

**Haddam Committee on Aging
Minutes
January 27, 2020
Haddam Town Annex**

Attendance:

Thurston Clark – Chairman of COA, Jackie Crysler, Marge DeBold, Beth Hartke, MaryLou Heger, Mary Pierce, Susan Ruddy, Bob McGarry – First Selectman, Jessica Condil – Senior and Social Services, Colleen Totman – Senior Center, Joann Woickelman – High Meadows, Kaye Burgess, and James Harris.

Call to order:

The meeting was called to order at 10:00 a.m. by Thurston Clark. The pledge of allegiance was said.

Public Comments:

Kaye Burgess spoke to the group about her experiences when she visited three other nearby Senior Centers (Middletown, Old Saybrook Estuary, and East Haddam). She mentioned a concern that our Senior Center hours had been cut back, and she described a variety of services that are offered by the other Centers and how some of them have dealt with concerns that are similar to Haddam's. Committee members mentioned trying to get our numbers up so we could justify keeping our Senior Center open for more than three days a week. Cost seems to be one factor. Another concern is the fact that our Senior Center space is limited to one large room. It was suggested that we work to address the problems we identify.

James Harris, a guest of Thurston's, visiting from Brooklyn, was introduced.

Minutes:

The minutes of the December meeting were considered and approved on the motion made by Mary Pierce and seconded by Mary Lou Heger.

Reports and Organizations Remarks:

First Selectman Bob McGarry spoke. He indicated that the Board of Selectmen were deliberating about next year's budget and if changes were suggested any request should go to the BOS and the Board of Finance. He also mentioned the anticipated Board of Education budget with a possible increase for the town of Haddam. The Census, taken every ten years, will be conducted on April 1 this year. The director at Brainerd Library and Jessica Condil, Haddam Social Services director, are working on a process to help make the Census taking successful in town.

Joann Woickelman reported that, at the time, there was no new news at High Meadows.

Jessica Condil, Municipal Agent/Social Services, reported for December. Some items in her report included: 226 visits to the Senior Center, 129 taking part in the CRT program, 10 medical trips by the van, about eight people per week for the Tuesday shopping trip, distribution of 65 Christmas baskets, the Food Bank served 25 adults and ten children, and January being the time of renewal for SNAP (emergency fuel program).

Colleen Totman commented about the Senior Center. It is now easier to show movies, thanks to a new Fire Stick. The Senior Center Facebook site (which needs updating) was mentioned, with the suggestion that perhaps Colleen should have access to it. She also noted that John Nork has helped to get the word out about activities and meals at the Senior Center by sending out informative emails to many seniors.

Mary Pierce, president of Haddam Club 60 reviewed the agendas for meetings today and next Monday, February 3. She also listed planned programs for the rest of the year.

Old Business:

A summary of responses to our recent survey was emailed to COA members today by Beth Hartke, who had volunteered to summarize the information. Her summary was based on the 32 responses from 200 mailings. Her summary is included as an attachment to these minutes. The Chair pointed out that it would be helpful to obtain information from a larger group, suggesting that we mail the survey to an additional 100 seniors. Jessica Condil, at Social and Senior Services, indicated that she would help in any way she could.

Emergency Preparedness – tabled to next meeting.

New Business:

The Chair informed Committee members that Bob Waller was looking at, and finding out more about, State grants available from Senior Resources Agency on Aging.

Adjournment:

Marge made the motion, seconded by Beth, to adjourn. The meeting was adjourned at 11:37.

Respectfully submitted,

Marjorie DeBold
Secretary, pro tem

The next COA meeting will be on the fourth Monday of February, February 24, at the Town Annex at 10:00 a.m.

