

**COMMISSION ON AGING
MINUTES
July 21, 2021**

Attending: Steven Katz, Presiding; Kip Burgweger; Carol Burns; James Dougherty; Ann Marie Hynes; Amy Jurkowitz; Ellen Wolfson
Staff: Lori Contadino.
Guests: Wheel It Forward - Elliot Sloyer; Department Human Services - Demetria Nelson; Christine Edwards; Janet Stone McGuigan

Call To Order: After technical difficulties the meeting was called to order at 8:44 a.m. The meeting was held by Zoom.

Minutes: Minutes of the June, 2021 meeting were distributed. The Chair asked if there were any corrections. It was noted that under the Directors Report Perrot Library was incorrectly spelled as Perot. With that correction, the Chair noted the Minutes as accepted

Chair's Report: S. Katz noted the overall increase in COVID numbers and that it could affect our re-opening plans.

Dept. Of Human Services: E. Wolfson reported that the Department held its meeting last night and that they discussed their campership programs and the interdisciplinary committee with the police department to deal with people with mental health issues to help prevent escalation of incidents and the legislation ending the moratorium on evictions. Demetria Nelson gave an update on the suicide prevention task force.

Nathaniel Witherell: E. Wolfson reported that 76% of staff and 91% of residents are now vaccinated and that visiting restrictions have been eased. Tight budget controls have been implemented.

SWCCA: A.M. Hynes reported that the annual meeting will be tomorrow.

Medicare Counseling: A.M. Hynes reported that they will be meeting to determine if Fall counseling will be remote, in person or a hybrid.

Friends of The Senior Center: A. M. Hynes reported the Tufts Foundation has awarded a 1 year grant that could be added to fund a 3 year project.

Senior Center: L. Helmrich is on vacation

Commission
Directors
Report:

L. Contadino reported that as Laurette Helmrich is on vacation, she would present a combined Senior Center Administrator and Commission on Aging Director's Report.

Drive-Thru Meals:

Friday Drive-Thru lunches suspended until further notice. The walk-in refrigerator went out of service and repair may be cost prohibitive for supporting only 4 meals a month. The current kitchen will remain closed and will not re-open. Tuesday "Taste of the Town" lunches highlighting various local restaurants and food service establishments has been very successful. Fairfield Pizza and Panda Pavilion prepared 120-140 individually wrapped meals ready for pick-up. Staff is working with other Town food service establishments to diversify and expand our Tuesday Drive-Thru offerings. Senior Center members are thrilled with the food and pleased that we are contributing to the local economy.

Senior Center Opening Status:

Daily programs have begun in the Center with more to be added in August. Overall response from members is very positive. A trio of indoor, outdoor and zoom programs continue. Members continue to drop-off liability waivers and to show proof of vaccination. A meeting of the Re-Opening Committee will be scheduled in the following weeks. COVID-19 cases are on the rise and variants continue to be concerning.

Demolition:

Demolition and asbestos abatement of the group floor two first floor lounges is underway and on schedule.

Fire Alarm System:

A new fire alarm system has been installed and multiple planned and unplanned fire alarms have been triggered by demolition and process of upgrading the system.

Summer Intern:

We are very fortunate to have an amazing summer intern - Nicole Orlofsky - who has been assisting us with updating the MySeniorCenter database and other project oriented initiatives. She is hard working and a pleasure to have with us. Additionally, Nicole is working on a special mailing to Medicare Beneficiaries in preparation of the annual Medicare D Open Enrollment season.

Health Insurance Counseling:

Two new certified counselors have joined the Greenwich Team. A meeting of our counseling team will be held in the next couple of weeks to review scheduling, process, waivers and online documents. A determination will be made in September whether the team will offer in-person consults, telephone consults or both.

TechCONNECTT:

The Board received a draft copy of the TechCONNECTT policy and participant application for review. The income criteria for eligibility is the same criteria used

by the Greenwich Department of Human Services with one major exception - TechCONNECTT does not have an asset test. In reviewing "other" programs that have financial eligibility criteria such as Senior Tax Relief, Greenwich Communities Housing Application and CT Medicare Savings program, we decided that it was best to set the criteria as indicated. If utilization is lower than anticipated, we could revisit and revise operating protocols.
MOTION: To accept using 300% of federal poverty level as the eligibility level for the TechCONNECTT program. Seconded. Carried.

Guest: Elliot Sloyer the Founding Board Member of Wheel It Forward gave a presentation on the history behind Wheel It Forward and on all of the amazing work they do to provide durable medical equipment (DME) to local residents. They are about to launch a national database of lending organizations. Last month they loaned over 200 items. They are now located in a larger warehouse space and are looking for more volunteers.

Next Meeting: The next meeting of the Commission will be at 8:30 on September 15, 2021

Adjournment: The meeting was adjourned by the Chair at 9:43 a.m. and the Commission went into Executive Session.

Respectfully submitted,

James B. Dougherty
Secretary