

COMMISSION ON AGING
NOVEMBER 2, 2009

MINUTES

Commission members present: Ernie Albin, Peggy Anderson, Terry Hulley, Helen de Keijzer, Lois Miller, Sandy O'Brien. Also present: Social Services Director Charlene Chaing-Hillman, Senior Center Director Jennifer Ruddy and Program Coordinator Nancy McCormick, SWCAA liason Meta Schroeter, Domestic Violence Task Force Director Marcia Hamlin, and First Selectman Woody Bliss.

The meeting was called to order by Chairman Miller at 9:20 a.m. Peggy Anderson made a motion to accept the minutes of the October meeting as written, Ernie Albin seconded the motion and it was unanimously approved.

Social Services Report: Charlene is trying to get donors to contribute fresh food for the Thanksgiving Holiday baskets. Many people have been using the Food Pantry where the main staple is canned foods. She believes fresh food would be a welcome change. It is likely 100 baskets will be given out this year as compared to 80 baskets last year. The Fuel Assistance drive has started up. 85 households have sent letters requesting assistance. The Warm-Up Fund has hired someone to help get through the system the number of people needing assistance. Confidentiality will be preserved. Tenant evictions in Town are up. In some cases Charlene is using funds from the Social Services Fund to maintain families until other sources of funding become available.

The Community Service Organization is moving right along. Their mission is to create a town wide website to find volunteers for various projects in the Town of Weston. They hope to provide vetted volunteers. The Community Service Organization will provide volunteers to help Charlene distribute the Thanksgiving Baskets. According to Charlene, Links has achieved 501c3 status. They are in the process of raising money to hire an Executive Director. They have about ¼ of the money needed. Charlene will let Helen know when the next Links meeting is scheduled. The organization wants Weston participation. ITN is also moving along. It received a grant from the State of Connecticut. ITN now has \$75,000 of the \$150,000 needed to begin operating. ITN views Westport and Weston as a single entity which is important if Weston is to benefit from its service.

Domestic Violence Task Force: Marcia Hamlin reminded the Commission that in February there will be a teen talent show at the High School. She would like to have as many Senior's as possible attend. Nancy will publicize the talent show in the newsletter. Peggy Anderson, the Commission's representative to the DVTF thought it would be a good idea to have the teen group that performs skits at the High School to raise awareness about teen abuse revise the skit for Senior's. The revised skit would be performed at the Norfield Church Senior luncheon sometime in late April or early May.

In the meantime the Commission will be thinking about the kind of elderly abuse to be dramatized in the skit. Peggy will report back to the Task Force.

First Selectman Woody Bliss attended the meeting to say a final good by to Commission members. The Commission thanked him for his years of service, and the support he has given the Weston Senior community.

Senior Center: The Senior Center Newsletter was sent out to all Westonites 60 years and older. The total came to 1400 households. Nancy said the cost is \$900.00 per mailing. She and Jen are hoping to do these mailings every two months. Several people contacted the Center to volunteer their services after receiving the newsletter. The High School Honor Society helped prepare the mailing, and intend to continue doing it. Since there is no money in the Senior Center budget for this project Nancy is checking out printers for the best price, along with charitable organizations that might donate money.

The trip to West Point was not a success. Jen and Nancy said information about the trip may have reached people to late. Terry Hulley will resume leading the Book Group at the end of January. Right now the newsletter and activities at the Center are on the Town web-site. At some future time the Senior Center hopes to have its own web-site.

Computer classes are in progress. Four to five people have signed up for the classes. Nancy said she will be sure to include Weston's three Senior tax programs in the newsletter as soon as the new deadline for applying to all three has been established by Charity Nichols. The Weston Police will be doing a program in December at the Center on identity theft and computer safety.

SWCCA: Meta attended the October 14, 2009 meeting . The Executive Director, Maria Allen, spoke of expected cut backs in funding certain programs and in SWCCA's own staff. Chris Crain, head of CHOICES program said CONN PACE will be changing dramatically as no nonformulary drugs will be covered and the premium will be increased to \$45. State and local governments are reducing budgets. Grant writing is playing a bigger role in obtaining funds. Numbers of needy clients are growing. Medicare D enrollment changes (November15-December31) are expected to be very high this year. Also discussed were scam alerts for jury duty, the census, etc., as well as the fact that some communities have had legal services come in and discuss spending down to be eligible for Title 19.

Senior Directory: Helen will be meeting with a professional book designer. The designer will not be charging the Commission for her services. The Commission agreed to have her do a prototype. The Commission also agreed that the Directory be 8 1/2 by 11, and Saddle Stitched. There will be no history of the Town of Weston. The history of the Commission on Aging will be expanded.

New Business: Welcome back to Terry Hulley who has been convalescing after a serious fall. Sandy O'Brien made a motion to adjourn meeting at 12:20 p.m.. Seconded by Peggy Anderson.