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Meeting Minutes
Commission for the Aging
Town of Easton, CT

Meeting – Monday, October 3, 2022 – 5:00 PM to 6:00 PM
Held at the Easton Senior Center

Attendees: Anne Hughes, Melinda O'Brien, Diane Parker, Lisa Tasi, and Alison Witherbee / Municipal Agent for the Aging – Social Services Director (via speaker phone). Nanette DeWester was not in attendance.

The meeting started at 5:10 PM. Christine Calvert, Director of Finance, Town of Easton, CT had opened the doors to ESC for the members. Alison Witherbee attended via speaker phone.

Meeting Minutes

The prior meeting minutes were reviewed and approved on a motion by Anne Hughes and seconded by Melinda O'Brien.

Ongoing Business

- MSC Fund

No update at this meeting.

-Municipal Agent's Report

Alison reported that Fall is a busy time as she is scheduling sessions for the Medicare Open Enrollment period, which is from October 15th to December 7th, as well as energy assistance applications.

She will be having one Medicare Open Enrollment Day on Tuesday, November 1st from 10AM to 2PM and it will also be a HYBRID event. Lisa Alhabal from Southwestern CT Agency on Aging (SWCCA) will meet with individuals for ½ hour sessions. The second part of the day will be conducted with another CHOICES counselor via phone or Zoom.US. The sessions are open to Easton, CT residents only.

Applications for Energy Assistance started on September 15th by appointment with Alison. Individuals can also contact the Alliance for Community Empowerment (www.alliance.com) or call 203-366-8241 if preferred. Individuals approved for energy assistance will have deliveries starting on November 1st. Requirements for applications are bank statement (for every member of the household); current UI statement ; any documentation pertaining to Employment/Unemployment/Pension; paperwork from DSS (Department of Social Services) if you are receiving SNAP (Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program) benefits.

A report on the "Grow A Row" program with data on the outreach during this summer will be used in upcoming meetings with the Agricultural Commission and other local interests to promote the cause for the next year. The involvement of FoodRescue.US. has helped locally by engaging volunteers to donate and transfer excess fresh food from farms, grocers, and

restaurants to those most vulnerable seniors. Stamford-based "Food Rescue" - <http://www.foodrescue.us/>

- SWCCA <https://www.swcaa.org/>

SWCCA meetings are beginning with a review of the year. The annual meeting, celebrating 48 years of service to the community, will be held on Thursday, October 20th at 9 AM via Zoom.US. Those interested in attending the meeting are welcomed. The meeting link is as follows: <https://us02web.zoom.us/j/86835285119>

Planning

With the Easton Village Store closed due to well remediation being conducted by the DEEP, the outreach of cooked meals delivered homebound Easton seniors or those in need during the holiday season is problematic. Alison will be contacting some student affiliated hospitality organizations that may want to engage in community outreach. During the holidays, Alison also works with the local chapter of the National Charity League. The CFA members also expressed interest in helping in some part for outreach during the holiday months.

Open Discussion

The CFA members discussed update on the expansion of SNAP benefits for CT residents as of October 1st. Governor Ned Lamont announced that more working families, single and older adults will become eligible for SNAP with monthly benefits rising more than 12% for all current enrollees. Under the new eligibility benefit levels, Connecticut residents will qualify for SNAP if their monthly gross income is at or below 200% of the federal poverty level (for example, this would include \$2,265 for a single person and \$4,625 for a four-person household). This is an increase from the most recent eligibility benefit level of 185% of the federal poverty level (\$1,986 for a single person and \$4,086 for a four-person household). It's also important to point out that SNAP enrollees of all ages are also automatically eligible for the Connecticut Energy Assistance Program. Food Assistance - SNAP (ct.gov)

Heating Help - Connecticut Heat Assistance Programs Other new updates for 2022 are: Applications for the Connecticut Energy Assistance Program (CEAP) and the Low-Income Household Water Assistance Program (LIHWAP) 2022-2023 Program Year are being accepted starting September 1, 2022.

The meeting concluded at 6:13 PM, on a motion by Anne Hughes, seconded by Melinda O'Brien and approved.

Submitted by,

Commission for the Aging
L. Tasi