

SENIOR CITIZEN COMMISSION
March 22, 2013

The Senior Citizen Commission, of the Town of Trumbull, held a scheduled meeting on March 22, 2013 in the First Selectman's Conference Room in the Trumbull Town Hall.

Members Present: Rachel Yahwak, Chairperson
Roberta Bellows, Amy DeZenzo, Joan Mehlhorn, Gary Raytar, Helen Weinstein, Dee Chiota, and alternates Linda Harris and Dorothy Merritt

Also Present: Jean Fereira, Senior Center Director

The following is a brief summary of the meeting.

A quorum being present, the Chairperson called the meeting to order at 10:00 a.m.

Public Comment

Linda Ciocci, a member of the Trumbull Senior Center, requested that molding be provided to the Trumbull Senior Center, as well as rods and hooks for the purpose of decorating a blank wall inside the Center. Trumbull Senior Center Director Jean Fereira noted that this is not in the budget that was prepared in December of 2012. Commissioner Gary Raytar asked for this issue to be brought up for discussion under New Business.

Ms. Ciocci also requested that the monthly Senior Citizen Commission Meetings be returned to their previous location at the Trumbull Senior Center on Priscilla Street in Trumbull, for the purpose of providing convenience to senior citizens who wish to attend. She provided correspondence in the form of a signed petition from 40 Friends of the Senior Center. She requested that this issue be voted on again in the future. Chairperson Rachel Yahwak noted that the Trumbull Town Hall provided more facilities for the meetings, and the location had already been voted upon. Chairperson Yahwak stated that the location could be discussed again in the next Meeting.

Sanford Lunt, of Stratford, asked about the continuation of the art classes that are currently being held at the Trumbull Senior Center. Chairperson Yahwak informed him that there were no plans to change the art classes, and no plans to do away with any of the current classes being held at the Center. Chairperson Yahwak asked that after classes at the Center, class members return the tables and chairs back to their original positions so that following classes, such as bridge, do not have a problem starting at their scheduled time.

Approval of Minutes

MOTION MADE (Mehlhorn) and seconded (Bellows) to accept the minutes of the February 22, 2013 regularly scheduled meeting, as amended. Vote was unanimous. Motion carried.

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Chairman's Report

Chairperson Yahwak thanked everyone for attending the Budget Meetings and the Meet and Greet session at the Senior Center. She also noted that Bingo is being held there this afternoon.

Jean Ferreira discussed the issue of termites in the billiards room at the Center. She contacted Allen White, the Town's Facilities Director, regarding the termites, and was informed that the termites found are of a swarming and nesting type. Plans for their removal are in effect.

Helen Weinstein pointed out a mistake on the Agenda prepared for the next Meeting, scheduled for April 26, 2013 at 10:00 a.m.

Motion was made by Helen Weinstein and seconded by Joan Mehlhorn to go out of order briefly for the purpose of a presentation from two staff members of the Gatekeepers Program. All in favor, motion carried.

Lindsay Carlson, Project Manager of the Bridgeport branch of the Gatekeepers Program, and Marissa, another staff member of the Program, handed out brochures to everyone at the meeting, and discussed the purpose of the Program. Ms. Carlson explained that the Gatekeepers Program, of the Mental Health Association of CT, is a free of charge, anonymous, and confidential service provided to seniors in need of any assistance. She also said the Program provides community education.

Ms. Carlson also went on to say that the Gatekeepers Program works with many professionals in the community, such as social workers, to connect seniors in need with the particular help they require. The Program is completely confidential, and can connect seniors to all kinds of services such as homecare, transportation, and legal aid. Home visits are scheduled only with the client's permission. Short term case management and 30, 60, and 90 day follow-ups are provided.

Chairperson Yahwak mentioned the upcoming Health Fair and asked Ms. Carlson for their participation. Ms. Carlson agreed. Additional brochures for the Gatekeepers Program were requested. Chairperson Yahwak thanked them for the presentation. The Meeting went back into order at 10:31 a.m.

Director's Report

Jean Ferreira discussed moving the planned Health Fair from May to June. The Health Fair would possibly be on a Friday and Saturday, and would not only be for members of the Senior Center, but for their family members as well. Chairperson Yahwak noted that the Health Fair can be publicized in the Trumbull Times.

Ms. Ferreira stated that the Finance Report is to go to the Town Council. The Town Council Meeting is scheduled for April 3, at 8 p.m.

Plans and costs are being discussed regarding the Senior Center new kitchen start-up process.

Ms. Fereira discussed the various upcoming Spring and Fall events in Trumbull such as the live music and entertainment on the Town Hall Green, the Apple Festival, and the Arts Festival. She also discussed transportation for seniors wanting to attend these events, noting the possibility of utilizing Town buses.

The May Senior Center Newsletter is scheduled to go out early.

Old Business

Commissioner Gary Raytar mentioned the Greater Bridgeport Transit, and said discussion and plans with Town officials are still in preliminary stages. Contact has been made with representatives from the Kennedy Center and Stern Village. It was noted that the GBTA now runs 7 days a week, weather permitting, from 4 a.m. to 11 p.m. The GBT will be further discussed in the next meeting in April.

Ms. Fereira asked Mr. Raytar about the management, advertising, booking, and general information regarding booking these rides for seniors. It was noted that this is currently in the process of development.

Commissioner DeZeno mentioned free buses for seniors at Stern Village. Whether or not there is grant money for this will be determined.

Ms. Fereira handed out the monthly financial report to Commission members. The Senior Center currently has \$300.00 for Bingo prizes. Ms. Fereira discussed the finances of the Center, stating there were \$480.00 in expenses and \$99.00 in income, making for a bottom total of \$34,849.74. She explained there is usually a hesitation with the carry-over, so a "0" balance is not reflective of the actual balance. Dorothy Merritt is to look at this as well. Ms. Fereira noted the advantages of the office using the Excel program to better see the growth, decline, and analyzation of finances, as well as the positive and negative trends.

The Beginner Line Dance classes at the Senior Center are successful. Senior center members asked for an additional 6 weeks of classes.

Chairperson Yahwak questioned the Commission about the Bylaws of the Senior Brochure needing approval from the Town Attorney and First Selectman Timothy Herbst. Ms. DeZeno will be getting more information about this.

Ms. Fereira commented on the Audit Report, stating something is being tentatively set up to satisfy the audit, and Town attorneys will be looking into it.

Ms. DeZeno noted that Elaine Wang, Executive Assistant to the First Selectman, met with Patrice Sulik of the Health Department to discuss the kitchen. It was determined that the refrigerator is the biggest concern, and a commercial refrigerator is needed for the Center. There is a frequent problem of Senior Center members using the refrigerator, when it is supposed to be used by staff members only. Ms. Mehlhorn noted the liability for possible falls, accidents, or injuries that can take place in the kitchen.

Ms. DeZeno mentioned the amount of \$110,000.00 as a possible estimate for the cost of the new kitchen. No specific amount to start any renovations has been determined at this time.

Selling or donating the old microwave was discussed. Ms. Fereira mentioned that \$45,000 was discussed for the possible commercial refrigerator.

Ms. Fereira has made some preliminary contacts with regards to the May Senior Citizen Appreciation Month Events. The Senior Proclamation is tentatively scheduled for 5/1. She presented a flyer to the Commission with a pink and green theme. The First Selectman will be delivering the Proclamation. Plans for attendance include requesting an RSVP to prevent over or under-purchasing supplies. A one day license to provide pre-packaged pastries is being researched.

An Open House at the Senior Center is tentatively being planned for an upcoming Sunday. This would provide the art classes with an opportunity to display their work. The possibility of making the paintings available for purchase was discussed. Ms. Fereira presented a flyer for the Open House. Jazzercise and Line Dance demonstrations were discussed, as well as food and other ideas for children and families. The tentative date for this would be May 5. Publicity for the Open House will be discussed. Ludlowe, Northbridge, and Mayfair senior homes were contacted, and special door prizes are expected to be provided for this event. Local businesses may be asked to participate as well.

Ms. Fereira also mentioned the Health Fair that is being planned. She gave an estimate of \$700.00 as a possible cost for all May Events.

Upon further discussion, the following motion was made.

MOTION MADE (Chiota), seconded (Bellows), to allow a \$1,000.00 budget for the Senior Center May Events. Vote: All in favor. Motion passed.

Ms. Bellows discussed the handling of the Senior Center Surveys, in response to the recent issue of Trumbull taxpayers funding programs being utilized frequently by non-residents. 30 Center members signed them and the results were tallied. 26 members chose the option 1, which suggested members have fees only, 1 member chose option 3, which suggested members have fees and pay per class as well, and 3 members chose option 4, which suggested keeping the fees as is. Option 2 suggested members only pay a per class fee.

The Senior Center fees were further discussed. Ms. Harris noted that classes outside the Center cost significantly more.

Upon further discussion, the following motion was made.

MOTION MADE (Chiota), seconded (Mehlhorn), to change the Senior Center membership fee to \$20.00 for non-residents, and to maintain the membership fee at \$5.00 for Trumbull residents, effective July 1, 2013. Vote: In Favor (5): Yahwak, Bellows, DeZenzo, Mehlhorn, Weinstein - Opposed (1): Raytar, MOTION CARRIES 5-1.

New Business

Linda Ciocci again requested rods and hooks for the Senior Center art classes. Ms. Fereira noted that the budget is finalized for now, and it cannot be changed. Ms. DeZenzo is to get recommendations on how to start possibly processing this request.

Chairperson Yahwak brought attention to the Internal Audit from 2010. The Commission is to set up a form for activity participants at the Senior Center, and to determine how they felt about the activities offered. Yearly evaluations are to be conducted. Ms. Fereira suggested making the evaluations simpler. Discussion was held regarding conducting both surveys and evaluations. Ms. Bellows, Ms. Harris, Ms. Chiota, Ms. Merritt, and Ms. Weinstein volunteered to meet about this issue, with a tentative meeting date of April 26 at 12:00 p.m.

There being no further business to discuss, a motion was made by Commissioner Mehlhorn and seconded by Commissioner Raytar to adjourn. The March 22, 2013 meeting of the Senior Citizen Commission adjourned at 11:39 a.m. with unanimous consent.

Respectfully submitted,

Dawn Kosarko
Clerk