

**TOWN OF TRUMBULL
CONNECTICUT**



Commission on Aging Meeting
Friday, August 25, 2023
Council Chambers, Trumbull Town Hall
2:00 pm

Present: Michel Ganino, Ron Foligno, Mark Ryan, Evelyn Wiesner, Alissa Heilbrunn and Linda Randall

Absent: Nancy Lucas

Also Present: Michele Jacob, Director of Human Services; Cindy Katske, Chief Administrative Assistant and Attorney Daniel Schopick (left the meeting at 2:24 pm)

The meeting was called to order at 2:04 pm by Mr. Ganino followed by the Pledge of Allegiance.

Mr. Ganino introduced Attorney Schopick who discussed FOIA as it relates to meetings. He noted:

1. Meetings must be noticed by an agenda with minutes taken that are posted after the meeting.
2. Meetings must be open to the public.
3. FOIA does not allow for commission or board members to conduct meetings through email, telephone or conference calls unless the public is invited to join in the conversation. Input on items such as meeting dates and proposed agenda topics may include all Commission members but no discussion can be held on any individual topic as you would then be conducting a meeting. Personal emails would become part of an FOI request about the topic.
4. You cannot have a quorum for a discussion without a posted meeting unless it is a legislative caucus with members of the same party.

The Trumbull Senior Discount Program was discussed with regard to the sub-committee formed. Once the sub-committee was formed, it became a separate entity that required posted agendas and minutes. General notes from the discussions submitted to the Commission do not meet the requirements. Members of the Commission can be individually tasked to work on a

project which is then presented to the entire Commission at a posted meeting for discussion and approval. A formal sub-committee is not necessary. Sub-committees are usually set up on a more long-term/permanent basis with a report to the entire group for approval.

Any documents to be discussed at a Commission meeting should be sent to the clerk for posting.

Public Comments

No public comments.

Approval of Meeting Minutes

Motion was made by Mrs. Wiesner to approve the minutes of June 23, 2023. Seconded by Mr. Foligno and approved with one abstention from Mr. Ganino.

Reports

Secretary's Report – no report.

Reports

Senior Center Director's Report – Mrs. Jacob reported the following:

1. There was a miscommunication with the purchase of the second defibrillator for the Senior Center. Estimates are now being obtained and an order will be placed.
2. The preliminary primary concept design for the new Senior Center was approved by the Building Committee. The facility will be 33,000 sq ft with two floors. The design includes spaces that can be used by the entire community. The Senior Center and Parks and Recreation Department will be working together to schedule activities outside of the regular Senior Center programs. The next meeting of the Building Committee will include a presentation of the final costs, both hard and soft. The traffic and environmental studies are being combined into a feasibility study to be presented to the Town Council. Neither report indicated the location was unacceptable for development. There are still many details to be finalized before the project is considered complete and presented for approval.
3. Bus driver, Bill, has retired. Two other individuals with the Center will step in to fill his hours.

Stern Village Report – Ms. Mack was unable to attend the meeting.

Chairman's Report – Mr. Ganino reported the following:

1. Parts of an email sent by Ms. Lucas was read including questions on the school volunteer program and the subsidized program for restaurants. Clarification was made regarding the difference between Restaurant Week and the coupons given to the seniors to different businesses in Trumbull.
2. Senior Business Discount Registry – there seems to be concern that this program may put a burden on the businesses after the strain of COVID. Mrs. Jakob noted the original idea was to support local businesses but after COVID, there seemed to be a culture shift with everyone asking for gift cards and donations and it has become very competitive. The Commission should not feel they cannot ask for a discount but should be cognizant of

how they approach the business owners. After discussion, it was agreed to request Ms. Bakalar to attend the next meeting to discuss this topic and learn her prospective with regard to its viability at this time. Motion was made by Mrs. Wiesner to table the discussion on senior citizen discounts. Seconded by Ms. Randall and approved unanimously.

Old Business

Seniors in the Schools – Mr. Ganino noted he and Mr. Foligno participated in this program last year at Frenchtown School. To continue the program, they would need additional volunteers to make it work. Discussion was held regarding how to recruit volunteers including messaging to seniors and the possibility of using the PTA to disseminate information. Ms. Randall questioned if this project was something the Commission should be involved in given the charge to the Commission according to the Charter. Mr. Foligno felt the program could be started by the Commission but, at some time, should be handed off to other individuals once it is up and running. Ms. Randall questioned how this benefited the 30+ percent of seniors in the town by involving the Commission in a school related program. She did not feel it was part of the charge of the Commission. She felt that perhaps Park and Recreation could be more involved with programs that would benefit the seniors in the community, if the Commission is looking for more community interaction.

Senior Business Discount Registry – previously discussed.

Senior Luncheon – not discussed.

New Senior Center – additional discussion was held regarding the condition of the current building. Motion was made by Mr. Ganino that the Commission go on record as supporting a new senior/community center. Seconded by Mr. Foligno. Approve – Ms. Randall, Mr. Ryan, Mrs. Wiesner, Mr. Foligno and Mr. Ganino; Abstention – Mrs. Heilbrunn. Motion passed 5-1. Mr. Ganino encouraged a presence to approve this initiative by participation in the Building Committee and Town Council meetings for the final discussions. This project will require public sessions as it is subject to a referendum vote for approval. Mrs. Katske will notify the clerk of these meetings as they are posted so the information can be disseminated to the Commission.

New Business

Expiration of Commissioner Terms – The terms for Mrs. Wiesner, Mr. Ganino and Mrs. Heilbrunn were extended. They were sworn in by Attorney Schopick prior to the meeting.

FOIA – previously discussed.

Volunteers for Commission – not discussed.

Change in Meeting Date – next meeting will be changed to September 29, 2023 at the Senior Center.

Adjournment

There being no further business, motion was made by Mr. Foligno to adjourn the meeting at 3:09 pm. Seconded by Mrs. Wiesner and approved by unanimous consent.

Respectfully submitted,

Barbara Crandall
Clerk