

Mansfield Commission on Aging Agenda
9:30 AM – Senior Center
Monday, May 11, 2009

PRESENT: K. Grunwald (staff), T. Rogers, T. Quinn (Chair), S. Gordon, J. Quarto, W. Bigl, C. Pellegrine, P. Richardson (staff), C. Phillips, A. Holinko, Lida Bilokur (guest), J. Brubacher

REGRETS: M. Ross, M. Thatcher

- I. **Call to Order:** Chair T. Quinn 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** of April 20: Please note that J. Quarto should be listed under regrets. The minutes were accepted with that correction.
- IV. **Correspondence** – Chair and Staff: none.
- V. **New Business**
 - A. Role of the Commission on Aging: C. Phillips distributed copies of the “Role of the Commission on Aging”, and also had information from the State Commission which recommends how a local Commission should be formed. T. Quinn reminded members that the charge of the Town Council to this Commission is advisory. C. Phillips came across material from 1974 and 1979. Question as to whether this group has any executive authority. T. Quinn hopes that this group can formalize some way of letting people know what services are available to seniors in Town. He would like to see the Town re-institute the town-wide newsletter to all residents. J. Quarto pointed out that Sparks is sent out yearly to all registered voters over the age of 55. P. Richardson added that the Town Manager’s report is sent out regularly via email.
 - B. Communications/Newsletters from Senior Housing facilities: P. Richardson distributed a copy of the Juniper Hill newsletter.
 - C. “Other”: none.
- VI. **Optional Reports** on Services/Needs of Town Aging Populations
 - A. Health Care Services
Wellness Center and Wellness Program – J. Kenny was not present; P. Richardson distributed a copy of her monthly report.
Mansfield Center for Nursing and Rehabilitation – J. Kenny was not present; no report.
 - B. Social, Recreational and Educational
Senior Center – P. Richardson distributed a copy of her monthly report. She mentioned that Generations Health Clinic will be doing dental screening at the

Senior Center. The Center will no longer be open on Saturday due to the ending of the DSS grant that funded this. The MySeniorCenter registration system has been installed and seniors are starting to receive their cards to “swipe in.” This system will eventually replace the sign-in book and class registration. P. Richardson explained what information is being collected, and also said that this can potentially be used as a mailing list for Sparks.

Senior Center Association – J. Brubacher (for Tom Rogers): T. Rogers reported that the Association is awaiting approval by the Association for a new publisher of Sparks. This will save the Town of Mansfield approximately \$7000 per year in production costs. Lida Bilokur stated that the final recommendation has not been agreed upon. The Association is also revising their bylaws to make them consistent with their expectations regarding the role of the Town in working collaboratively with the Association.

C. Housing

Assisted Living Advisory Committee: K. Grunwald reported that Masonicare has finalized an option to purchase a piece of property for their proposed facility.

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.

T. Quinn mentioned that the Annual Town meeting will be Tuesday night. K. Grunwald added that transportation will be available to anyone who is unable to drive.

VII. Old Business

A. Long Range Plan for 2007- 2010: Update on Action Plans (all): no discussion.

B. Mansfield 2020: Review of Action Plans: copies of the Commission’s responses to the questions posed around these items were distributed to Commission members.

- New Senior Center: the feeling is that this is not likely in the current fiscal climate. J. Brubacher mentioned that recently the MSCA Chorus performed in Wallingford, and they were very impressed with the facility there. He suggested that a group of seniors should visit Wallingford and find out how they got this built. T. Rogers suggested having the Town Council form a study committee. J. Quarto suggested that the Town Council form a committee to explore options to partner with Masonicare to expand the Senior Center facility. J. Brubacher made a motion that a small group (he, K. Grunwald, T. Quinn, J. Quarto) get together to make a recommendation to the Commission around this issue. This motion was seconded, and approved unanimously. W. Bigl has suggested that the Town look at acquiring the land adjacent to the Community Center for a new Senior Center. P. Richardson feels that starting the process of accreditation

would be helpful to support the need for a new Center. C. Pellegrine feels that it is within the charge of the Commission to make a recommendation to the Council to pursue exploring partnership options with Masonicare.

- Board of Senior Citizens: T. Quinn has discussed this with the Mayor, and she feels that this is not viable.
- Transportation: C. Pellegrine pointed out that the feeling of the Commission is that this is a priority and needs to be expanded. There is a consensus that there are areas of the town that are not served by public transportation. Park & Ride is another idea that was discussed. There was some discussion about the perceived need for transportation vs. the actual need. K. Grunwald mentioned the availability of the Municipal Transportation grant, which may not be funded in the State budget. P. Richardson added that there are other services for seniors that may be eliminated or reduced in the State budget. S. Gordon asked about the availability of bus schedules, which can be difficult to read. T. Quinn asked whether or not this is a problem that the Commission should address? W. Bigl mentioned that possibility of a map being posted. C. Pellegrine suggested putting an article in Sparks to remind seniors about the bus. C. Phillips feels that people will only use the bus when they absolutely need to. J. Quarto said that the question becomes when you need it where would you go for the information? P. Richardson indicated that schedules are located at the Senior Center. K. Grunwald suggested inviting Mindy Perkins from the Transit District to come to a COA meeting; he will do that for the June meeting. Several members of the Commission will ride the bus prior to our next meeting.
- Tax Relief: no discussion
- Employment Opportunities: The feeling is that the lack of local businesses makes this less of a priority. P. Richardson mentioned that Community Companions and Homemakers is interested in hiring seniors. In general there does not seem to be a lot of interest in this issue.

VIII. **Adjournment**

The meeting adjourned at 10: 48 AM. Next meeting: **Monday, June 8, 2009** at 9:30 AM at the Senior Center

Respectfully submitted,
Kevin Grunwald