

Minutes of the Social Services Commission
January 8, 2015 - Senior Center - 8:30 a.m.

Members present:

Rob Michalman, Ruth Clark, Faith Roebelen, Marcia Dufore, Bob Brooks, Sharon Kozaczka

Director Janet Frechette present, Denise Winiarski, MiniBus Director, could not attend the meeting as she has to remain in her office until a closing is declared, or her buses are back on the road. Director Paula Pascoe could not attend this meeting.

Also present Bridget Fidler

Chairman Rob Michalman called the meeting to order at 8:37 a.m. The Social Services Commission invited and welcomed former commission member, Bridget Fidler, to attend all commission meetings, as her personal insight from the community is valuable. Ms. Fidler no longer serves on the Commission as she is no longer a resident.

Citizen Comment: none

Minutes - Ms. Dufore moved to approve the minutes of the December 11, 2014 meeting; Ms. Clark seconded. The minutes were approved by unanimous vote.

The Chairman noted for the record, for the January 2015 copy of the Suffield Round About, Suffield Senior Center News, that the Senior Center follows the inclement weather policy of the school system: If the Suffield Schools are closed, the Senior Center is closed. If the Suffield schools have a delayed opening, the Senior Center will open at 10:00 a.m. As some of the Commission members cannot attend a 10:00 a.m. meeting, the Commission decided that a delayed opening will mean for the Commission, a cancelled meeting.

Directors' Meeting

Janet Frechette, Director of Social Services, EAA, distributed her written report. She noted that because of the lower gasoline prices, the funds from the Fuel Bank are going further. The Operation Fuel program restarted Dec. 1; Suffield received a total of \$5000. Private Fuel: We continued to tap these funds for clients in crisis. So far, 2100 gallons have been authorized. The successful Holiday Party at the Senior Center generated a gift of \$505 to the private fuel bank. The Meals-On-Wheels - The number of the meal recipients continues to be higher than normal. Salvation Army -We started this year with \$3000 in our budget. Kettle donations raised an additional \$2,184.09 (compared with \$1,763 last year). That gives Suffield \$4,965.68 for the program year. SNAP Assistance - The EAA will be offering SNAP assistance again on Feb. 4 from 10:00 a.m. to 1 p.m. at the EAA office. Appointments are necessary.

Paula Pascoe, Director of the Senior Center, was unable to attend. Mr. Michalman distributed copies of the Suffield Round About, the Suffield Senior Center Newsletter, to the members.

Chairman's update: Mr. Michalman deferred to Mr. Brooks. Mr. Brooks reported that an offer has been made and accepted by a candidate for the position of Youth Services Director. As soon as all paperwork is formalized, he will send an email announcement naming the new Youth Services Director. The Commission discussed the need for a new member. Commission members should submit their recommendations to the Chairman. The members are well aware of the needs of the Commission and it was felt that their personal recommendations would be of value because of their personal knowledge of persons who might be willing to serve and that were well qualified.

Discussion of a Survey - The Commission discussed the need and the requirement for a Survey to ascertain the needs of the residents of the Suffield. It was decided that there would be two surveys; one for the senior population and one for the general public. The Commission also discussed how a survey would be distributed to the public. What kind of format should be used for the survey? Mr. Michalman distributed a draft that he had compiled for review by the Commission. Ms. Dufore distributed to the commission, copies of other Town surveys. The Commission commented on the Manchester's survey and also noted that the Town of Newington's survey was long and was focused on housing needs. The commission needs to think of what kind of questions should be used for the two different surveys.

The compilation of surveys, questions, distribution, will be placed on the Agenda of the next meeting.

The meeting was adjourned at 9:35 a.m.

Respectfully submitted, Bobbie C. Kling, Secretary SS.MINUTES.JANUARY.8.2015