

The Senior Citizens Commission held their regular meeting on Thursday, February 16, 2012 at the Senior Center at 2:45 P.M. Present at the meeting were members Paula Friez, Sally Tracy, Diane Croxford-Walker and Maureen Johnson; Municipal Agent Cheryl Schardt; Administrative Officer Joyce Stille and Senior Center Employee Alice Hare.

**Call to Order:**

Mrs. Friez called the meeting to order at 2:45 P.M.

**Approval of Minutes:**

A motion was made by Mrs. Tracy, seconded by Mrs. Johnson to approve the minutes of the November 17, 2011 meeting minutes as presented. Motion unanimously passed.

**Public Comment:**

None.

**Municipal Agent's Report:**

Mrs. Schardt reported that she has received information on other towns' procedures for their food pantry. The group discussed the importance of having an intake form. The form would request information such as number of family members, ages and allergies. This intake form could assist in determining the level of need. The group also discussed having a list of available items to select from. It would also help people know what donations are needed. The group discussed if it would be necessary to have set hours for the food pantry. However, due to the number of people requesting items from the food pantry that would not be necessary.

Ms. Stille requested current numbers of families that utilize the food pantry and receive assistance. Ms. Schardt provided the following information since the beginning of the fiscal year, July 1, 2011:

- approximately 8 families a week use the food pantry
- approximately 7 families have received fuel assistance (no repeats)
- 2 families have received assistance with their electric bill
- 1 family for phone

The group reviewed that phone bills should not be paid. There are programs available for free phones to use for emergencies.

The group reviewed the current procedure of determining assistance for fuel, and changes that need to be made:

- a form needs to be created to determine level of assistance
- if the family requests assistance from Social Services while waiting for approval from ACCESS, the Director of Senior and Social Services is required to follow up on ACCESS approval

Currently there is no form used. Ms. Schardt will be creating a form that will need to be completed each time someone requests fuel assistance.

**Old Business:**

Mrs. Friez reported that Probate Judge Michael Darby will be returning to the Bolton Senior Center on May 23<sup>rd</sup>.

The group discussed the success of the Open House. Suggestions included ending the Open House at 5:00 rather than 7:00.

Mrs. Friez shared with the group that setting up a "Buddy System" was discussed at the monthly Board meeting. Ms. Stille discussed the importance of having a current "At Risk" list of Seniors or residents with special needs that is available during town wide emergencies.

Ms. Stille reported that the budget that was submitted actually showed a decrease in the FY13 budget. The budget was changed in the Vendors Account to bring it to the current level. This is the line item used for Resident Assistance.

**New Business:**

Mrs. Johnson shared an article with the commission regarding a tax freeze for eligible Middletown Seniors. Ms. Stille noted she wasn't familiar with Middletown's procedures; however it is typically a tax deferred program. The senior continues to pay the same amount in taxes; however the increases are accumulated, and will come due when the estate sells. Mrs. Johnson will follow up with the city of Middletown for more information. Ms. Stille informed the board that after it has been researched, if the board feels it is something they would like to pursue, at that point it should be brought to the Board of Selectmen.

Ms. Stille explained to the board that there is an Elderly Tax Relief Local Share Program. This information is available at the Assessor's Office. There is also a work program for seniors if they qualify for up to \$750 credit on their taxes. This information is available at the Senior Center.

Mrs. Tracy reported that residents that were not getting the newsletter before are now receiving it.

The next meeting will take place Thursday, April 19<sup>th</sup> at 2:45 p.m.

**Adjournment:**

A motion was made by Mrs. Johnson, seconded by Mrs. Croxford-Walker to adjourn the meeting at 3:30 P.M. Motion unanimously passed.

Respectfully Submitted,

Heidi Bolduk  
Board Clerk

PLEASE SEE THE MINUTES OF SUBSEQUENT MEETINGS FOR THE APPROVAL OF THESE MINUTES AND ANY CORRECTIONS HERETO.