

**EAST LYME COMMISSION ON AGING  
REGULAR MEETING MINUTES  
TUESDAY, FEBRUARY 13th, 2017**

**Present:** Joe Palazzo, Chairman, Mike Bekech, Joan Bengston, Marge Caste,  
B.B. Smith

**Also Present:** Cathy Wilson, Senior Services Coordinator

**Absent:** Ilene Harris, John Whritner

**1. PRELIMINARY BUSINESS**

Chairman Palazzo called the Commission on Aging Regular Meeting of February 13, 2017 to order at 5:00 PM.

**FILED**

**a. Pledge of Allegiance**

The Pledge was observed.

Feb 15 2017 AT 12:10 AM/PM  
(Carmel Palma, Clerk)  
**EAST LYME TOWN CLERK**

**b. Delegations**

Mr. Palazzo called for delegations.

There were no delegations.

Ms. Wilson noted that Stephanie Gould, Director from the Lymes Senior Center was here this evening to observe and that some others from that Center may also be coming along to listen.

**c. Approval of Meeting Minutes – January 9, 2017**

Mr. Palazzo called for any corrections, additions or deletions to the Regular Minutes of the Commission of January 9, 2017.

**\*\*MOTION (1)**

Ms. Caste moved to approve the Regular Minutes of the Commission of January 9, 2017 as presented.

Ms. Smith seconded the motion.

**Vote: 3 – 0 – 2. Motion passed.**

Abstained: Mr. Bekech, Ms. Bengston

**d. Correspondence**

Ms. Wilson noted that she had provided them with copies of The Focal Point application which she has not heard anything on yet and of the Annual Report for the department that had been compiled.

**2. STATUS REPORT**

**a. Transportation**

Ms. Wilson reported that the vehicles are running well and that the drivers are also doing well. Her full-time driver that has been working a reduced load that will be re-evaluated soon to see if that can be increased. The grant for the new bus is moving along and they should have it later on this year. She said that her transportation totals from FY 11/12 through FY 15/16 have increased by 31%; and they are getting a lot of requests for rides to local events during the day such as the CG concerts, when the buses are busy bringing people to doctor appointments or to get out shopping. She said that she had looked into perhaps using a limousine service with a small bus (24-28 capacity) in its' fleet for such trips but they cost more than the event (up to \$40 pp) itself and for an event in New London would not be worth it.

Ms. Caste brought up the fact that if it were for evening events they would also have an associated cost with them – beyond the use of the senior center bus itself, they would have to pay a driver and that could go into an overtime situation which would not be cost effective. She asked what they would charge for such a trip.

Ms. Wilson said that they charge \$3/pp now for the day enrichment trips that they do.

Ms. Smith commented that it would appear that they are tailoring transportation to special things for a certain element of people and suggested that they suggest to those who want to go to New London or another very local event and who do not want to drive or go with someone else that Ms. Wilson suggest to them that they look into using Uber. She noted that many people that she knows use it and have good things to say about it.

Ms. Wilson said that she would look into it so that she would have that information for people.

#### **b. Senior Trips**

##### **(1) Enrichment Trips** – Ms. Wilson reported on the following trips for March:

On Wednesday March 8 they will take a trip to the Outback Steakhouse in New London, CT. The Trip fee is \$3.

On Wednesday March 22 they will take a luncheon trip to Westbrook Lobster in Westbrook, CT. The Trip fee is \$3.

##### **(2) Day/Overnight Trips** – Ms. Wilson reported on the following upcoming day trips:

April 6, 2017 – Mohegan Sun with the Lymes Senior Center (pick-up in EL) - Trip fee \$20.

April 12, 2017 – Westchester Broadway Theater – Mamma Mia – Lunch included. Trip fee is \$97. Registration has begun. Minimal Walking.

April 29, 2017 – New York City on your own – bus leaves EL at 7:45AM and NYC at 7:30 PM. Trip fee is \$48. Registration has begun. No meal, lunch on your own. Lots of walking.

May 9, 2017 – One World Observatory at One World Trade Center. Lunch on your own at Brookfield Place. Trip fee is \$88. Registration has begun. Lots of walking.

May 25, 2017 – Boston Museum of Fine Arts – guided tour of the Matisse Exhibit and time on your own. Lunch not included in the price. Trip fee is \$68. Registration has begun. Moderate walking.

June 23, 2017 – Newport Flower Show at Rosecliff Mansion – Lunch and shopping on your own in the Wharf area. Trip fee is \$46. Registration begins March 1st. Lots of walking.

##### Upcoming overnight trips:

May 28-June 5, 2017 – Steamboatin' on the Mississippi River – Trip is FULL.

June 29-30, 2017 – Ogunquit & Portland ME – 1 night & 2 days- tour of Portland, Lighthouse Cruise of Casco Bay. Starting at \$229pp. Registration begins March 1.

September 8-10, 2017 – Museum of African American History, includes Potomac River Cruise and more. Starting at \$473pp. Registration begins March 1.

October 1-11, 2017 – Fall Foliage Cruise in New England, Canada & Newfoundland with Royal Caribbean. 11 days & 10 nights. Fees from \$1530 - \$2620 taxes included. Registration has begun.

October 24 – November 8, 2017 – Escorted Panama Canal Cruise on Celebrity Infinity – Trip is FULL.

November 4-15, 2017 – Escorted Tour of Croatia, Slovenia and the Adriatic Coast. Trip fees from \$3369 - \$3899 (travel insurance not included) Registration has begun.

Ms. Wilson explained that they are also going to try a 'meet-up' trip to see how it works out. This would be something such as the ferry in New London where people would drive themselves and meet there and she would see if she could get them a reduced group rate price on one of the two-hour trips that they offer.

### **c. Programs**

(1) **Senior Nutrition Program** – Ms. Wilson reported that there were no meals delivered on Thursday, Friday or today due to the blizzard last week. For the café she said that they bought pizza and salad and served that. Also, there was a price change with the Bistro program (Mondays) where they were raised by a dollar. She said that she has kept the entrée and a side price at \$5.

(2) **Senior Center Programs - Ongoing** – Ms. Wilson reported that the programs are doing well.

(3) **Senior Center Programs - New** – Ms. Wilson reported that they have a clay class starting this week and also an oil painting on fabric class. She said that space is an issue for programs. This Thursday they will start the Senior Learning Network using the TV. There are many free programs that they can see. They are working on trying to organize this.

### **d. Budget – General Fund, Revolving Account**

Ms. Wilson reported that the expenses are doing well except for the Part-time driver line item as they are using that person to cover for the regular driver. The Revolving account is also in good shape although the day trips are a bit high now as they transferred some to the overnight trips for now – that will even itself out once the day trips start up in April.

### **e. Revenues – General Fund, Revolving Account**

Ms. Wilson reported that both the general fund and revolving account are on track. The December-January time frame is typically a slow time due to the holidays and the uncertain weather.

## **3. OLD BUSINESS**

### **a. Budget Process for FY17/18**

Ms. Wilson reported that she has a .1% increase in her budget and a decrease of \$4000 to the program instructor's line item and a refusal to the Senior Center Associate upgrade that was requested. She presented her latest budget information and said that she was upset with it and suggested that they request a meeting with the First Selectman to discuss both of these items and the future of the subsidy part of the programs. She felt that they were not sharing the same vision.

Ms. Caste asked if she had increased the fees for the programs to help offset the cost.

Ms. Wilson said that a card pass for some of them is \$50 for 30 classes and the card is good for a year. She said that she has increased it a bit.

Ms. Caste asked about the reaction to the increase.

Ms. Wilson said that she did get some complaints.

Ms. Smith said that she did not think that they should be restrictive age-wise and that she did not think that they were. She felt that it was good to have a good interactive mix of people coming together.

Mr. Palazzo asked if she was looking for a motion to schedule a meeting with the First Selectman on this.

Ms. Wilson said that she was and that maybe a member or two would like to join her. She noted that she had begun putting a draft letter together requesting the meeting and outlining the reasons. She said that she would work on finalizing that.

**\*\*MOTION (2)**

Ms. Bengston moved that Ms. Wilson request a meeting with the First Selectman to discuss the reduction(s) to her department budget.

Mr. Bekech seconded the motion.

**Vote: 5 – 0 – 0. Motion passed.**

Mr. Palazzo asked about raising the price of the classes and of the special dinners that they have. He noted that they only charge \$5 or \$6 for the special dinners (at the last one, pork chops - they served 70 people) however the VFW and others such as Church or Firehouse events charge \$10-\$12 and he has seen some 150 people show up for those including the elderly. He suggested that maybe they increase the special dinners to \$7 or \$8 as they provide great meals and often if there is anything extra, the people get to take it home and have another meal - all for the same price.

Ms. Wilson said she really did not want to have to do that.

**b. Expenditures from the Parahus Account**

Ms. Wilson reported that they had put \$75,000 into a CD and that there is \$38,000 in the remaining part however around \$13,000 has been used and will be removed when Finance does those transfers.

**c. Replacement of ELCC Freezer**

Ms. Wilson said that they have the new freezer (\$2300) and that it is working out well. They are still moving items around for the best work flow.

**d. Other Pertinent Business**

Ms. Caste noted that they had discussed a fundraiser and said that Groton had held a Superbowl fundraiser and raffle of sports items. She suggested that they might do something similar as it would be easier than trying to organize a walk where they may not get the proceeds for all of the work that would have to be done. Further, there are many walks that are held locally already.

**4. NEW BUSINESS**

**a. Introduction of New Board Member**

Ms. Wilson introduced Mike Bekech, the new member of the Commission to the Commissioners.

Mr. Bekech said that he is the Assessor in the Town of Waterford and that his wife had recently retired from her position as the Assessor here in East Lyme. He noted that he had served on some Boards in Town at various times and that he has also attended Senior Center meetings in Waterford to familiarize himself with this process.

Ms. Wilson said that the both Centers work well together and work with the Lymes Center also.

**b. Trips using Senior Center Vehicles**

This item was discussed previously.

**c. Service Animals vs Therapy Animals**

Ms. Wilson explained that Service Animals are specifically trained and certified and protected under the ADA. Therapy animals are a whole different item with no certification required. She said that while she would like to have something in place regarding this, that it would have to be handled carefully. Discussion involved any liability in the event that something happened with a therapy animal. Ms. Wilson said that she would continue to work on this and see what she could find.

**d. Replacement of ELCC Kitchen Appliances**

Ms. Wilson said that Mr. Neistat who had helped them with the freezer has looked over the kitchen appliances that they have (6 burner stove w/grill top and 2 ovens below) and will come back to them with some prices for replacement items – specifically a 6 burner stove and 1 oven below and a convection oven and portable griddle. The items that they have now are 25 years old. The cost estimates should come back soon and she will provide them with them at their next meeting.

Mr. Palazzo said that a 5-shelve convection oven goes for around \$3500.

Mr. Bekech asked if it would be appropriate for them to look at the layout and see if they would like to make any changes while they are talking about new equipment. Ms. Wilson and Mr. Palazzo said that the area still works as it is.

**e. Incident Report**

Ms. Wilson said that this involved a person who tripped and fell in the foyer inner door. They did not want to see a doctor, family was notified and it was suggested that they visit the walk-in clinic.

**f. Other Pertinent Business**

There was none.

**5. PUBLIC DISCUSSION**

There was no public discussion.

**6. ADJOURNMENT**

**\*\*MOTION (3)**

Ms. Smith moved to adjourn the Commission on Aging Regular Meeting of February 13, 2017 at 6:04 PM.

Ms. Caste seconded the motion.

**Vote: 5 - 0 - 0. Motion passed.**

Respectfully submitted,

Karen Zmitruk,  
Recording Secretary, Pro-tem

