

Meeting Minutes
Town of Easton, Connecticut
Commission for the Aging
Monthly Meeting
Monday, June 4, 2018

The meeting was called to order at 5:09 PM. Present were Linda Dollard, Anne Hughes, Karen Martin, Melinda O'Brien, Lisa Tasi and Eileen Zimmerman / Municipal Agent – Senior Services. Phyllis Machledt was not in attendance.

1. Meeting Minutes

The minutes from the May 7, 2018 meeting were reviewed and unanimously approved by the members on a motion by Anne Hughes and Linda Dollard.

2. Unfinished Business

A. MCF Fund

An updated report was furnished via Town Finance Director, Christine Calvert.

B. Medicare Savings Program CT

Recently on May 15, 2018 Governor Malloy signed budget legislation adopted by the General Assembly that includes full funding restoration for the Medicare Savings Program. The benefits will continue through end of next fiscal season, 2019.

3. New Business

A. Municipal Agent's Report – Eileen Zimmerman

The "Healing the Heart" workshop just concluded and Eileen plans to offer this bereavement outreach group once again in the fall. Also planned would be small group meetings in her office to make it more casual. Eileen attended a Narcan Training at the Easton Library which was held by Silverhill Hospital in conjunction with the EMS and Easton Police. She has also attended a Veterans' Assistance Training in Rocky Hill. VA has programs to assist those who are veterans. She also met recently with fellow Municipal Agents at a meeting held in Stratford. In her duties, she is currently assisting with some with complicated issues. Eileen is currently attending Medicare CHOICES Counselor Training at SWCCA.

B. Discussion & Planning on Projects

Eileen is thinking of a presentation on Downsizing and staging a senior's home for sale. She is working with some senior contacts who have specialty in these areas. Linda Dollard also has a lead that can lend some support and direction.

Planning for this topic and the previously mentioned panel discussion will be developed for implementation during summer months for implementation at a late September / early October date.

Eileen will also offer an additional "New to Medicare" presentation in September with Lisa from SWCCA and Open Enrollment sessions in October and November.

Eileen is also looking to get the Barlow "teen techs" involved in another effort to assist seniors with their smartphones and computers.

CFA members discussed the situation of some seniors still driving and the peril they face. There is a need to inform them for their safety and take other transportation options. There is the Easton Senior Center van which is available gratis to Easton seniors. Previously ITNCoastalCT, a senior car service (part of ITNAmerica) was a membership program available in the immediate area with volunteer drivers who use their personal cars however that program has ceased operations. Anne Hughes brought up the idea of getting seniors to utilize Uber or Lift for their needs. Discussion continued but there are reasons why seniors are hesitant - technological unfamiliarity, safety & privacy concerns and budget.

CFA had a presentation a few years back about "seniors & driving". Perhaps another updated presentation with suggestions for viable alternatives on transportation can be formed along with other pertinent topics.

Seniors "Aging in Place" – nearly 90% of seniors wanting to stay in their own home as they age – has been identified by AARP and other organizations. The reasons are multiple – familiarity of home, finances, wanting to live independently. CFA did identify that seniors should be proactive about planning for retirement, including thinking about how they might need to change their lives or their environments to ensure that they're going to be able to retire and live comfortably where they want to live and be doing what they want to be doing.

Linda Dollard proposed a fun event for lady seniors and with discussion it could be a collaborative effort with the ESC. Eileen will consider this idea.

C. SWCCA Report

Phyllis Machledt, SWCCA representative, was not present. The next meeting of SWCCA will take place on June 13th.

D. Other New Items

MA Hours – Eileen's current work week is 25 hours Monday through Friday. She proposed working Tuesday 8AM-4:30PM; Wednesday 8AM-4PM; Thursday 8AM-4:30PM. Upon discussion, the CFA members agreed that the proposed change in days and hours would not create a problem. Instead the new days and hours would provide flexibility and guarantee greater time to handle responsibility in Municipal Agent and Senior Services roles. Linda Dollard made a motion, seconded by Karen Martin and it was unanimously approved. Communication will be sent to Eileen so she may present this to Town Hall.

Lisa shared a presentation she developed on Senior Citizens – 911 Education program and provided a copy to Eileen.

Karen Martin entertained revisiting this safety idea as she and former member Mary Pajonas had suggested earlier this year that both the Police and Fire Dept. be guests to lead another presentation as the topic is timely and helpful.

E. Other Updates

None

F. Open Discussion

Since the next CFA meeting is not until September 4th (Tuesday after Labor Day Holiday), the members will be in contact with Eileen with regards to topics and ideas discussed at today's meeting. The Chair will update members and be in contact with Eileen.

4. Next Meeting

The Commission's next meeting will be held on Tuesday, September 4th, 2018 from 5:00 PM to 6:00 PM at the ESC. The agenda will be forwarded to the Town Clerk for proper posting.

5. Adjourn

Karen Martin made a motion to adjourn the meeting. Linda Dollard seconded the motion and it was unanimously approved at 6:20 PM.

Submitted by,
Commission for the Aging
L. Tasi