

Mansfield Commission on Aging Minutes
9:30 AM – Senior Center
Monday, March 9, 2009

PRESENT: C. Pellegrine (Vice-Chair), Judy Lester (guest), M. Thatcher, C. Phillips, S. Gordon, P. Hope (staff), M. Ross, A. Holinko, K. Doeg, J. Quarto, J. Kenny (staff)
REGRETS: T. Quinn

- I. **Call to Order:** Vice-Chair C. Pellegrine called the meeting to order at 9:30 AM.
- II. **Appointment of Recording Secretary:** K. Grunwald agreed to take minutes for the meeting.
- III. Acceptance of Minutes: the minutes of the **February 9** meeting were accepted as written.
- IV. **Correspondence** – Chair and Staff: review of packet, including Mansfield 2020 vision plan. C. Pellegrine noted that the letter on concerns about audio difficulties at the Town Council meetings has gone to the Town Council and the Communications Committee.
- V. **New Business**
 - Review of Agency Funding Requests and Recommendations:
 - o Carol Phillips- TVCCA (Meals on Wheels): total agency budget is approximately \$600,000. Their request is for \$4637.52. K. Doeg asked what percentage of the total budget is being covered by Mansfield. It is not clear from the application; the request is based on the number of meals delivered. Carol feels that their mission supports our departmental mission, service not offered by the Town, operating in a fiscally responsible manner; recommends that we fund them in the amount requested. K. Doeg raised the issue once again as to the role of this committee as being to recommend cuts or advocate for services? C. Pellegrine asked if the group wants to make a recommendation separate from the other agency requests? The feeling is that we should go through all of the agencies. K. Doeg feels that the Commission should determine whether or not the request is reasonable.
 - o Tim Quinn- McSweeney Center: T. Quinn was not present. The request is for \$6500. K. Grunwald pointed out that there was an article in the Willimantic Chronicle stating that there is a concern that other towns are not supporting McSweeney as a regional senior center, and that Mansfield makes the largest contribution after Windham. He raised questions as to the Town's willingness to continue to financial support this to this extent. M. Ross asked if this is the only dental service in the area? P. Richardson explained that Generations also offers a dental clinic, although

there is a long wait for services. Discussion re: other options for dental care.

- Carol Pellegrine- Companions and Homemakers: the request is for \$4500. A. Holinko distributed copies of her review and went over the details. She sees this as a very essential service that is not offered by any other agency. Fees are charged based on ability to pay and eligibility for coverage through other programs. J. Kenny strongly endorses this agency; feels that they are able to respond to almost all requests for assistance. They are currently developing a website with information and links to other services.
 - Sam Gordon- WRTD- Dial-A-Ride: K. Grunwald provided a brief overview of the service and how it is funded. The feeling is that this is an important service.
 - P. Richardson pointed out the Veteran's Advisory Center and CT Legal Services also provide services to seniors.
 - Discussion regarding recommendations: K. Doeg moved that the Commission recommend to the Council that all of these agencies offer critical services and should be funded in the amount requested. This was approved unanimously. K. Grunwald will notify Commission members when agency funding requests will be coming in front of the Council in their budget deliberations.
- Mansfield 2020: Review of Action Plans (due April 1): C. Pellegrine suggested that members take some time to review this, and possibly form sub-committees to answer the questions posed. P. Hope suggested coordinating with the Senior Center Association, which has also been asked to provide feedback. M. Ross feels that some of the action points are redundant in light of existing services, and this feedback should be provided.
- New Senior Center: J. Quarto was part of a group that visited new senior centers in the area recently, and pointed out that we may want to look at possible regional services. M. Ross raised a concern about transportation issues related to accessing regional services for seniors.
 - Board of Senior Citizens: no discussion.
 - Transportation: no discussion.
 - Tax Relief: no discussion.
 - Employment Opportunities: no discussion.
 - Encourage Affordable, Accessible, Housing: no discussion.
- C. Pellegrine asked that members review these questions and come prepared to answer them at the next meeting.
- Proposed representative from Juniper Hill: Ruth Gunn- not present; this item will be removed from future agendas.
- "Other": none.

VI. **Optional Reports** on Services/Needs of Town Aging Populations

A. Health Care Services

Wellness Center and Wellness Program – J. Kenny distributed copies of her **January** report (February not available). C. Phillips asked about providing training for homecare workers and nursing assistants. Some of this training is provided through the community colleges. She feels that this would be appealing to women whose children have gone to school and are looking for employment. J. Kenny suggested that employment opportunities are available through Community Companions and Homemakers.

Mansfield Center for Nursing and Rehabilitation – J. Kenny: no report.

B. Social, Recreational and Educational

Senior Center – P. Richardson distributed copies of her monthly report. She reported that the Senior Center will be implementing MySeniorCenter, a computerized registration system.

Senior Center Assoc. – John Brubacher (for Tom Rogers): not present; no report.

C. Housing

Assisted Living Advisory Committee, Wrights Way, Juniper Hill, Jensen's Park,
Other: no reports.

D. Related Town and Regional Organizations such as:

Advisory Committee on the Needs of Persons with Disabilities, Senior
Resources of Eastern CT: no reports

VII. **Old Business**

- Long Range Plan for 2007- 2010: Update on Action Plans (all): K. Grunwald reported that M. Ross has been asked to consult to the town on the purchase of assisted hearing technology for the Town Council Chambers. Mark recommends that there is good signage to indicate that there is assisted listening technology available.

IX. **Adjournment**

Meeting adjourned at 11:16 AM. Next meeting: **Monday, April 13, 2009** at 9:30 AM at the Senior Center. Since this is Passover week, the recommendation was made to change this to the 20th. Group agreed unanimously.

Respectfully submitted,
Kevin Grunwald