

**COMMISSION ON AGING  
MINUTES  
MAY 20, 2020**

Attending: Patricia. Burns, Presiding; C. Burns; Kip Burgweger; James Dougherty; Ann Marie Hynes; Steven Katz; Ellen Wolfson  
Staff: Lori Contadino; Laurette Helmrich.  
Guests: Christine Edwards.  
Town Zoom Meeting Coordinator: Craig Jones

Call To

Order: The meeting was called to order at 8:35 a.m. The meeting was held by Zoom.

Minutes: Minutes of the April meeting were distributed prior to the meeting. A Motion was made to accept the Minutes as presented. The Motion was seconded and carried.

Commission

Directors

Report: L. Contadino presented the following Report:

**BUDGET PRESENTATION TO RTM COMMITTEE: HEALTH & HUMAN SERVICES**

5/5 Reviewed originally proposed FY20-21 Budget and discussed how the \$26,000 mandated budget reduction, irrespective of contractual obligations, would impact programs and services. Highlighted CoA and Senior Center response to COVID-19 and the concentrated focus on outreach, communication, resources, referrals, food insecurity, community collaborations and remote programming. Budget passed: 12-0-0

**HELLO NEIGHBOR PROGRAM**

Created Hello Neighbor program

Requested Voter Registration record and received approval from Town Attorney to proceed

Designated agefriendlygreenwich@gmail.com as the email account to receive all phone logs and inquiries

Phase I Pilot: Recruited 70 RTM volunteers

Created Call Logs (10 residents each within their District)

Conducted volunteer orientation via Zoom 4/30

Released First Selectman Reverse-911 call to 700 residents 80+ on 5/1

Volunteers began calling residents 5/2

Phase II: Recruited 40 additional volunteers from the Commission on Aging's Board and Professional Network

Identified new RTM volunteers and existing members that were interested in calling additional residents

Held volunteer orientation via Zoom 5/14

Released First Selectman Reverse-911 call to 2,500 residents 75+ on 5/15

Volunteers began calling residents 5/16

Review of 60 Call Logs

(600 phone calls):                    3 referrals to Human Services  
   8 household requests for masks  
   2 referrals to SWCAA grocery program  
   10 referrals to Bridging the Generations

"The most gratifying, impactful experience they have ever had"

"What a wonderful program"

"Residents were sincerely happy to receive the call - nice to know that someone was thinking about them"

A.M. Hynes reported that many of the phone numbers she was given were no longer valid. She suggested that we try to validate current numbers and get new numbers before there is a need to do the program in the future.

E. Wolfson stated that she thought the First Selectman robo-call announcing the program was very helpful. She noted that from her calls she learned that many older residents either needed a computer or needed improved computer skills to stay connected during quarantine.

### **SWCAA GROCERY BAG PROGRAM**

Team Leader:                    Greenwich Commission on Aging

Community Partners: Greenwich Department of Human Services, At Home in Greenwich, Community Centers, Inc. (CCI), Jewish Family Services of Greenwich, Neighbor-to-Neighbor, Meals on Wheels

First Delivery: 5/1                    160 clients (program launch)

Second Delivery: 5/8 195 clients

Third Delivery: 5/15                    210 clients

Fourth Delivery: 5/22 215 clients and refinement of list to include delivery on alternating weeks to support a larger number of individuals.

### **SWCAA AFFINITY GROUPS**

Affinity Groups meet every Wednesday at 3:00 p.m. via Zoom as follows:

Week One (of each month) - High Technology User Group - a group designed to address program possibilities and challenges for senior members with proficiency in using web-based (You-Tube, Facebook, Twitter) or video conferencing (Zoom or WebEx) type modalities. Possibly identify common program goals, splitting curriculum development responsibilities, shared invitations for member participation, technology needs and ability for SWCAA to assist with the purchase.

Week Two (of each month) - Full Group Participation for basic needs and ReOpen CT update. Share best ideas from each Committee and discuss CT's plans to reopen and the types of support, funding, training, etc. needed to make this happen.

Week Three (of each month) - Low Technology User Group - similar to High Tech group goals, identifying common programs and needs for seniors with limited or no access to technology. Brainstorming ideas for distribution of materials. Identifying best telephone

system platforms to communicate with senior members. Identifying how SWCAA can help provide funds in support of your efforts.

Week Four (of each month) - Caregiver and in-home program supports. This is a forum for providers and program people to discuss the reshaping of in home or community services to support seniors. It also looks at ideas to support caregivers with specialized programming to meet the needs of caregivers via video conference or community chat rooms, etc. Work on a curriculum hosted by various members that might include resource experts, counseling and stress reducing techniques for participants.

### **VIRTUAL HEALTH INSURANCE COUNSELING**

The team of certified Health Insurance Counselors are meeting monthly to discuss virtual options for Health Insurance Counseling. A fillable form has been created by Heidi Nolte, one of our certified counselors, to trial. A campaign to assist older adults in creating personal accounts on [www.mymedicare.gov](http://www.mymedicare.gov)

### **DISTINGUISHED LECTURE**

**DR. DALE ATKINS**

**WEDNESDAY, JUNE 10TH**

**7:00 VIA WEBINAR THROUGH the Town of Greenwich**

**Resilience and Continued Coping as a possible topic to address.**

Senior

Center: L. Helmrich reported that the CONNECT program with Greenwich Country Day School is working very well. They have also partnered with Edgehill and we are now sharing zoom programs. GCD has the ability to collect credit card payments for paid programs. They will do so and then write a check to the Friends account. GREATS held a zoom meeting. Members expressed the hope that the Senior Center would continue presenting zoom programs even after the Senior Center reopens. There are no current plans to reopen. A meeting was held last week with the First Selectman. Town Hall will do a limited reopening on June 1<sup>st</sup>. After that the Town will plan on how to reopen other Town facilities. We guess that a September reopening is the earliest possible. The upstairs tenants are pushing to reopen. It was suggested that the closure would present a good opportunity for the Town to at least start the next phase of renovation while the building is empty.

Dept. Of

Human

Services: E. Wolfson - No Report

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Nathaniel

Witherell: E. Wolfson - The new Executive Director seems to be well qualified. They are in the process of hiring for three major positions including Director of Nursing.

Age Friendly

Greenwich: S. Katz stated that the programs with the committee work has been on hold during the pandemic. It is hoped that committee work can resume this summer.

Senior

Tax Relief: Lori reported that the Town filing deadline was May 15. The State extended its filing deadline to August 15.

New

Business: E. Wolfson reported that she is working with a representative from UJA on presenting a program for seniors on how to deal with a situation where they are physically confronted. She will set up a zoom meeting for further discussion with UJA.

Executive

Session: The Commission went into Executive Session at 9:40 and returned to an open meeting at 10:00

Strategic

Planning: It is time to reactivate the Strategic Planning Committee for the next phase of strategic planning.

Next Meeting: The next meeting of the Commission will be at 8:30 on June 17, 2020

Adjournment: The meeting was adjourned by unanimous motion at 10:05 a.m.

Respectfully submitted,

James B. Dougherty  
Secretary