

COMMISSION ON AGING
SPECIAL MEETING MINUTES
March 4, 2024

RECEIVED FILE RECORD
EAST LYME, CT

2024 MAR -6 P 3:01

Caunhillu Helw
TOWN CLERK

Present: Michael Bekech
Ilene Harris
Joe Palazzo
Margret Hughes
Marge Caste
Wendy Fiore
Kevin McGowan

Absent: Joan Bengtson

Also Present: Kristen Caramanica, Director
Rose Ann Hardy, Ex Officio

1. PRELIMINARY BUSINESS

- a. **Pledge of Allegiance.** The Pledge of Allegiance was observed.

Chairman Bekech called the March 4, 2024 Commission on Aging Special Meeting to order at 5 p.m. Mr. Bekech welcomed Mr. McGowan as a new member of the Commission on Aging.

- b. **Delegations.** There were no guests.

- c. **Approval of Meeting Minutes February 12, 2024.** Mr. Bekech asked for additions, deletions, or corrections to the February 12, 2024 Commission on Aging Minutes.

The following correction was noted: On page 4, Motion (2) was made by Mr. Palazzo.

MOTION (1): Mr. Palazzo moved to approve the February 12, 2024 Commission on Aging Minutes, as amended. Seconded by Ms. Harris. Mr. McGowan abstained from voting. (6-0-1) Motion carried.

- d. **Correspondence.** There was no new correspondence.

e. STATUS REPORT

- a. **Transportation.** Ms. Caramanica reported she applied for the 5310 grant. She sent a public notice in the Day newspaper on February 23.

Looking to hire a new driver.

Ms. Caramanica informed the Commission the R-1 bus went on February 29 to go in for service. The drivers have had issues with the lift.

b. Senior Trips.

1. Enrichment Trips:

March 13, to the Jealous Monk in Mystic.
Painting with Girl Scouts on March 13 at 4 p.m.
St. Patrick's Celebration on March 15 at 12:30 p.m.
Chime Time on March 19 at 10 a.m.
Easter Basket Centerpiece with Smith Acres on March 20 at 10 a.m.
Paper Bird and Next Canvas Board on March 22 at 1 p.m.
ROMEO on March 27 at the Jealous Monk in Mystic.

Overnight Trips. The following trips are planned:

1. Washington DC April 5 to April 8, 2024. Twelve individuals have signed up.
2. The Orchid Show at New York Botanical Garden on April 16, 2024
3. Mackinac Island on June 14-June 22, 2024.
4. Iceland Magical Northern Lights November 5-November 11, 2024.
5. Croatia and It's Islands, April 22, 2025-May 3, 2025.

c. Programs

1. **Senior Nutrition Program.** Ms. Caramanica reported there have been no changes to the Senior Nutrition Program.

2. **Senior Center Programs Ongoing.**

Registration for spring classes begins on March 11 for residents and March 18 for non-residents.

To date over 300 applicants for energy assistance have been seen.

Our social worker has been working with East Lyme Police Department, Protective Services, DSS and Ledge Light

3. **Senior Center Programs New.** Painting with Girl Scout Troop on Wednesday, March 13 at 4 p.m., St Patrick's Day Celebration on Friday, March 15 at 12:30 p.m., with entertainment, Chime Time Tuesday March 19 at 10 a.m., Easter basket centerpieces with Smith Acres Wednesday March 20 at 10 a.m. and Open Game Day every Thursday (except the third Thursday).

4. **Budget – General Fund, Revolving Account is doing ok.**

5. **Revenues – General Fund, Revolving Account.** There have been no changes to revenues.

3. OLD BUSINESS

- a. **ARPA Funds.** Ms. Caramanica informed the Commission she and Mr. Bekech met with the Board of Selectmen and Board of Finance to discuss ARPA funds. Next step is Town Meeting on Wednesday, March 6 at 7 p.m. at the Town Hall.
- b. **ARPA Grant Update.** Ms. Caramanica reported we have ordered furniture for the coffee/tea station and have received wonderful feedback.

c. **Other Pertinent Business.** There was no discussion of other pertinent business.

6. NEW BUSINESS

- a. **AARP Grant Ideas.** Ms. Caramanica reported an idea for an additional grant for a lending shed to store DME, is due on Wednesday. Mr. McGowan suggested training on how to use the equipment. Blue Door would like to work together on this possible venture. It was felt the Senior Center could help with storing equipment and bring it to them on as need basis. Ms. Harris suggested limiting how much medical equipment can be stored at the Senior Center. There was concern about liability and the town attorney will be asked for an opinion. The grant was tabled until next time it's available.

Ms. Caramanica's other idea was for a grant for bird watching. Commission agreed, and Ms. Caramanica will apply.

- b. **Tombari Family Fund.** Ms. Caramanica informed the Commission she received a check from the Tombari Family Fund in the amount of \$8,922.25.
- c. **BOS Budget Review Meeting.** This Commission's meeting with the Board of Selectmen was held on February 21. Mr. Bekech reported we met with the First Selectman and Finance Director prior to this meeting. Ms. Caramanica gave a power point presentation. They gave us another six hours for a driver. Our Social Worker was hired with an ARPA Fund for FY 23/24 and looking to extend her an additional six-month with a new ARPA Fund that needs to be expended by Dec 2024. Our receptionist was hired for 25 hours. They suggested to use funds from the Tombari Family Fund to pay for the receptionist. Mr. Bekech stated the Tombari Family Fund was not intended to be use for salaries. Mr. Bekech stated morally this should be used for new programs and the needs of the population we are serving. Ms. Harris agreed that fund should go into the Parahus Account. There was a consensus of the Commission that the Tombari Fund should be used to support programs.

d. **Other Pertinent Business.** There was no discussion on other pertinent business.

5. EX OFFICIO REPORT

Ms. Hardy reported the town is rapidly expanding. She stated we have a state department specifically to serve the elderly and that is the place to provide incentives to help the elderly. East Lyme has a large senior population.

6. PUBLIC DISCUSSION

There were no guests.

7. BOARD RESPONSE

There was no response.

8. ADJOURNMENT

MOTION (2): Ms. Harris moved to adjourn the Commission on Aging March 4,

**2024 Special Meeting at 6:10 p.m. Seconded by Ms. Hughes. (7-0)
Unanimous.**

Respectfully Submitted,

Frances Gheri, Recording Secretary