COMMISSION ON AGING
MINUTES
JUNE 17, 2015

Attending: Patricia. Burns, Presiding; W. Blumenthal; Catherine Brennan; Francis Burgweger; James Dougherty;
Staff: Lori Contadino; Laurette Helmrich.
Guests: N. Edwards, RTM; Loretta Lucci, River House.

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

Minutes: Minutes were distributed for the May 20, 2015 meeting.
The following typos were noted:
  • Minutes: 3rd line insert “m” before “ore” and add a “t” in “represen_ation”.

Add the following for clarification:
  • Chairman’s Report: 3rd sentence - at the end add ($127,271.00 - $77,580.20 = $49,690.80 or 39%).
  • Chairman’s Report: 6th Bullet: at the end of the 2nd sentence add (less than 3% or 20 out of 1,000 members).
  • Chairman’s Report: at the end of the list of Bullets add the following new Bullets:
    • It was suggested that the escalation rate for the one year renewal should be the same as the proposed BET guidelines for increases, which is 2%, and not 2.5%.
    • It was also suggested that the number of contract hours be further reduced to 750 (or ½ of the previous two contracts) not 1,000 because the maximum number of passengers under the proposed contract is 20 whereas the previous contract provided for a maximum of 50 passengers, with a corresponding reduction in the contract cost of another $13,944.70. 1,000 hours was proposed to provide a sufficient cushion to prevent overtime service charges. Members were concerned that 750 hours would not provide a sufficient cushion and that overtime service charges would be more than the savings of $13,944.70).
    • The River House contract with TAG was requested by the Board for review for purposes of comparison but Carol Burns stated that a written request to the River House Board had to be made prior to its release. The Town grants funds to River House towards its contract with TAG. TAG has reported receipts from River House of $30,000.00 less than the Senior Center on its Form 990 for FYE 6/30/13.
    • It was noted that the TAG invoices do not keep track of the
number of passengers transported and were paid quarterly rather than monthly as required by the contract so that TAG was receiving 2 months of payments in advance.

With the above changes a motion to accept the minutes was made, seconded and carried with one abstention by W. Blumenthal who was not at the May meeting.

Chairman’s Report: Presented by P. Burns: A report was given on the TAG contract. Discussions were held with the First Selectman and others regarding the new contract. All were pleased that a new, more favorable contract has been negotiated. It was indicated that the savings on the TAG contract over the amount approved in the new fiscal year budget could be used to offset the anticipated shortfall in the Share the Fare program as both are within “transportation”. It was also clarified that the BET budget increase limits are only guidelines and that larger percentage increases can be proposed if justified.

A discussion was had on renovations and it was noted that it will be important to include GREATS and Senior Center members in the process so that they feel a sense of ownership.

Senior Tax Relief: The program seems to be underutilized with the number of participants decreasing with people on the program having died or moved. It was noted that we need to better alert seniors as to the program. The committee will reach out to the Board of Realtors to see if there is a reason for so many seniors selling and moving. It was noted that while the hospital social workers would be good contacts to spread the word about the program to seniors being discharged from the hospital, the social workers at Greenwich Hospital are not responsive but those at Stamford Hospital are.

Director’s Report: L. Contadino reported that she has made two deliveries of the senior directory to St. Catherine’s Church but that direct interaction with the head of the church’s nursing ministry has been difficult. Increased outreach to clergy and faith communities is a goal. Overall community awareness is a goal as we proceed with renovations to the center. Lori met with the new Town Administrator who was very aware of the past studies done on the center and who seemed very supportive. Lori has begun writing parameters for the Share the Fare program to establish the guidelines of who can participate and to what level. We also need to establish a maximum monthly amount of vouchers that can be sold. We do make seniors aware of all of the transportation options that are available to them.

Transportation Committee: The committee needs to start meeting to get an early start on the next transportation contract with either TAG or another provider. The need to get
detailed bills from TAG showing individual ridership was noted. There was an overage paid to TAG under the old contract due to wait time billing. This is being reviewed by the Town legal department to determine the amount that needs to be credited back.

Social Services:
P. Burns reported that the Homemakers services presented a report at the last Social Services meeting. Out of 109 people in the program only 34 have qualified for SWCAA. It was requested that we ask why this number is so low as most, if not all, should be qualified.

Administrator's Report:
L. Helmrich reported that the office door and new window hardware are scheduled to be installed. We are in week 9 of 11 of the initial Super Noggin program. It has been going very well. The Fall program is being planned and will include an evening course at the library. The annual lobster bake will be held in July. We care coming up to the option year in the food services contract. We are part of the Nathaniel Witherell food services contract. As the old contract from 2012 did not have an escalation clause we anticipate a significant increase. We are looking to get the two kitchen workers who are our employees under the new contract as Morrison employees.

Multipurpose Senior Center:
A meeting is being held at noon with a company that specializes in senior center design. They will spend two days reviewing the entire facility and will make recommendations on use of space, materials, etc. The goal is to make the most efficient use of the current space as is possible. The Friends of the Senior Center is paying the $3,000.00 fee.

MOTION: That the final, revised TAG contract be distributed by email to all commission members who will review the contract and vote for or against or abstain by email reply. Seconded. Carried.

NEXT MEETING: The next meeting of the Commission will be held on July 15, 2015.

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

Respectfully submitted,

James B. Dougherty
Secretary