

SENIOR CITIZENS ADVISORY BOARD

REGULAR MEETING MINUTES

WEDNESDAY, OCTOBER 23, 2024

11:00 AM

The Waverly Center
7 Waverly Avenue, Portland, CT 06480

PRESENT: Elaine Cote, Roselani Ferguson, Pamela Wilcox-Dapkus, Gail Landry

MEMBER(S) ABSENT: Janet Colonghi

STAFF PRESENT: Sarah Elliot Caratasios, Senior Service Administrator

PUBLIC: Carlotta Lord

1. Chairwoman Cote called the meeting to order at 11:05 am. In the multi- purpose room of the Senior Center.
2. Minutes from July 24, 2024, were reviewed and accepted.
3. Old Business:
 - 3a. Congregate Meal Service: This program allows transitional students with developmental delays, the opportunity to not only obtain volunteer hours, but the opportunity to acquire on the job training skills which will prepare him/her to be successful as they move forward.
 - 3b. AARP Grant: Unfortunately, due to staff shortages the deadline date was missed for this \$5,000.00 Grant. Since proper staff is now in place it will be much easier to stay on top of deadlines.
 - 3c. Mom's Meal and The Kitchen at Futures: Companies will be bidding for a new contract, which will be in effect for three years. There is a target date of March 1, 2025, to begin service.
4. New Business:
 - 4a. Bingo Machine: The Bingo machine has arrived, and the necessary permits are being looked into. The objective is to have student volunteers from the High School run the event which provides the student with community service hours and interacting with the town seniors.

4b. New Administrative Assistant: Heather Celinski was hired to hold the position of Administrative Assistant for the town of Portland. Ms. Celinski exhibits many strong qualities and will be a great asset to the town.

4c. New Intergenerational Programs: This is an amazing program which involves PHS high students from many different cultural backgrounds to work on their language skills in various ways.

4d. Alzheimer's Association Collaboration: With assistance from the Portland Library and the Portland Police Department, the Alzheimer's Association will provide at no cost educators and pamphlets on how to recognize when a loved one is struggling with cognitive functions. The Police Department will also share with attendees the program called Bring Me Back Home. The target date for this is December 2024.

4e. Seniors Needs: It is important to educate the town's residents on the needs our local seniors have. Many in town are not aware the Senior Center is a separate entity from the Portland Food Pantry, and it's important to educate residents on this so the proper needs are placed with the correct group. There is a high demand for transportation for seniors to and from medical appointments. A suggestion to create a brochure educating residents on the various programs the Senior Center does to assist our seniors is important. Its also important to inform our residents of the financial needs needed to support these programs. A budget meeting will be held in December and residents are encouraged to share their views.

4f. Implementing the Better Age Software Program: This program is at no cost to Portland. This involves students from the high school working with state agencies collecting data from seniors in the community. This data involves issues seniors experience with transportation, housing and access to food. The target date for this program is January 2025.

5. Public Comment:

Carlotta Lord brought up a question regarding the National Recognition Accreditation for the kitchen at the Senior Center. This is a prestigious award the town's kitchen held prior to renovation. Ms. Lord also inquired if anyone at the Senior Center was certified to run the AED at which time Ms. Elliott Caratasios stated the AED is user friendly and provides step by step instructions should anyone need to use the device.

6. Adjourn Meeting: Meeting adjourned at 1200 pm.

Respectfully Submitted,

Pamela Wilcox-Daphus