

TOWN OF HADDAM COMMITTEE ON AGING Minutes

Monday JANUARY 8, 2018 10:00 am Town Annex Bldg. Jail Hill Haddam

Attachments: Agenda 1/8/2018

Members Present: Thurston Clark, Jackie Crysler, Marge DeBold, Susan DeCarli, Beth Hartke, Mary Lou Heger, Mary Lou Pierce, Susan Rutty, Robert Waller, Charles Macunas-HKYFS, Eleanor Farrell, Jessica Condil, Allen Alonzo Emergency Management Director.

Call to Order: By **Mary Lou Heger** followed by Pledge of Allegiance

Minutes of the November meeting were read, and a motion was made to accept as amended and agreed by all.

COMMITTEE REPORTS

Eleanor Farrell advised that she had seen 32 people last month. Many of the seniors helped were concerned about the pending cuts to the Medicare Savings Program at the state level. Here income levels were changed putting many at risk of losing this vital program which covers prescription costs and other medical services. They were very busy considering other options if the program were cut.

Club 60 Their meeting is 1pm today. Mary Lou Pierce discussed the club's scholarship recipient Megan Little. She advises that Bingo will be offered on 1/22 and the December meeting featured the school Jazz band generating a very good turnout.

HKYFS Charles reports that they have posted for a new Executive Director and have 50 candidates. Interviews set for next week. On a sad note their Director of Clinical Services Nathan Carpenter has resigned to move to Atlanta. They will be replacing him, and they have 2 interns who can take up some of the work there. The agency is also pursuing grants for small nonprofits, for new programs.

Allen Alonzo the towns **Emergency Manager** was introduced to the group. He was asked to join us, to explain how the program serves Haddam both in terms of planning for natural and man-made emergencies. Members of the disaster organizations are trained and equipped and insured against personal risk to handle these events. Earlier Thurston had asked about how the Warming centers worked, and we wanted to integrate his information with the work being done by the committee on Emergency

Preparedness for seniors. The Connecticut State office of Emergency Services provides guidance, ongoing, and makes disaster emergency proclamations which puts the system in place for an event. Locally they have about 40 cots for shelters which can be located at the Middle School, with alternative warming sites at Higganum Firehouse and the Library. The State can provide FEMA stores to help with our response. The Town's Emergency Plan is updated in cooperation with the Fire Chief. Allen said he would be willing to speak to other groups showing interest if needed.

The COA would like to help: At present there is a local population of 13% over 65 years and 30% over 55. The COA can help by helping to identify "Shut ins" that may need additional assistance to stay safe or be removed in the event of a major storm. This needs to be kept updated. Jessica advises that she has a small list between her and Allen of about 8-11 people in town who have been identified. It was suggested that the COA begin a public outreach information program to make sure we have the names of those who need assistance, through various methods, and it typically takes 7x for people see the campaign and respond. We discussed the Land line vs Cell Phone changes and how the listing may not show new numbers. The most important message is for people to be prepared to be on their own for 24-72 hours, with what they need to keep warm, hydrate and provision with enough food for that period. The COA will put together a subcommittee to develop public education program to support the work by Jessica and Allen in this regard.

Thurston recommended we stress elements to help seniors react to this information using multiple sources e.g. The Haddam Now, Bulletin, Senior Center, Senior Expo and the program started by Jessica with information magnet. We should investigate ways to engage other organizations to work together in these types of issues, citing Churches, Lions Club, Knights of Columbus etc.

We should highlight the **Haddam.org** website section on Emergency Response for those who use computers.

One benefit of a rising interest in this topic may be to get local volunteers from the various groups to participate in the various emergency organizations. The COA subcommittee led by Beth will continue to investigate how other entities work to notify citizens and better understand how all components work together locally and regionally.

We spoke about the Lion's Club local initiative for readable House Numbers. They have identified a problem with inconsistent house numbering, preventing first responders

from easily identifying one house from another. For a small cost people can sign up to have very legible house number sign made. Examples are in the lobby of the Haddam Post Office, and application sheets available with the Lions (Larry Maggi, coordinator) The COA will help to make this information available more broadly, and initially Thurston will write a letter for local News about the program.

On a sad note: Beth advised the COA that Margie Bartolini had recently died. She was known among things for bringing magazines to the senior Center.

Motion to adjourn: Without any new business forthcoming, a motion to adjourn was made by Marge, and seconded by Beth. Members voted to adjourn at 11:20am.

NEXT MEETING MONDAY February 12, 2018 AT THE ANNEX ON JAIL HILL RD

Respectfully submitted by,

Robert D Waller

Secretary COA

Minutes approved by COA 2/12/2018 on a motion by Susan Ritty and seconded by Mary Lou Pierce, voted all aye.

Sent to Town Clerk and First Selectman 2/12/18 by email. Robert Waller