

Commission on Aging

Minutes of April 8, 2013

MEMBERS PRESENT: Will Bigl (2015), Sam Gordon (2014), April Holinko (2014), Bettejane Karnes (2015), Steve Kegler (2015), Bev Korba (2014), Laurie McMorrow (2014), Don Nolan (2014), Joan Terry, (2013)

COMMUNITY REPRESENTATIVES: Estelle Elliot (Wright's Way), Marilyn Gerling (Glen Ridge), Emile Poirier (Jensen's)

STAFF: Cindy Dainton, Senior Ctr. Coord.; Kevin Grunwald, Dir. of Human Services;

GUESTS: Matt Hart, Town Manager; Toni Moran, Town Council Personnel Committee; Maria Capriola, Asst. Town Manager; Steve LeGalt, Paradigm Healthcare Development

Minutes - The minutes of the March 11 special meeting were approved as written.

New Business – Councilor Toni Moran explained state PILOT funds and how much they affect Mansfield's budget. She said the Council is interested in determining how to best offer needed human services.

Matt Hart said the Senior Services position did not receive many applications when it was advertised last fall and has not been re-advertised due to a spending freeze put into effect in December. His proposed budget for 2013-14 contains funds for the three human services positions to be vacated (department head, senior services social worker, youth services counselor). It also proposes to increase the hours of the transportation coordinator and to restore the youth challenge program.

Toni Moran cautioned us to be careful regarding the word counseling as the word has a variety of definitions.

The Commission members expressed their opinions regarding the qualifications of the human services positions. Kevin said that there were few calls for services requiring an LCSW designation. Laurie shared what her responsibilities were in a similar job where she provided support counseling.

After more than an hour of discussion, it was decided that the Commission appeared to be in consensus on the expectations for a senior services worker. April was asked to formulate a statement for the approval of the Commission members that will then be given to the Town Manager and Council. April requested Laurie's help with the wording of the statement letter.

Senior Center – Kevin distributed copies of the Senior Center report. He said the questionnaire regarding services at the senior center is being filled out by many members. Beth Hankins is doing outreach in an effort to reach those who do not come to the Senior Center.

Assisted Living – Steven LeGalt of Paradigm Healthcare Development gave an update on a proposed independent/assisted living center to be located in southern Mansfield. His estimate is that it could open within three to five years.

Triad – Will reported that the police academy began last week with over 40 people in attendance.

Respectfully submitted, Joan Terry, secretary

Next Meeting: May 13th

Goals for the Commission on Aging 2012-2013

1. Monitor Mansfield's Long-Range Plan for seniors with a continued focus on priority issues of senior safety, information dissemination, senior center space needs and health care needs including changing federal benefit programs.
2. Continue to advocate for the installation of a bus shelter at the Route 275/Community Center bus stop.
3. Advocate for improvements to the local transportation system.
4. Encourage the Downtown Partnership to make the new Storrs downtown senior friendly.
5. Provide information regarding tax relief available to residents.
6. Monitor the development of an independent living/assisted living facility in Mansfield.
7. Support the hiring of a Senior Services Social Worker.
8. Support the implementation of the FoodShare program.