

Mansfield Commission on Aging Minutes

10:00 AM – Senior Center

Monday, February 11, 2008

PRESENT: K. Grunwald (staff), J. Quarto, C. Pellegrine (Vice-Chair), B. Goulsbrough, M. Thatcher, S. Gordon, M. Ross, Rob Miller (Guest, Eastern Highlands Health District), P. Hope (staff), Stephanie Woodruff (Intern/Guest), C. Phillips, Will Bigl
REGRETS: T. Quinn, J. Kenny, A. Holinko

- I. **Call to Order:** Vice-Chair C. Pellegrine called the meeting to order at 10:00 AM.
- II. **Appointment of Recording Secretary:** K. Grunwald agreed to take minutes for the meeting.
- III. Acceptance of Minutes: the minutes of the **January 22, 2008** meeting were accepted as written.
- IV. **Correspondence** – Chair and Staff: C. Pellegrine circulated a get well card for Tim Quinn. She will follow-up on appointment letter for Mark Ross to the Committee on Committees.
- V. **New Business**
 - Robert Miller: Director of Health for the Eastern Highlands Health District; local regional health department for the area. The Health District has a staff of 10; health inspectors and educators. Their primary function is to provide public health services including environmental health (restaurant inspection, etc.), communicable disease control and education, health education including employee wellness and safe routes to school. The District recently received a grant to promote healthy behaviors and activity among seniors, and will be forming a coalition to determine how the money will be allocated and spent. The coalition will consist of Ande Bloom of the Health District and representatives of the local senior centers. www.ehhd.org is their website. Rob distributed copies of their annual report. He explained that they have formed a regional health district because it is more efficient than doing this for individual towns; this also makes them eligible for additional grant funding. The district is focusing on public health emergency preparedness, which is being funded by the CDC to improve preparedness for public health emergencies. They have formed a partnership of local healthcare providers. They are currently focused on pandemic flu. Rob distributed a pamphlet on pandemic flu as part of their health education component. They have developed a database of volunteers and a local health network that identifies all providers in the area. One of the challenges is in targeting special needs populations. They have created a “file of life” which collects healthcare information for seniors in one location. Restaurant inspections vary depending on the classification of the restaurant. They are required to respond to complaints. C. Pellegrine asked how they are intending to get this information out to seniors. Dissemination includes WAM Horizons, Senior Sparks, public presentations, radio talk show, cable access, etc. W. Bigl invited Rob to speak at Jensen’s. B. Goulsbrough suggested using Sparks more to get information out. They will also make more materials available to distribute at the Senior Center. P. Hope asked about the district being able to pay for health prevention services at the Senior Center. Some health districts obtain grant funding to support those services. A work plan was approved as part of the funding proposal, which

identified items such as exercise equipment, medical screening devices, etc. M. Ross asked how the special needs population is defined? This question has not been answered adequately by the health district. The health district is looking to establish an ongoing advisory committee that will emerge from some of the new grant activities focused on public health and educational promotion. Members thanked Rob for his presentation.

- Agency Funding Requests (K. Grunwald/Commissioners): K. Grunwald asked commissioners to report on agencies they reviewed.
- R. Gouldsbrough: Windham Regional Transit District: requesting slightly over \$41,000 for Dial-A-Ride services. Recommend that the agency be funded as requested. Moved and seconded; approved unanimously.
- J. Quarto: McSweeney Regional Senior Center: have requested \$6500 to support the dental clinic. She reported that while a small number of residents used the service, this appears to be an important service. Recommended approval of the funding. 126 Mansfield residents used the service in the past year. Moved and seconded; approved unanimously.
- C. Phillips: TVCCA: Delivered meals-on-wheels to 42 residents. Requesting an increase in funding from \$1460 to \$4840, reflecting increased costs of food and fuel. This is the first increase in nine years. C. Phillips feels that state and federal funding should be increased, along with client donations. She recommends funding as requested. Moved and seconded; approved unanimously.
- A. Holinko: Community Companion and Homemaking Service: not present, no report.
- C. Pellegrine asked that members attend the Town Council meeting to support these agency funding requests.
- "Other": B. Gouldsbrough mentioned the funding request for the No-Freeze shelter; some discussion regarding this service.

VI. **Optional Reports** on Services/Needs of Town Aging Populations

A. Health Care Services

Wellness Center and Wellness Program – J. Kenny was not present; copies of her monthly report were distributed. J. Quarto noted that the date needs to be corrected. Mansfield Center for Nursing and Rehabilitation – J. Kenny was not present; no report.

B. Social, Recreational and Educational

Senior Center – P. Hope distributed copies of her report. The Center has been closed some days due to weather. The bi-annual townwide copy of Sparks was distributed; the copier needed to be replaced when this was being produced. Staff are slated to receive new computers, which will allow them to send directly to the copier, improving quality of the publication. Some new programs are starting; a presentation was done on the cardiac rehabilitation program, which is covered by Medicare. The Association purchased 16 new armchairs and three computer carts. Tax Assistance is being offered on Monday and Wednesday. Two undergraduate students are doing internships here. P. Hope met with Generations Connect at UConn to attempt to access more volunteers to work with seniors.

Senior Center Association – J. Brubacher (for Tom Rogers) was not present; no report.

C. Housing

Assisted Living Advisory Committee: K. Grunwald gave a brief presentation on the work of this committee. An RFP is being released.

Wrights Way: no report.

Juniper Hill: distributed 110 copies of the transportation survey.

Jensen's Park, Other: no reports.

D. Related Town and Regional Organizations such as:

Advisory Committee on the Needs of Persons with Disabilities: M. Ross is looking at suggesting something for new sound system for the Council Chambers.

Senior Resources of Eastern CT: no report.

VII. Old Business

- Long Range Plan for 2007- 2010: Action Plans – Small group discussion W. Bigl reported that he, C. Phillips and T. Quinn completed the strategic planning process. He read their vision statement for the year 2020. Adrienne Parks and Joan Pinney joined the three members working on this. Action points include a new senior center, transportation, information dissemination, Mansfield Board of Seniors, similar to Board of Education, to oversee concerns of seniors. The other action point was to work with UConn to bring the Senior Olympics to the Town of Mansfield. There will be an open house for the Vision Fair at the Senior Center on Feb. 27 at lunch time, and in the evening at the Community Center.
- K.Grunwald reported that Dial-A-Ride is going to be piloting a trip to the library from Glen Ridge, Juniper Hill, and Wrights Way. This will be publicized once the schedule has been determined. B. Gouldsbrough raised the issue of liability for volunteer drivers. C. Pellegrine stated that at one point volunteers were certified to drive municipal vehicles, but this may no longer be the case. B. Gouldsbrough said that there is insurance coverage available for volunteer drivers. K. Grunwald will get information about this to B. Gouldsbrough. He will draft a letter to Rep. Denise Merrill on behalf of the Commission to waive insurance requirements for volunteers.

IX. Adjournment: meeting adjourned at 11:30 AM.

Next meeting: **Monday, March 10, 2008** at 10:00 AM at the Senior Center

Respectfully submitted,
Kevin Grunwald