COMMISSION ON AGING

TOWN OF WESTON, CONNECTICUT

Minutes: Monday March 2, 2020 at 9AM

Present: Commission members Helen de Keijzer, Richard Wolf, Francine Goldstein, Alison McElhone; SWCCA liaison and Senior Center Director Wendy Petty; Social Services Director Allison Lisbon; Woody Bliss from the Weston Tax Relief Committee, and; Diana Heisinger, from the Friends of the Weston Senior Center

The meeting convened at 9:06 AM.

The minutes of last meeting (February 2020) were discussed and approved with a few minor changes.

Roy briefly discussed the Dial-a-ride report. Mileage was up in February. Most trips are for medical runs, followed by trips to Senior Center. All miles have been in the Prius. In light of recent Coronavirus developments, Roy has asked for supplies (eg masks, gloves, hand sanitizer). Fran stated she is on the Community Emergency Response Team and will forward a recent email from Mike Vincelli about COVID-19. Face masks should only be warn by health professionals treating sick people, or by an infected person to protect others.

Minutes from the special meeting on February 6th to discuss the recent Weston Tax Relief Committee Report and Recommendations were reviewed and approved without changes. Woody indicated that the Tax Relief Committee will recommend that the monies saved would be designated for the Senior Services and Senior Social Services budget lines. A public hearing on this matter is scheduled for Thursday, March 5. Richard commented that the people who would benefit from the proposed changes need to be notified. Allison said she would speak with Randi Derene and Wendy will notify people at the Senior Center.

Richard said there are homes in the town that would qualify as affordable housing but don’t because they lack deed restriction. He suggested that the town could consider offering an abatement in exchange for a deed restriction. A public hearing about the proposed new 10 year town plan is scheduled to be held at WMS on April 4 at 1030am.

Richard provided a Facilities update. The town has included in its capital budget the following items for the senior center – new entrance, ramp, powered doors, etc. An architect has been hired. Allison said the town is also putting money aside to do ADA compliance assessment. Richard will be going to the Board of Ed facilities committee meeting to discuss giving Wendy independent control over the Senior Center heating. The heating has been inconsistent and has been controlled by the school’s facilities department.

Allison gave an update about Social Services. The first selectman didn’t increase her hours from 26.5 to 27.5 per week. Allison spoke with Jonathon. She will apply for a SWCAA grant to help fund a Senior Services outreach worker. This person would go into senior’s homes to provide education and information about community and other resources. The grant would require another source of funding. Helen asked if Allison would bring the Commission on aging a copy of the grant proposal when it is complete. Helen said the Commission could recommend to the Board of Selectman using monies from the elderly assistance fund to help support the outreach worker pilot program.

Wendy gave an update on the Weston Senior Center. Friends of the Senior Center have donated money for new furniture, including 2 new desks, new rugs, a new puzzle table and a refrigerator. She is still waiting on new benches and a runner for the entryway. The Friends also sponsor many activities and events that the town doesn’t support financially. Wendy noted that the chairs at the church parish center are problematic and thinks the church is fundraising to get new ones. The Art Expo is scheduled for July 21st. Meadow Ridge is the sponsor. Wendy reported the Senior Center has 500 active participants and they see up to 100 participants each day. Carla was out with a broken foot but is now back. Diana, who has been an extraordinary volunteer, and Linda have been helping to fill in. Wendy reported that the art classes and trips have been filling quickly. Residents take precedence. Anyone who wants to use the Senior Center after hours can do so for a small fee.

Finally, in open discussion, Richard, who is also on the Facilities Optimization Committee, advised that we must be speak up about not wanting to move the Senior Center to WMS.

 The meeting adjourned at 10:10.

Respectfully submitted, Alison McElhone