

Commission On Aging

Meeting Minutes for February 6, 2024

Commission Members present: Gary James Kelly – Chair, Maria Potvin, Anita Morrison, Lorraine Kraft, Kathy LaBranche, and Jim Sundin

Absent: Eugenia Perry

Guests attending: Lorraine Campbell, Marcia Crawford, Shirley Finney, Evelyn Gilbert, Ollie Jones, Sam Jones, Kathy Lombardo, Myrna Mehus, David Murray, Barbara Pellett, and Lorraine Trinks.

Meeting Called to Order: at 2:03 pm

Approval of Minutes/Secretary's Report: Eugenia was absent so Gary read the minutes from our January 2024 meeting. Anita took the minutes of this meeting. Anita made a motion to accept the January minutes and Jim seconded.

Treasurer's Report: Gary stated that there were no expenditures in the past 2 months therefore no change to the budget balances.

Old Business: 1) Gary reviewed the present status of the town wide survey and met with the Mayor's Chief of Staff and the Health & Social Services Director just prior to this meeting and presented his recommendations of the analysis and presentation for the Mayor's office and Town Council once the analysis is complete. Five hundred and twelve seniors responded to the survey and there were approximately 502 written comments to be addressed. 2) Gary re-emphasized the need to continue the work on the paper for senior discounts offered to town seniors. This will be an integral part of our efforts to address many of the comments gathered in the survey. Gary will send out the present list for Commissioners to review and gather more input. The list will eventually be posted on the Commission website and on hand out flyers. 3) Gary also discussed the existing volunteer programs and how they could be bolstered to address some of the issues seniors are having with keeping up with heavy yard work such

as leaf cleanup and disposing of heavy branches that come down during storms. He will continue to investigate and see if volunteers can help with these issues. 4) Gary suggested the creation of a brochure for seniors so they can use this as a reference for town services.

New Business: 1) Gary discussed the issue of a home heating funding crisis for low income individuals including seniors. The federal government cut back the amount of funding available, and many seniors in adjoining towns have depleted the funding. Although East Hartford has alternative funding avenues to address this, many Commissions in Connecticut are sending letters to our state representatives to address this shortfall from the state surplus. The legislature began meeting yesterday and we hope the Governor will approve more funding to protect some of our most vulnerable citizens. Gary drafted a letter in support of our fellow Connecticut seniors and it is presently under review by the Mayor's office. 2) Gary stated that although the Christmas Wish List program was a big success again this year, a few residents were confused and thought this was a yearlong program and continued to make requests for donated items after the presentation. Gary worked on this with the Riverside Staff and the misunderstanding has been resolved.

Opportunity of guests to speak: It was pleasure to see such a large amount of visitors to our meeting. Several questions were asked and comments were made and addressed during the meeting. A suggestion was made to publish the results of the town survey in the local newspapers once the study is completed.

Motion to Adjourn: At 3:08 pm Anita made a motion to adjourn and Kathy seconded.