

MINUTES, HUMAN SERVICES ADVISORY COMMITTEE
June 20, 2012

PRESENT: Ethel Mantzaris (YSB), chair; Jane Blanshard (Disabilities), secretary; Sara Anderson (Advocates for Children); Dexter Eddy (housing Authority); Kevin Grunwald (ex officio); Lorraine Kenowski (at large); Bev Korba (Senior Center); Victoria Nimirowski (WAIM); Joan Terry (Commission on Aging).

ABSENT: Sara Anderson (Advocates for Children); Ron Baker (First Baptist Church).

The meeting was called to order by the chair at 2 p.m. The minutes were accepted.

Kevin met with representatives from Food Share this week. They are planning to bring in a food truck every other week, alternating between a refrigerated truck and one without refrigeration. They will bring produce and dairy products. There will be no eligibility requirements; anyone may have access to the food. They are looking for a sponsor who will find eight to ten volunteers to manage the distribution.

Victoria pointed out that she would volunteer, but not on extremely hot days. Kevin agreed that they need a larger pool of volunteers because some people would feel reluctant to brave bad winter weather, too. When school is in session they can probably get UConn volunteers.

Joan asked if it would involve heavy lifting. Kevin said that a requirement would be the ability to lift ten pounds. The time commitment would be only about an hour. The site is under discussion. Wright's Way parking lot is not quite big enough because the truck is large. The largest concentration of low-income residents at the north end of town is Hunting Lodge Road, but this is primarily students.

We need to publicize the need to observe fair housing regulations and to have a complaint process in effect. Human Service is developing this service. Kevin reported that someone said Glen Ridge is discriminating because it requires an applicant to be able to take care of himself. Private ownership does not release the housing from the rules. Jane pointed out that we expect new members to participate in the cooperative for at least a few years before they become incapacitated. A person who feels discriminated against would have to file a complaint.

Youth Services is starting Mansfield Challenge on June 23. It takes 7th and 8th grade kids on a wilderness challenge. This has been offered for a number of years. There is no charge, but we have been soliciting donations. They rent canoes, do rock climbing, take long hikes—no matter what the weather. Also a number of kids get camperships at Holiday Hill, Camp Mansfield, and the 4H Camp. Those on fee waiver can use it for up to four weeks of camp.

Senior Services will schedule fewer evening activities at the Senior Center this summer, once a month. There will be a picnic in July and a movie of the queen. Masonicare is hosting a barbecue in August. There is a slight charge for this. They will have some promotional material.

Public transportation? Kevin said that he had presented his letter to the disabilities advisory committee and they endorsed it. It has not been sent because he needed to wait for this committee to endorse it as well. We voted to send the letter. Kevin said it would be in the Council packet for their next meeting.

Kevin said we could probably invite the staff to our next meeting. If we meet in July there might be a lot of people away. We were trying for a mission statement that says what makes us unique, what is our actual purpose, what are we doing? Food Share's is "When Hunger Goes Away, So Will We." It's an easy thing to remember that tells you who they are, but they are focused on only one thing. We want to focus on something that says, "We do this, but we don't do that." Any other thoughts? Ethel: The shorter the better. Perhaps eliminate "with no additional fees." Kevin: we will continue our attempt to prioritize.

Ethel: Number VI on the agenda has to be done by the staff. It is not appropriate for us to do this. Kevin said the committee hasn't identified what we would like to accomplish. Ethel said that one goal would be for us to be familiar with what is going on in the department, and perhaps offer suggestions if needed.

Ron has not been able to come because of funerals; Kevin will check with him but thinks he is interested. Jane says she is retiring from public service. Kevin says she is supposed to be on for three years.

Next meeting: July 18. We will skip August.

Meeting adjourned at 2:30.

Respectfully submitted,
Jane Blanshard