

**TOWN OF ENFIELD  
COMMISSION ON AGING  
MINUTES FOR WEDNESDAY, JANUARY 8, 2020**

**Present:** David Goyette, Chairperson; William St. George, Secretary; Timothy Slade, Treasurer; Michael Arnone, Jr.; Judy Kilty; Pat Linehan; Howard Florian; Kathleen Tallarita; Lori Unghire, Town Council Liaison; Bill Kiner, Town Council Liaison; Jennifer Switalski, MSW - DSS Social Worker, Staff Liaison.

**Absent:** Alice Egan, Vice-Chairperson; Marlene Hoginski; Muriel Capocci.

**Guests:** Shelia Grady, Senior Center Manager.

**I. Welcome**

David Goyette, Chairperson, called the meeting to order at 2:04pm.

**II. Secretary's Report**

Will St George reported. He thanked Melissa Torres-Newman for her excellent work on the minutes. A motion to accept the minutes, as presented, made by Tim Slade and seconded by Kay Tallarita passed - (8-0-0).

**III. Treasurer's Report**

Tim Slade reported. A motion to accept the report, as presented, made by Will St George and seconded by Howard Florian passed – (8-0-0).

**IV. Election**

David Goyette stated he surveyed 2019 officers, and all are willing to continue. He asked if any other Commissioners were interested in a position and no interest was expressed.

A motion made by Will St George: "Motion to re-elect the slate of current officers", was seconded by Kay Tallarita and passed (8-0-0). Dave Goyette, Chairman, Alice Egan, Vice-Chairman, Tim Slade, Treasurer and Will St George, Secretary.

**V. Committee Reports**

**A. Senior Minor Home Repair Program (Helps Seniors Stay In Their Homes)**

Tim Slade reported. The DSS will begin taking job request calls on March 2<sup>nd</sup>. Start date for repairs is March 31<sup>st</sup>. A completed job scope list has been delivered to the SC and will shortly be delivered to DSS. {Reminder - The list explains what work the program will do; e.g., gutter cleaning, and what jobs are not done; e.g., yard work} One new volunteer has been enlisted and they are looking for one more. Lori Unghire stated the New Day Church, recently established in town, have many members looking to do community volunteer work. She told Dave and Tim who they could contact. Prior discussions on the storage facility and the mold effects were then continued. {Reminder - mold on tools and supplies is being carried into volunteer's vehicles and citizen's homes.} Tim stated the program requires 400 square feet. of storage with warehouse-level heating, electricity and preferably restroom access. Lori stated she had contacted Tom Andrews from DPW and is waiting to hear back. She asked for the value of the items affected by the mold. Tim stated it was about \$7,500 worth of tools and supplies.

**B. Symposium (An Annual Topic-Focused Discussion Between Senior Service Providers)**

**{8th Annual Symposium: April 28, 2020; Asnuntuck College; 8am-12pm. Theme: Mental Health}**

Pat Linehan reported. The 2020 Symposium is set for April 28, 2020. The next committee meeting is February 10 before the Commission meeting at the SC. The Mental Health topic is important to first responders, Health Care workers, and others who will encounter situations that require recognition, prior training and protocols. The Symposium will cover five topics consisting of the five most prevalent mental health issues in older adults. They are: Depression; Anxiety; Bipolar disorders; Eating disorders.

### **C. Isolated Seniors (Symposium Focus Group)**

David Goyette and Mike Arnone, Jr. reported on the Friendly Caller Program in development. Dave described the program for the new Liaisons. The project came out of a focus group from the Symposium held two years ago. So far, a 12-week pilot was done. Carolyn Schultz is the volunteer coordinator and the program coordinator is Kathleen Souvigney of the Enfield Food Shelf. They are readying a second pilot then plan to start regular operations. The program is moving into the current Food Shelf building in February after they move. Part of the cost of the program startup is funded with a grant through NCAAA. Discussion of volunteer recruitment occurred. Will asked if the 'Counsel of Churches' would be able to help. They are not; however, Lori Stated she would contact the 'Faith Council' with notification of the program and the need for volunteers. Mike Arnone, Jr. has completed the program brochure. Members offered distribution suggestions and offered to help. The beneficial relationship between this new program and others like "Enfield Cares" and Social Services referrals was discussed. The next committee meeting is February 3, 2020 at Parkway Pavilion.

### **D. TV Show "Senior Living-SLTV" (Symposium Focus Group)**

Senior Media Project - (Public information about aging and living as an older American)

Pat Linehan and David Goyette reported. Dave explained the project for the new Liaisons. The next taping is on January 14, 2020, with subject "Dealing with Post-Holiday Letdown." Host Dr. Martha McLeod will receive guests Cynthia Guerreri and Jennifer Switalski from DSS. Tim stated Sandy has requested an earlier crew arrival for training, crew arrival at 12:30, others arrive at 1:00 with taping at 2:00 o'clock. The show next month will feature the new Director of Social Services, Cynthia Guerreri. SLTV: On Cox Public Access, channel 15, Thursdays at 6:30pm and Fridays at 9:30am.

The regular operating schedule of this project is: Taping on the second Tuesday of the month with crew arrival at 1:00pm and taping at 2:00pm; and a Committee meeting on the third Tuesday of the month 1:30pm at the SC.

**E. Transportation Survey (Symposium Focus Group)** (A Survey of Enfield Resident Demographics, Transportation Usage & Attitudes) Will St George reported. With the holidays his plan to meet with DSS staff was pushed to this month.

### **F. Grandparents Raising Grandchildren**

**(A Support Network for Parenting Grandchildren Due to Death, Addiction, or Other**

**Circumstances)** Kay Tallarita reported. The group numbers are up to over 20 Grandparents and 15 children. The next meeting's speaker is the Chief of Police. Kay stated a new goal is to collaborate with other Grandparents' groups – reaching out to educate and get support. The Enfield Women's Club has been a strong supporter. The growing interest in the program of the Sisters of the Poor demonstrates the potential success of outreach efforts (by Kay Tallarita). Kay led a discussion of the many difficulties encountered by these grandparents. One tragic difficulty is it is how easy it is for a 'recovering' parent to take the children away; whereby, the high 'recovery' rate failure puts the children back into an 'addiction environment'. Bill Kiner stated that Tom Arnone Sr. was prompted to investigate sponsoring a bill in the state legislature that would give these grandparents parental rights.

### **G. Triad (A National, State, and Town Program of Senior Safety)**

David Goyette noted Marlene's absence. Next meeting is in February.

### **H. Blue Book (A Resource Book of Essential Services for Seniors)**

David Goyette reported for Alice Egan. The document is being proofed for corrections and additions by Social Services. The document is to be finalized at the March 9<sup>th</sup> committee meeting. The printing in March will produce 9,000 copies. Distribution was discussed with plans, suggestions and offers of help. The last printing and distribution was done in 2012 by the Town of Enfield who mailed 13,000 copies to every senior household.

**I. Nursing Home (A Holiday Gift Program for Nursing Home Residents without Social Connections)** David Goyette reported for Alice Egan. David Goyette noted Alice's dedication to this project. He read the thank you letter sent from St. Joseph's. This past season 25 to 30 bags of presents were delivered to Seniors without social connections at Parkway and St. Joseph's Residence.

**J. CHOICES (A Federal Program - SHIP - State Health Insurance Assistance Program)**

(State certified counselors educate and assist citizens with Medicare and related insurance.)

Will St George reported. Post "Open Enrollment" period, he has continued to counsel. In January, two Wednesday evenings are scheduled. In February he will add to the schedule the Friday mornings that follow a scheduled Wednesday. Commissioners asked questions about the program and the specific counseling.

**VI. Regular Reports and Topics**

**A. DSS Report**

The Commission had questions about the grant writing process, the awarded grant process, and town grant writer(s). The concern is about the future of grants to the town from the NCAAA that cover Commission or Commission sponsored projects. Specifically, the need to identify who will be writing the grants, since Damian, who was hired as a grant writer, is no longer a town employee. Both Bill Kiner and Lori Unghire stated they would look into the matter. Pam Brown is now working just on Fridays. The WIC program applications, which are handled on Wednesdays, is receiving a lot of people.

**VII. Old Business**

**A. Grants** Covered under VI. A.

**B. Senior Groups**

**i. Senior Center Advisory Board** Alice Egan was absent. Shelia Grady discussed the group's traditional holiday meeting.

**ii. Friends of the Senior Center** Marlene Hoginski was absent. No update.

**C. Senior Center Focus** Covered under B. i. above.

**VIII. New Business**

**A. Election** The election is documented above between section-III and section-IV.

**IX. Announcements & Acknowledgements**

- "Caring for Your Aging Parents" on Wednesday, February 26 at 6:30 pm at Enfield Central Library.
- Under the Committee Reports, the reporting Commissioners each expressed gratitude for the support of the Town, the Department of Social Services and various town staff. The Town was thanked for providing space for those projects and programs that need it. Additionally, the general support from the Town and Town Staff is fully appreciated. Commissioners thanked specific DSS staff for their abiding support and excellent work. In no particular order they are: Heather Benyak, Amy Morales, Cynthia Guerreri, Tom Andrews, Erin Tynan, Melissa Torres-Newman and Jennifer Switalski.

**X. Adjournment**

A motion to adjourn made by Will St George and seconded by Judy Kilty passed (8-0-0). David Goyette adjourned the meeting at 3:30pm.

Next meeting: Wednesday, February 10, 2020 at 2pm at the Enfield Senior Center.

Inclusion(s): None

**Respectfully Submitted by Will St George, Secretary**

Cc:

Christopher W. Bromson, Town Manager,  
Bill Kiner, Council Liaison,  
Lori Unghire, Council Liaison,  
Jennifer Switalski, MSW - DSS Social Worker, Staff Liaison,  
Cindy Guerreri, Director, Department of Social Services,  
Shelia Grady, Senior Center Manager,  
Mary Keller, Deputy Director of Recreation Services,  
Marguerite DuPrey, 'Commissioner Emeritus' 32 Woodside Park, Enfield, CT. 06082,