

April 29, 2024

**Commission for Senior Services**

**Regular Meeting Minutes, April 15, 2024**

**Attendance:** Sarah Adair, Claudia Coplen, Diana (Wendy) Kleros, Doris Levinson, Merle Spiegel

**Staff:** Wendy Petty, Kristen Witt

**Absent:** Holly Betts, Elaine Daignault, Teri Klein

**Guest:** Harris Falk

Commission Co-Chair Claudia Coplen called the meeting to order at 10:05 am, and the minutes from the March 18<sup>th</sup> meeting were approved with one change. There were no public comments on non-agenda items. Sarah Adair shared the information that the Tree Board would be celebrating Arbor Day on Friday, April 26<sup>th</sup> from 3:00 to 5:00 pm in the area behind Town Hall and would be giving out three different types of sapling trees.

- Wendy Petty, Senior Center Director, reported that the Center was well into its spring semester and classes were going well. The first week had been challenging with parking, but things have settled down since then. Starting in May there will be a Tech Hub set up in one of the conference rooms twice a week at which seniors could get assistance with technical matters from student volunteers. Adam Konowitz will continue tech help in the fall, and every Thursday at 2:00 pm will feature a presentation on a special topic. She added that on April 27<sup>th</sup> the Center would host both a drug takeback day and a wellness fair run by Positive Directions. Also, she noted that May is Mental Health Awareness Month and that the ailing tree planted in honor of Sue Pfister will be replaced.
- Kristen Witt, LCSW Municipal Agent for Seniors/Senior Social Worker, reported that the 2023-24 Energy Assistance program will end in early June. The Renters' Rebate program just got under way, and interest is intense. She added that Farmer's Market Cards will be distributed to seniors below a certain income level, providing them with a one-time \$50 value to be used at the Westport or other participating farmer's market locations.

- Guest Harris Falk remarked that there were no new developments in the affordable housing arena, and that the transit department merger with Norwalk was not yet complete.

Commissioner reports:

- Doris Levinson, Parks and Recreation, confirmed that she would no longer be routinely attending the Prevention Coalition meetings as its initiatives rarely related to seniors. If a specific initiative emerges of interest to seniors, she will attend those meetings. Parks and Recreation is working with the Westport Rotary Club on plans for its 100<sup>th</sup> anniversary and with the Westport Young Women's League on development of the new Compo Beach playground. Multi-use equipment will now be used for the playground, and shovels will be in the ground in September. The first of five review stages has been completed, and hopes are that \$500,000 will be collected in donations toward the playground project.
- There were no separate reports for Housing, Transportation, or Human Services Commission updates.

The meeting was adjourned at 10:50 am. The next meeting will be held on May 20, 2024.

Respectfully submitted, Merle Spiegel