

Town of Somers

Meeting of Advisory Committee for Seniors

June 13 2017

Present: Pat Bachetti, Elaine Bemont, Dori Bynack, Eileen Fedorowich, Phyllis Gwilliam, Ailene Henry, Deanna Schuetz, Joan Sizer, Tim Welch

The meeting was called to order at 1:30 pm by chairman Deanna Schuetz.

Eileen moved and Phyllis seconded the motion that the minutes of the May 2017 meeting be approved as written.

Audience: Bud Knorr (Somers First Selectman), Kathy Devlin (Selectman), Dan Fraro (president Senior Club), Bev Guimond (vice president Senior Club)

Joan moved and Tim seconded the motion that audience participation be permitted.

Bud and Kathy thanked Deanna and the committee and emphasized the importance of the Senior Center for our senior population. They reported that a committee has been formed to discuss the idea of building a new community center through bonding. This center would include facilities for seniors. The proposal will be brought to a referendum at the November elections.

The statistics about Senior Center attendance provided by the new MySeniorCenter software will be helpful in planning.

Committee Updates:

a. Chairman's Report:

I. Senior Center Policies and Procedure Manual: A manual would give guidance to staff and senior center participants about operational procedures and services. Deanna had previously emailed the manuals from Colchester, Hamden and Wallingford CT for the committee to evaluate. There was some discussion about these. Kathy suggested we look at national guidelines put out by the National Council on Aging and also look at the Somers Employee Manual. It was also suggested that we look at manuals from centers close in size and vicinity to ours. It was suggested that a sub-committee be appointed to work on this. Tim moved and Pat seconded that the committee be made up of two committee members plus Deanna. Ailene moved and Phyllis seconded the motion that Joan, Eileen and Deanna make up the sub-committee. The goal is to bring a rough draft to our August meeting. Our town attorney should approve the final manual.

II. Upcoming Senior Center Trips/Events/Programs: Deanna distributed a list of June and July events and trips. Complete list is available on request. The SCamper (children's rec group + seniors) series will take place on 4 summer Tuesdays.

Coffee Talk: We talked about the importance of open communication and decided to hold another coffee talk in September with the theme of programming – events and programs anyone would like to see happen at the Senior Center.

On June 27, Pat Bachetti will receive the Robert Percoski Community Service Award and Deanna will receive the Adolph Anderson Award for Employee of the Year.

b. Meals on Wheels: The new subsidy guidelines for MOW recipients will go into effect on July 1. There have been several private donations to the MOW fund in response to the newspaper articles describing the need for money for this fund. We will revisit in August

the criteria for becoming a recipient of MOW. Ailene has found a definition of “homebound” to help with this.

c. Senior Support: Pat is in touch with 12 people and will do something special for July 4th. This program is much appreciated.

Bereavement cards are sent to Senior Club members by a member of the club. Senior Center staff also sends bereavement cards.

d. Senior Club: Deanna reported that at our January meeting we had passed a motion that information about the Senior Club would be published in the Senior Newsletter for 3 more months and then club content would be removed from the newsletter. This has continued because the club was not fully aware of this decision. Deanna states that having Senior Club news in the newsletter causes a problem for Senior Center staff because people call for information about the club which they cannot answer because the club is a private entity and not officially a part of the Senior Center. Dan read a statement saying he would like the Senior Club to be inclusive of all seniors. We discussed the fact that because the club holds considerable money in an investment account, the bequest of Mrs. Dion, the club is designated as a 501c7 group for tax exempt purposes. IRS rules say a 501c7 group is only open to members. It was suggested that the club consult with an attorney with the idea of changing the status of the club so it could become more inclusive. We talked about the Senior Club having its own newsletter whether monthly or quarterly or the club could publish an informational article for free in the local newspapers. Ailene moved and Eileen seconded a motion that as of the October newsletter, Senior Club information would no longer be published in the newsletter.

Bev reported that all people who come to the Wednesday Senior Club lunch are club members.

We talked about the Senior Club having its own liability insurance to cover accidents that might happen during club events.

Dory reported 159 paid members. There will be a Senior Club party on July 5.

e. Publicity: No report.

f. Woodcrest: Eileen reported that the fire dep’t did a helpful program on safety issues. She talked about the importance of having regular fire drills and a fire warden on each floor of the large buildings.

Old Business: Lifeline and the emergency registry will be revisited at our August meeting.

New Business: none

There will be no Advisory Committee meeting in July.

Next meeting August 15.

Moved by Dory and seconded by Tim our meeting was adjourned at 3:23 p.m.

Respectfully submitted

Ailene Henry secretary

Minutes not official until approved at subsequent meeting.

