

Branford Commission of Services for the Elderly

Laurie Rockwell – Chair
Patricia Brownell
Patricia B. Torre

Dana Murphy
Susan Cosgrove Barnes
Mary Hahn

Luba Mebert Schmid
Jean Richo

Meeting Minutes March 8, 2018

(Page 1 of 2)

Call to Order - The meeting was called to order at 5:00 pm at the Branford Fire Department by Chair Laurie Rockwell. Present: Jean Richo, Patricia Torre, Mary Hahn, Laurie Rockwell, Patricia Brownell, Susan Cosgrove Barnes and Dana Murphy. Also in attendance: Director Dagmar Ridgway and Activities Coordinator Nancy Cohen and First Selectman James Cosgrove.

- I. Approval of the Minutes - Motion to Approve the Minutes of the January 11, 2018 meeting by Mary Hahn, seconded by Pat Brownell. Vote to approve: Unanimous.
- II. Director's Report was presented by Director Ridgway. The information was sent to the Commissioners prior to the meeting. It included the Financial Report, Statistics and POCD submission. The Budget for Fiscal Year 2018/19 was discussed. The Director spoke of the Presentation of the Plan of Conservation & Development (POCD) sessions, and the importance of advocating for needs of seniors while we continue to build the infrastructure needed for the aging community. She also talked about the AARP/WHO designation for the establish of Age-Friendly Communities.
- III. Social Services Report was presented by Director Ridgway. Highlights include: Energy Assistance Applications, the Rent Rebate Program (waiting to hear from the State regarding changes to the program) and the Medicare Savings Program.
- IV. Programming/Activities Report was presented by Nancy Cohen. Among the many topics addressed: Upcoming activities such as the Men's Focus Group, the Newcomer's Breakfast, Ballroom Dancing and the return of the Aging Mastery Program (with acknowledgement of grants from the Branford Community Foundation and Anthem). There is hope that in the Fall there can be evening sessions, as the afternoon sessions are difficult for some to attend. Nancy mentioned that Roberta Gill-Brooks and Chief Robert Gill gave a wonderful and powerful presentation about the town's local Black History in honor of Black History Month. The Dinner Parties are back and there are some neat trips on the horizon.
- V. Citizen's Comments – were addressed throughout the meeting. Many subjects were addressed, including: A new facility update (First Selectman Cosgrove provided a status report and addressed some questions and concerns); Housing issues – who handles them and how they relate to the POCD hearings; The establishment and duties of the Elderly Services Commission (again, the First Selectman fielded questions and concerns). The Elderly Services Commission (ESC) will further research the POCD links on the Town's website in order to best present the POCD Committee with appropriate comments and insights to advocate for the Town's Seniors. The ESC will also look in to inviting other organizations to our meetings to better inform its audience of services and assistance that may be available. The new facility topic arose again, and the First Selectman indicated that he has asked the architect for some renderings that can be displayed. The architect will also make

Branford Commission of Services for the Elderly

Laurie Rockwell – Chair
Patricia Brownell
Patricia B. Torre

Dana Murphy
Susan Cosgrove Barnes
Mary Hahn

Luba Mebert Schmid
Jean Richo

(Page 2 of 2)

Another presentation at Canoe Brook, hopefully in May, during Older Americans Month. Specific comments from the Comment Box were addressed. A question arose regarding some computer stations that were not replaced. The Director responded that there are now Tablets, thanks to the Greater New Haven Transit District, that can be signed out and used. And they will be hiring a new Technology Associate. A brief Re-Cap of Action Items followed. The ESC will reach out to Stephanie at the Orchard House to give a presentation at a future meeting. Pat Brownell recommended they each review the AARP information, as she was quite impressed with it. And the ESC needs another Commissioner!! Anyone interested should contact the First Selectman directly.

A Motion to Adjourn at 5:55 was made by Pat Torre, seconded by Mary Hahn and was followed by a Unanimous vote to approve. The next meeting is scheduled for May 10, 2018.

Respectfully Submitted by Doreen F. Denhardt, Commission Clerk