISSION ON AGING  
MINUTES  
JANUARY 16, 2019

Attending: Patricia Burns, Presiding; Carol Burns; James Dougherty; Anne Marie Hynes; Steve Katz; Ellen Wolfson. Excused due to Jury Duty: Francis Burgweger  
Staff: Lori Contadino; Laurette Helmrich.

Call To  
Order: The meeting was called to order at 8:30 a.m.

Minutes: Minutes of the November 21, 2018 meeting were distributed. A Motion was made to approve the Minutes. Seconded and Carried.

Guest  
Speaker: The scheduled guest speaker, Melinda Frame, the Internal Auditor for the Town of Greenwich could not attend but provided a very detailed report for distribution on the Commission On Aging and Senior Center Financial Automation Project. The project will involve some costs to purchase hardware to implement various pay cards but will make our financial processes much more convenient and efficient.

Nathaniel  
Witherell: E. Wolfson reported that the Witherell board has not met since our last meeting but that a report fro an outside consultant recommended the sale or lease of the facility. It was noted that deed restrictions would prevent this.

Dept. Of  
Human  
Services: E. Wolfson attended her first meeting as COA representative last night. Senior Tax Relief was mentioned in terms of possibly adding people with disabilities to the program. Their report on TAG was very supportive of TAG and the feeling was that the Town should support TAG. They did ask what the COA is doing in terms of suicide prevention.

Friends of  
the Senior  
Center: P. Burns reported that a funding appeal has been made for a major sum. It would involve naming rights

Senior Center  
Director's  
Report: L. Helmrich showed the calendar with a color front and back cover. The new lower level bathrooms will be opened before the end of January. The next phase will be the conversion of the old craft room to a new Technology lounge and will include all new computers, printers and projectors. The YWCA has offered its water aerobics program to our members without the need to purchase a YWCA membership. They only pay the \$5 per class fee. We will have a collaboration with the Bruce Museum this summer where our members will have a special tour of an art exhibit and then have a series of art classes. Our collaboration with the Liberation Program is worthwhile. Two individuals were referred to our on site Liberation worker. The annual Older Americans Month event will be "Joey and Maria's Comedy Italian Wedding" and will be held on May 17. Planning is under way

Commission  
Director's

Report: L. Contadino reported that we met with the Town Administrator to review our proposed budget. Cuts were made that will result in our combined budgets coming in at an increase of under 2%.  
We have appeared before the Board of Selectmen three times with a fourth appearance scheduled to discuss the Senior Tax Relief proposal. Our three goals were to eliminate or extend the sunset provision, provide a notice of the program with all tax bills and to create additional income/credit levels. The latest request from the Board was that we quantify how many additional seniors would benefit by raising the income limit to \$76,000. Such information does not appear to be readily available. Expanding the levels as now proposed would increase the cost of the program by about \$40,000 which would still be well within the amount historically allocated for the program. A Selectman also raised the possibility of expanding the program to include people with disabilities. This raises serious timing issues as the current regulation authorizing the program applies only to Seniors and would have to be amended to include those with disabilities. Determining the additional cost of expanding the program to those with disabilities would be impossible to determine. It is not believed that this could all be accomplished prior to the current program expiring and could create a gap in or elimination of the credit.  
The work of Kip Burgweger related to the Senior Tax Credit was recognized by the Commission.

Age Friendly  
Greenwich: S. Katz and L. Contadino reported. The next step is to present an action plan. The goal is to have the plan in place in April for presentation to the Board of Selectman in May. We have reached out to Columbia to see if they will provide another team. We are looking at a portal used by Orange County that allows citizens to easily identify age friendly elements of their community. Lori and Steve presented the Age Friendly initiative to the Retired Men's Association. The organization was very receptive and supportive.

Next  
Meeting: The next Commission meeting will be held at 8:30 a.m. on Wednesday, February 20, 2019.

Adjournment: The meeting was adjourned by unanimous motion at 9:55 a.m.

Respectfully submitted,

James B. Dougherty  
Secretary