

COMMISSION ON AGING

DRAFT

Minutes

November 7, 2016

Present: Commission members Helen de Keijzer, Don Gumaer, Allison Lisbon, Peggy Anderson, Bruce Lorentzen, and Joy Peshkin; Social Services Director Charlene Chiang-Hillman; Senior Center Program Coordinator Carla Jegen; Dial-a-Ride driver Gordon Green; WWHD representative Monica Wheeler, and guest Woody Bliss.

Meeting convened at 9:15 a.m.

Minutes: October 4th minutes will be approved next month.

SWCAA: Helen announced that liaison Meta Schroeter, who was not present, had told her there was nothing major to report from the last SWCAA meeting.

Dial-A-Ride/Transportation: Gordon distributed his regular monthly Dial-a-Ride update and gave a glowing report on the new excursion bus. Gordon and Roy, who has also driven it, as well as seniors who have already been on a trip, are very enthusiastic about the bus and its comfort. In addition, Gordon said that the new Dial-a-Ride van is almost ready for delivery and will have the same graphics as the larger bus.

Senior Tax Relief Programs review: Woody said that he has received some useful information from the Connecticut Conference of Municipalities (CCM). He also reported for Margarita that her attempt to get detailed historical data on Weston's senior tax relief programs was unsuccessful. Discussion ensued; Woody will follow up with the tax collector and Town Administrator Tom Landry.

Weston Social Services: Helen asked Commissioners to be thinking about new program ideas and/or services that might be brought to Weston to help seniors more successfully age-in-place; Woody suggested asking CCM for research assistance on this issue.

Helen noted that Allison, who is a social worker, has been volunteering to help Charlene as a volunteer coordinator. Allison said that more than 100 people have signed up with her as potential helpers in the spirit of 'Weston-neighbors-helping-neighbors'. She has already begun facilitating intergenerational community connections, most so far supporting seniors with tasks such as raking of leaves and small repairs. Charlene is looking to add staff hours for a Volunteer Coordinator position in the upcoming Department of Social Services budget and Helen expressed interest in seeing a Social Services presence at the Center.

Charlene reported on some of the work her office typically does as fall progresses, including matching individuals in need with available fuel assistance programs (a state program, Operation Fuel, and the Weston Warm-Up Fund), maintaining two phone lists (an emergency outreach and

a reassurance list), and planning for the distribution of the annual Thanksgiving and Christmas/Holiday gift baskets.

Weston Senior Activities Center: Bruce reported on behalf of Wendy that, while the figures are not final, net income from the Classic Car Show is expected to be approximately \$16,000. Carla said that the Holiday Re-gifting Sale will take place the week after Thanksgiving and that donations of unused items are welcomed at any time. She commented that the Center is continuing to be used after hours by the Weston Parks and Rec. Department, the Library (during its ongoing renovation), the Swim Club, and other organizations. Carla also reported that, in addition to the new bus trips going very well, Center lunches are continuing to be popular. Around 35 seniors typically attend and the staff plans to regularly utilize the activities room as a back up for the cafe when needed.

The upcoming budget process and Wendy's interest in increasing Center staffing hours were touched on as well as days/hours of Center operation. Carla expressed interest in potential programming on a Thursday evening (possible dinner and entertainment). The value of having a part-time professional social worker on the Center's staff and/or sharing such a position with Social Services (potentially fulfilling the state mandated Municipal Agent for the Elderly role) was briefly discussed..

Friends of the Weston Senior Activities Center: Bruce reiterated that he's seeking to expand the Board and asked for recommendations. Helen suggested that the Friends consider including the Senior Center Director and a Commission representative at regular meetings to help develop new ideas and maximize good communication.

WWHD Report: Monica brought up current proposals at the state level to consolidate health district services; discussion ensued. She also reported on an upcoming flu clinic at the Library.

Other Business: Helen briefly discussed the meeting she, Wendy, Margarita, Charlene, Allison and Dale Robinson had with the Director of Community Health and Wellness at the RVNA to discuss the organization's Quality Living at Home program.

Meeting adjourned at 11:00 a.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Don Gumaer