

COMMISSION ON AGING
JULY 13, 2022
MINUTES
IN PERSON, HERITAGE CENTER

PRESENT: COA Commissioners: Mary Dale Lancaster, Kathy Brandt (note-taker), Sarah Cummings, Garner Lester, Sarah Atwood, Peggy Zamore

Staff: Margherita Pilato, Angelica Fontanez, Kayla Seftner

Members of Public: Doug Renfield-Miller, Sal Armato

Meeting Called to Order: 9:02 am

- 1. June 8, 2022 Minutes approved:** Sarah Atwood, Sarah Cummings
- 2. Public Comment:** Doug Renfield Miller : attended Super Food and had good smoothies made by Margherita
- 3. Social Services Report:** Angelica Fontanez- See monthly report. Gift card initiative has been pretty well accepted. A lot of families need help with summer camp programs, complicated method for payment, hoping to change for next year by coordinating with United Way. Salvation Army can be used for camp and for other things, like a car tax payment for a family. Van busy again. 33 trips. Trying to get ARPA funds for rental assistance. 50K available for this through ARPA. Angelica suggests a three person (blind) panel to decide who receives funding – will run it by Julia Pemberton, seems like a good idea. Distribution of gift cards described. May wish to revise bylaws to cover social services as well as senior issues. Description of committee, name of committee should be changed perhaps to Commission on Aging and Social Services. Discussion ensued. Updating bylaws and mission statement should be in our goals for next year. Promulgation of rules for things like gift card distribution and van rides would be helpful, per Angelica. Need to have clarification of purview of committee vis-a-vis social services.
- 4. Program Coordinator's Report:** Margherita Pilato: did not quite meet half of instructor pay with income, but it should even out with other months. New Tai Ji Quan classes very well attended. Also, the Fitness to Fit You class is well attended. Restore and More has been going well. Debby Goldenberg is the instructor. Its a chair yoga class with meditation. Sip and Chat is a new idea, Sarah & Ruth had this idea. Six or seven people attended. Highstead Arboretum was a nice tour. Discussion ensued regarding tech teaching, now that SW Dev has moved on. Need to empower seniors to use their devices. Need to find knowledgeable and capable tech teachers.

5. Chair's Report: Mary Dale Lancaster: First, we need new committee members. Need a non-Democrat for the regular committee. Peggy cannot move up because she is a Democrat. Need one more Democrat and two others. Sal Armato is here today, he would be a great addition to the commission, but as a Democrat, can only be an alternate currently. Garner & Sarah gave Mr. Armato good recommendations. Recommendation will be sent to Julia Pemberton to add Mr. Armato as our new alternate. There are 2000 people on the town's list that are in our age group. Need help on how to reach these people. Email list would be easy. Peggy needs some help with this on the communication committee. Not sure what we want to say to all the seniors once we have figured out how to reach them all. All we know so far is that this is our target information. Sarah A & Sarah C will help Peggy with this project. They can coordinate with Social Services. Next: MD is considering stepping aside from committee chair after 3 years as chair. So, despite loving being chair, stamina is lacking to continue serving. Will stay on till end of year. Will stay on Commission as a regular member. Looking for a replacement. A change in leadership is good for an organization. As of 12/31, new chair needs to be in place. MD will be making calls to see who is interested in taking over. We should all consider who might be good in the committee, keep it mind when we interact with neighbors. Would be great to have younger people also.

6. First Selectperson's Report: Julia Pemberton not available. Per MD: ARPA, Ruth gave a good presentation, and funds were approved by Committee to put in retractable door. Still needs approval of all 3 selectpersons, then town meeting. Caveat, Park & Rec could use the room as well in certain circumstances. 60K approved for this project. Sean Donnelly also assisted to the presentation. Internet access should be increased. MESH system should be installed .

7. Publicity Committee: Sarah Cummings; article placed in Redding Sentinel re: food pantry. Tina Armato did a beautiful flyer. Distribution of flyer to be developed. Could go out through Town Hall in monthly town happenings letter, under Food Pantry news. Should go out to PTA groups. Maybe reach them by email. Churches & Caraluzzi's should have color copies. Many organizations have done fundraisers for the food pantry, so they should get emails about this new program. Angelica can make a list, include churches, Boy Scouts, etc. Has gone out twice on FB. Susan Clark of the Sentinel might be willing to place it pro bono.

9. Old Business:

10. New Business:

Need to re-swear: KB, Garner Lester, Hilda Rhodes, Sarah Cummings.

Eversource situation – Garner presented the Cross Highway point of view. Good people involved in committee to stop Eversource. Garner would welcome our participation and let us know when the meetings are.

Meeting Adjourned: 10:21 a.m.

Minutes taken by: Kathleen Brandt