

Meeting Minutes  
Commission for the Aging  
Town of Easton, CT

Meeting – Monday, November 7, 2022 – 5:00 PM to 6:00 PM  
Held at the Easton Senior Center

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

The meeting started at 5:12 PM. A welcome was made to Jessica DiPietro, new Alternate Member.

Meeting Minutes

The meeting minutes were reviewed and approved on a motion by Diane Parker and seconded by Anne Hughes.

Ongoing Business

- MSC Fund

No update at this meeting.

-Municipal Agent's Report

Alison has been busy with Medicare Open Enrollment sessions and energy assistance applications. Counselors from the CHOICES program at SWCCA (Southwestern CT Agency on Aging) [www.swcaa.org](http://www.swcaa.org) have been assisting with any questions on current insurance plans within the Medicare setting.

With the oil prices the highest in the US in decades, there is concern that seniors may need additional financial assistance. Alison mentioned that there may be some funds available from the local chapter of the Salvation Army specifically when health or safety are at risk.

Alison will be having a Lunch and Learn presentation on November 10<sup>th</sup> with members from the Aspetuck Health District. The topic will be on "Fall Prevention and Holiday Safety. The Aspetuck Health District strives to promote health and well-being, prevent disease, and ensure a clean and safe environment.

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

SWCCA has been instrumental in assisting Alison with the Medicare Open Enrollment period with the participation of CHOICES counselors. The agency is a trusted source of advocacy, information, and access to care for older and vulnerable adults that provides resources to strengthen the regional aging network. It receives funds through the Older Americans Act and works with dedicated volunteers.

Planning

The CFA members discussed some options for holiday meal outreach. The members will be coordinating with Alison to determine a convenient schedule. Lisa said availability of members will make the project easy to do. She will follow up with Alison and members.

#### Open Discussion

CFA members discussed the potential of rolling blackouts and loss of electricity with regards to seniors or those comprised who may be on oxygen therapy. Many power companies place a special code on an elderly member's account that will mark them as a priority customer. A form can be submitted by a medical provider to assist emergency arrangements with the power company. Alison will be reviewing a list of those seniors and others with disability who may be in this category. The RUOK program with the EPD can offer additional assistance to seniors who may also be homebound or medically disabled. Jessica provided detail on what actually defines a homebound person (from Medicare): 1/ Patients either need supportive devices such as crutches, canes, wheelchairs, and walkers; special transportation; or help from someone else in order to leave their home because of illness or injury OR have a condition that makes leaving the home medically inadvisable; And 2/"There must exist a normal inability to leave home; and leaving home must require a considerable and taxing effort." Lisa also asked about those who may have a medical alert pendant or band that may be compromised when being without electricity. Although most medical alert buttons have a self- contained battery that communicates to the medical alert console (company), the backup power may last only up to 72 hours, depending on the system that is installed. A list of those individuals who may have this type of life-saving assistance will be a good review / cross-check for Alison's outreach and safety concerns with first responders.

Additional information regarding heating and energy assistance is available on the following websites -

Connecticut Energy Assistance Program

[www.Alliancect.org](http://www.Alliancect.org)

Alison informed the CFA members that former Municipal Agent Pam Healy's husband had passed away.

The meeting concluded at 6:05 PM, on a motion by Dianne Parker, seconded by Nanette DeWester and approved.

Submitted by,

Commission for the Aging  
L. Tasi