

TOWN OF EAST HAMPTON
COMMISSION ON AGING
REGULAR MEETING
THURSDAY, FEBRUARY 9, 2023
SENIOR CENTER AND ZOOM

Minutes

Present: Chairperson Dr. Eric Rosenberg, Vice Chairperson Sue Greeno, Commission members Jean Sundstrom, Sali Cosford Parker and Shelly Grendzinski

Also in attendance: Town Council member Alison Walck, Senior Services Coordinator Jo Ann Ewing, Lin Johnson and Len Johnson

Call To Order

Dr. Rosenberg called the meeting to order at 4:00 pm.

Adoption of Agenda

A motion was made by Ms. Cosford Parker, seconded by Ms. Sundstrom to adopt the agenda.

Voted (5-0)

Approval of Minutes

A motion was made by Ms. Sundstrom, seconded by Ms. Cosford Parker to approve the minutes of the January 12, 2023 as presented. Voted (5-0)

Public Comment

Lin Johnson, 21 Long Crossing Road, expressed her concern regarding an article that had been published in the Rivereast News Bulletin, concerning the possibility of the library taking over the senior center space. Len Johnson, 21 Long Crossing Road, stated the town's future priorities should shift to the betterment of local seniors. Many seniors have been paying taxes in town for years to support Lake Pocotopaug's water quality, the high school renovation, a new police station and town hall. Now is the time to support their senior center.

Senior Services Report

Ms. Ewing stated that the energy assistance process has been slowly improving. She has been working with Laura at the Housing Authority to be sure applications received are being processed. CRT has been experiencing a slow response time due to a reduction in staff, triple the applications, new online applications system. Ms. Ewing submitted her budget request to the town, for a full-time employee position instead of a part-time job. This would alleviate the need for help with publicity, planning and implementing programs for seniors, such as overseeing Meals on Wheels and the transportation program.

Ms. Cosford Parker presented a letter she had written to support Ms. Ewing's request for additional staffing on behalf of the Commission on Aging. Ms. Greeno made a motion to approve the letter with minor changes. Ms. Sundstrom 2nd the motion. Voted (5-0)

Old Business

Reports from Housing, Transportation and Health & Wellness Sub-Committees.

Housing: Dr. Rosenberg met with Jeremy Decarli, Planning and Zoning Official, to work on the Accessory Dwelling Unit and renovations needed for the public safety presentation. The event will be presented at the Town Hall on Saturday, April 15, 2023 at 1:00pm.

Transportation: No Update

Health & Wellness: Dr. Rosenberg and Ms. Greeno attended a meeting with several other town departments that are working together to increase the betterment of citizens' health and wellness, including increasing activities for local seniors. Ms. Greeno announced that Ms. Ewing has been appointed to be the “lead” of the group to help coordinate and collaborate with one another.

Housing Authority Report

Ms. Grendzinski reported that four of six empty apartments in senior housing will be filled. They have been reviewing applications for the other two vacancies. None of which are handicapped accessible. The authority still needs a director. The position was posted, but they have not received any resumes yet. Their focus has been to help seniors be a little more active by getting them out of their apartments to visit the senior center. The concern for emergency access to the apartments was discussed.

Strategic Planning Workshop

Dr. Rosenberg and Ms. Greeno have been working on planning a workshop for members to share their personal ideas and goals they would like the commission to focus on. This will be a meeting open to the public for observation. The meeting will be held on February 21, 2023 from 10:00 am – 2:00 pm in the Community Room, at the library. An announcement will be submitted to the Rivereast News Bulletin to inform the public of the meeting.

Energy Assistance Program Advocacy

Dr. Rosenberg presented the article to be published in the Rivereast News Bulletin regarding the urgent need for energy assistance of older adults. He discussed additional information available the day after the last COA meeting on 1/12/23. Ms. Greeno proposed a motion to amend the Energy Assistance Advocacy motion that was passed on 1/12/23, striking part b., “share the letter with past COA Round Table members and ask them to do the same.” Ms. Sundstrom seconded the motion. The motion passed (5-0).

Budget

Dr. Rosenberg presented the budget he submitted to the Finance Department for approval. A motion was made by Ms. Sundstrom to accept the budget, seconded by Ms. Grendzinski. Voted (5-0)

New Business

Dr. Rosenberg announced that Mike Thompson, Editor of the Rivereast News Bulletin agreed to publish announcements and information submitted by the Commission on a monthly basis to keep the public updated and increase interest amongst local citizens.

Public Comment

None

Adjournment

Meeting was adjourned at 5:30 pm.

Respectfully Submitted,

Anne Maynard
Recording Clerk