

MINUTES
Human Service Department Advisory Committee
Meeting
May 18, 2011
2:00-3:00

Present: Ethel Mantzaris, Youth Services Advisory Board, Victoria Nimirowski, Windham Area Interfaith Ministries, Sara Anderson, Mansfield Advocates for Children, Frank Perrotti, Member at Large, Jane Blanshard, Advisory Committee on Persons with Disabilities, Joan Quarto, Mansfield Senior Center Association, Joan Terry, Commission on Aging, Dexter Eddy, Mansfield Housing Authority, Kevin Grunwald (staff), Pat Michalak (staff), Cindy Dainton (staff)

Regrets: None

- I. **Call to Order:** Meeting called the meeting to order by Chairperson Ethel Mantzaris at 2:01PM.
- II. **Approval of minutes:** **MOTION** was made by F. Perrotti, seconded by D. Eddy that the minutes show what committee each member represents. **MOTION PASSED** unanimously.
- III. **Staff Presentations:**

Adult Services: Kevin Grunwald outlined the scope of the adult services office. He distributed copies of the quarterly report. He explained the Special Needs Fund that is used to help folks who are unable to meet the cost of utilities or groceries. This fund is completely funded by private donations. The use of food stamps has increased dramatically since the recession. The department oversees the distribution of baskets at Christmas and Easter. The increased demand for such services has caused the department to consider priorities carefully. Residents who seek fee waivers for recreation programs or trash pickup are processed by the adult services staff. They oversee the elderly tax rebate program as well as landlord/tenant issues. The staff members are not licensed clinicians so referrals to outside agencies are made as needed. However, several staff members are currently working toward their clinical licenses.

Senior Services: Cindy Dainton talked about the services offered at the Senior Center for those who are 55 or over. There are 1300 members of the center and 70% of them are Mansfield residents. In a typical month there are as many as 200 events, eight to twelve programs every day. There will be a change in hours this summer. The center will be open Thursday evenings and closed Friday afternoons. The classes at the center must be self supporting if there is a paid instructor.

Youth Services: Pat Michalak began by thanking several committee members for the help they have given her office in the past. Her department presently has a staff of two due to budget cuts. However, by using volunteers, many of whom are students at the University of Connecticut and E.O. Smith High School. They are able to offer a remarkable number of effective programs. The Youth Services Department serves as the social work referral for the public schools as they do not employ their own social workers.

IV. Review of Information Previously Requested.

Several handouts were distributed regarding the structure and activities of the Human Services Department, Youth Services, and the Senior Center.

V. Ethics issues for Advisory Committees

Tabled until the next meeting.

VI. Other

A question was raised regarding a person who would like to participate in our Volunteer to participate in our Volunteer Transportation Program but lives in an abutting town. She is a taxpayer in Mansfield because she owns real estate in our town. Since the program requires residence the Committee felt that she was not eligible but suggested that perhaps one of the volunteer drivers would be willing to drive her by making private arrangements.

VII. Future Agenda Items/Adjournment

- Kathy Ann Easley, Barbara Lavoie and Sandy Baxter were suggested as presenters at future meetings.
- Item #V

Next Meeting June, 15, 2011 at 2:00pm

Meeting Adjourned at 2:48 PM.

**Respectfully submitted,
Joan Quarto**