

Policy and Planning Board Minutes

Monday, March 1, 2021

Present: Virginia Ferrari, Robert Fox, Wendy Kleros, Doris Levinson, Andree Brooks,

Staff: Sue Pfister, Holly Betts, Kristen Witt, Jacqueline Villapandro, Elaine Daignault

Absent: Aracelli Cetina, Nor Smitobol, Karen Kleine

Meeting Called to order: Virginia Ferrari

Item #6 moved to #2

- Approval of February 1, 2021 meeting minutes: Robert Fox/Virginia Ferrari
- Update on "Hello Neighbor" program, Jacqueline Villalpano: Jacqueline reported doing well with grocery deliveries. There are 7 volunteers and the 9 recipients. The department was able to match 7 recipients. The grocery program recipients have a code when match with a volunteer. The volunteer will coordinate time and day of delivery; no more than 15 grocery items with receipt and payment either check, cash or Venmo. No cigarettes, alcoholic beverages, and prescriptions. Service will be provided once a week. Volunteers and recipients will follow the Covid-19 Guidelines. Volunteer not allowed to go into the homes to unpack the groceries. Registration form for "Hello Neighbor" program will be on the website.
- Update on COVID and vaccination Sue Pfister: Sue reported that the vaccination clinics and numbers had an uptick in numbers. The positivity rate is continuing to decline. As of Friday, the positivity rate was 2.22% this is terrific for the State of Connecticut. There were 140 Covid-19 related hospitalizations in Fairfield County and 21 confirmed cases of the variant reported in the State of Connecticut, bringing the number up to 63. Sue mentioned the Johnson and Johnson vaccine responds well to the variants. The Friends will be putting together a panel of experts for a round table discussion on the Covid-19 for a safe community by Zoom. Should have accurate answers for staff and participants of the Center before reopening. The center held two (2) clinics. one (1) last week primarily for the second shot, 170 shots were given out. The Senior Center offered the Health department this facility for any future clinics. Will reach out for the folks having trouble registering and the homebound. Elaine stated the testing facility at 47 Long Lot Road closed as of Friday February 28, 2021. Harbor Yards in Bridgeport and Norwalk Technical School on Richards Avenue in Norwalk are opened for testing.
- Report on FY2021-22 budget Sue Pfister: Sue reported that the Budget for the Center for Senior Activities and applauded the Board of Finance how they were extremely supportive, understanding and compassionate for the work the department does. The presentation of the 2021-22 budget was made to the Board of Finance by Elaine Daignault and the vote was unanimous. The budget will then go before the RTM for their approval in March. Elaine reported that there is a vacancy in her department for a social worker due to an employee resigning.
- Executive committee to set date to discuss vacancy by Elaine Daignault: Sue said Goodbye to Barbara Pearson-Rac as she has moved out of state to be close to family. Nor Smitobol is recovering from his second knee surgery and doing well. According to the by-laws need to fill the vacancy of Barbara's remaining term. The Executive Committee consists of Doris, Virginia, and Diana (Wendy) and will be meeting with Sue to discuss the vacancy.

Senior Services Commission is in need of volunteers. Elaine asked the board to reach out to individuals if they would like to serve on the Senior Service Commission which is an advisory board. Opportunity to rebuild from the ground up and to make suggestions what the senior's needs and issues are. Also to make things better for seniors.

- Report on upcoming programs for April– June 2021 calendar of events and special programs, Holly Betts: Holly reported that she is excited about working with Elaine and Sue regarding them being approached by the Staples Honor Society (65 students) and asked if they could do something with seniors. On March 8th this year's honor society students and seniors will have a multi-generational discussion group to talk about a letter from a book called "Right Words at the Right Time" by Marlo Thomas. Four (4) seniors signed up and could use six (6) more. There will be five (5) sessions every Monday from 3:30pm till 4:30pm. Looking for comments and ideas from individuals. Virginia had a suggestion for the importance of hydration for seniors and the risks for dehydration. We have a dietic intern which will be the last for this year from the University of New Haven; she will be arriving on March 29 to do lecture on low sodium diets. On April 6th she will talk about hydration. Thank you, Virginia for the suggestion. Registration on March 8th for Westport and on March 15th non-residents. Earth day picnic drive through. Earth Place is going to do an hour presentation on some of their animals that are on their facility via zoom. Cinco De Mayo drive through meal will also include a demonstration by Jaqueline how to make authentic guacamole and chips. Another suggestion was to add a Yogalates class which is Yoga and Pilates combination class. The center will partner with Parks and Recreation to do Plein Air classes at town parks and beaches. Holly has an instructor who is interested to do this class. To activate Myactivecenter call the Westport Center for Senior Activities to obtain one-time key code. Still doing Tax Counseling program which is all booked and referring individuals to other preparation facilities. Sue thanked all the Tax counselors.
- News from Municipal Agent Kristen Witt: Kristen thanked Sue regarding her report on the vaccine update. Also reported seeing individuals for energy assistant program. Talked about the Tax abatement program. Choices counselors, we have two (2) who assist with the Medicare part D, Prescriptions Plan, Medicare Advantage or Supplemental plan Medigap Plans are having a training for new counselors. If interested, please let Kristen know.
- News from Board Members: for Senior Activities. Bob, nothing exciting. Mentioned that he thinks the programs for the vaccinations are going well. Concerned about individuals who cannot get to a facility for vaccinations. Wendy, George is doing fine. Wendy started doing Dick Rauh's drawing class and still with Chris doing her landscape class. George and I are doing Chris's drawing class together. Can't wait till April to get back to the Y for Spin Classes. Delores had all her vaccines. Would like more information regarding how life would return to normal. Andree had no contact with individuals regarding tech support. Busy with her clients and history lectures. Virginia went to Yale New Haven for her shots and has been going to restaurants.
- Next meeting: April 5, 2021
- Motion to Adjourn: Wendy Kleros/Virginia Ferrari

Respectfully Submitted,
Diana Wendy Kleros
01-MAR-2021