



# Town of Fairfield

## MINUTES

### HUMAN SERVICES COMMISSION

**September 22, 2011**

A meeting of the Human Services Commission was held on Thursday, September 22, 2011, at 4:00 p.m. in the First Floor Conference Room in the Sullivan Independence Hall in Fairfield.

**PRESENT: Commissioners:** Doug DeFauw, Chairman; Selma Cohen, Vice Chairperson; Louis Fernous, Jr., Nancy Legare, Elizabeth O'Connell, Phil Stein and Joan Swanson

**ALSO PRESENT:** Claire Grace, Director of the Fairfield Senior Center and Human & Social Services

#### **MEMBERS OF THE PUBLIC:**

Jennifer Hochberg  
Palma Senator

**GUEST SPEAKER:** First Selectman Michael Tetreau

**CALL TO ORDER:** The meeting was called to order by Chairman Doug DeFauw at 4:00 p.m.

#### **1. APPROVAL OF MINUTES:**

Approval of the minutes of the June 23, 2011, was tabled until the next meeting.

#### **2. GUEST SPEAKER:**

Commissioner DeFauw welcomed First Selectman Michael Tetreau.

Mr. Tetreau said that while the Town added Facebook to its website recently and it was helpful during the recent hurricane, he would like to upgrade the site but there was no money in the budget to do so at this time.

Mr. Tetreau said that although there was not enough money in the Town's budget for additional services for senior programs at this time, he would like to increase the funding at the next budget. He also said he wanted to get feedback from the seniors as to what programs were important to them.

Mr. Tetreau said he wants to get the Senior Services Directory 'on-line' and that it should be reviewed every three months for updates. Ms. Grace said the Senior Directory was ready to be published and could be put on the Town's website. However, Ms. Grace said there was no money from this year's budget to cover the cost of publication. Ms. Grace said that SWCAA would be giving a small grant to the Senior Center which she would put toward publishing the directory. Ms. Grace said that the grant would not be enough to cover the cost of publication and she wanted to use the money from private donations. Commissioner DeFauw said the Town should pay for publishing the directory. Mr. Tetreau said there was no allocation in this year's budget for publication of the directory, but it could be put on next year's budget. Mr. Tetreau agreed with Ms. Grace and said she should use whatever money she had available from the grant and private donations to pay for publication. He also suggested that post cards be sent to seniors advising of the availability of the directory.

Commissioner Phil Stein asked the First Selectman what should be the priority regarding the Senior Services Directory. Mr. Tetreau said that (1) it should be put on the website, (2) announcements sent out to Friends on Facebook, (3) a press release should be issued regarding its availability, and (4) postcards should be sent as discussed.

Commissioner Selma Cohen agreed with the First Selectman and said that sending postcards was a good idea.

The discussion continued regarding the activities and programs available at the Senior Center.

Commissioner Nancy Legare asked about tax credits for seniors. Mr. Tetreau explained that the RTM reviews the Town's the Senior Tax Program every two years. Mr. Tetreau said proposals for some changes will likely be made at the next review as the Town's senior population was growing. Ms. Claire Grace said that she had presented the Town's Tax Relief Program to SWCAA and found that Fairfield does better than most other towns.

Ms. Palma Senator, a member of the public, briefly commented on the Town's Tax Relief Program.

The First Selectman thanked the Commission for having him as a Guest Speaker and said he looked forward to meeting with them again soon.

**3. FAIRFIELD SENIOR SERVICES: Claire Grace, Director - Fairfield Senior Services**

Ms. Grace reported that a Health Fair will be held at the Senior Center on November 16<sup>th</sup> at 10:00 am.

Ms. Grace also reported that the Senior Page on the Town's website was on a par with the Town's Health Department, having received more than 3,000 hits between 2010 and 2011. Ms. Grace further reported that the Town has added Facebook to its website.

Ms. Grace stated that the Senior Services Directory was ready to put into print and will be 'on-line' on the Town's website. Ms. Grace said the First Selectman had reviewed the Directory, and the Fire Department and Police Department were waiting for the finished product. Ms. Grace said that a grant from SWCAA to the Senior Center would put toward publishing the directory. However, Ms. Grace said it would not be enough to cover the cost of publication and she was looking for additional funds from private donations. Commissioner Doug DeFauw said again that he felt the Town should pay for publishing the directory and Commissioner Phil Stein agreed. Commissioners Selman Cohen and Nancy Legare agreed with Ms. Grace that the additional money needed for publishing the directory should come from a fund of private donations to the Center.

Ms. Grace also discussed the senior population of Fairfield, noting a steady increase from 2008 to 2011. The Connecticut Economic Resource Commission (CERC) Town Profile Data indicates that seniors from ages 50 – 65+ now comprise 36% of Fairfield's population.

**4. BOARD OF HEALTH LIAISON: Commissioner Doug DeFauw**

There were no items for discussion at this time.

**5. OLD BUSINESS:**

There was no old business discussed at this time.

**6. NEW BUSINESS:**

There was no new business discussed at this time.

**MEMBERS OF THE PUBLIC:**

Ms. Palma Senator again complained about the Fairfield senior activities being listed on the last page of the activity directory for the surrounding towns. Ms. Palma also said she thought the Town should pay for the Fairfield Senior Directory. She also discussed the Town's tax relief program and said the Town needs to do more for its seniors.

Ms. Jennifer Hochberg suggested a press release should be published regarding the Center's Facebook page.

Ms. Hochberg also suggested that members of this Commission attend the RTM meetings, further noting that the meetings can be reviewed on FairTV.

**7. JOURNMENT:**

There being no further business to discuss, the meeting adjourned at 5:55 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

CONSTANCE M. WADI  
Recording Secretary

**N.B. The next meeting of the Human Services Commission will be held on October 27, 2011 at the Fairfield Senior Center**

Minutes are subject to review, correction, and approval by the Human Services Commission.