

Community Services and Recreation

DRAFT MINUTES/APPROVED

To: Community Services Commission Members

From: Gerardo Sorkin, Director

Re: Commission Meeting September 2, 2008

Meeting was called to order by Chairman Laurie Jean Hannon at 5:33 p.m.

I. Attendance:

Present: William Carey, Laurie-Jean Hannon, Scott Leamon, Judith McKay, and Antoinette McKeon.

Staff: Gerardo Sorkin, Director and Carla Pelliccio (Secretary).

Absent: Thomas Balga, Michael Compare, Walter Heinig and Frank Kruglik.

II. Acceptance of Minutes:

Scott Leamon made a motion to accept the Minutes of June 10, 2008, seconded by William Carey.

III. Correspondence:

Invitations to the Columbus Day Heritage Gala were received by the Commission.

IV. Director's Report:

Gerardo Sorkin introduced Carla Pelliccio as the new Secretary to the Department of Community Services and Recreation. Mr. Sorkin provided a bit of Carla's professional background and confirmed her role as liaison between the Commissioners and the Department as they relate to these monthly meetings. Mrs. Pelliccio will assume the responsibility of making sure Commissioners' needs are being met, preparation of meeting agendas, recording of minutes and appropriate follow up following the meeting.

Daycare:

Enrollment: Has maintained their enrollment numbers in the pre-school and after school program. They are currently at capacity and have people on waiting list.

Trainings: Various trainings related to Early Childhood Education had taken place over the summer months. Members from ACES (*Area Cooperative Educational Services*) had provided training on Arts and Literacy for the teachers. A specialist from the Parent-Child Resource Center also presented to the daycare staff and will be presenting again in September. Daycare is currently facing new challenges in area of children with special behaviors. They will look to obtain further training to deal with these challenging behaviors.

Activities: Six summer field trips were reported. Students had access to swimming pool twice a week. Bulletin board decorated by Daycare throughout summer months reflecting idea of diversity.

Counseling:

Personnel: Mr. Sorkin announced the resignation of Laurie DePaola, Counselor IV who had presented on Counseling Services at the previous meeting on June 10, 2008. Mr. Sorkin is actively recruiting for this vacant position to fill as soon as possible. The position is being advertised on the town website and on Careerbuilder.com. Among the approximate 25 applications, 10 have the qualifications, and approx 6 candidates have been interviewed thus far. He will start second round of interviews with potential candidates next week. He has identified two strong candidates. The two current clinicians are maintaining the current client case load. They are also triaging new referrals.

Question was posed by Mr. Leamon as to status of computer program that had been previously discussed. Mr. Sorkin stated that this project has been put on hold and will resume once the Counselor IV position has been filled as they will be the leading force for the project.

Update: Annual Harbor Health contract has been renewed.

Youth Services:

Grant: A \$30,000 grant through Workforce Alliance was awarded in partnership with the Board of Education. Monies have been spent throughout the summer months and will continue to be spent throughout the year to assist the youth with special needs. Over the summer months, 13 students were placed (10 in town related positions and 3 in private sectors).

Project Graduation: Very successful event. 240 students participated. Student and Chaperone surveys were randomly sent to a handful of students and chaperones alike. There were relatively high return rates on surveys and results were presented. Commissioner Antoinette McKeon had given her first-hand positive feedback as a chaperone from the evening. She felt it was a great blend of activities, theme, and great amount of time for the event. Comments from the surveys were also reviewed and feedback was given by the Commissioners.

Reading Program: Mr. Sorkin mentioned the success of the summer reading enhancement mentoring program that allowed high school students to volunteer and mentor children to read. Youth Services and the Children's library worked together. The theme of the program was "Catch the Reading Bug."

Senior Center:

Activities: Copies of the monthly *Senior Happenings* brochure of activities and events were distributed to each Commission member. Since there are so many activities, Mr. Sorkin will distribute these brochures at each monthly commission meeting. The Commissioners were quite impressed by the comprehensive nature of activities.

Senior Center Renovation Grant Proposal: Still waiting to hear back from the State of CT.

Personnel: Mr. Sorkin announced the start of Anna Feretti, the Senior Center's new Part-Time Clerk, whose first day was today. Ms. Feretti has replaced Dorothy Esposito who had retired.

Community Services:

United Way Days of Caring:

The Department will be participating in United Way's Days of Caring (Sept. 15 to 21, 2008) with two special projects:

1. A Diaper Drive (3 donation locations throughout town to collect diapers: Library, Recreation, Senior Center. Press releases sent to local papers to raise awareness.
2. Replacement of light bulbs with Energy Efficient bulbs for North Haven Housing Authority Residents. The project will cover both housings: Temple Pines and Parkside (70 units total). Bulbs and manpower

sponsored by United Illuminating. UI also considering weatherization efforts for residents as well. Also exploring possible ways to get the local high school students involved in this project.

A Free Energy Assistance and Energy Savings Presentation: Has been scheduled for October 4, 2008 from 10am-1pm at North Haven Middle School. This event will include presentations from: United Illuminating, Southern CT Gas Company, Community Action Agency of New Haven, Clean Energy Task Force, 2-1-1 Infoline among others. This event is open to the public. Mr. Sorkin requested that Commissioners provide any suggestions or ideas that they may have to incorporate into the program. Press release already sent to local papers.

Energy Assistance: Will begin making appointments on September 15. Applications will begin on October 1. Appointments will be handled by three staff members and will take place on Wednesdays only. Training took place last week for staff. Currently making determination if Town will use online system to process applications due to security concerns that have arisen. Two days have been scheduled to go to the Senior Center to process applications. For any homebound residents, the Community Action Agency will arrange visits. Press release sent to local papers.

Emergency Fund: An emergency fund exists in the event that there is a resident in need to who has run out of oil and is freezing that can be tapped into in case of an emergency. A signed Memorandum of Understanding has been signed by a local oil company to guarantee delivery of emergency oil within 4 hours.

V. Finance Report:

Board of Finance had not met in July so report reflective of month ending June 30, 2008 is the most up to date report was furnished to the Commission. A question was posed regarding the Overtime line.

Recreation: Now has their own overtime line versus previous years. \$24,464 currently budgeted for Recreation overtime this year. Community Services has \$3,500 of their own overtime budgeted, specifically for Counseling Services.

Day Care: Current snapshot of expenditures of grant were provided.

VI. Old Business:

During previous meeting, Ms. Hannon asked for statistics as to how many people attended Senior Center during heat wave. The Senior Center became a Cooling Center until 8:00 p.m. p.m. No residents had attended, however those who frequented the senior center for lunch stayed longer during the hotter days.

Never Drive Faster than Your Guardian Angel Can Fly – It's Your Choice: Bumper Stickers were created by Youth Services in cooperation with North Haven H.S. students in memory of Nicole S. who had died in car crash before graduation. These bumper stickers were distributed at Project Graduation. Well received by students.

The Departmental Organizational Chart had been provided to the Commissioners upon request from last meeting.

The question was posed by Ms. Hannon if Mr. Sorkin was taking part in any direct care while Counselor IV position was vacant. Reported that he is conducting weekly clinical supervision with the two counselors, however is not seeing clients directly at this time.

VII. New Business:

Ms. McKeon and Ms. Hannon met with Mr. Sorkin over the two months that the Commission had not met and felt that it was a very positive meeting and were very pleased with everything that is going on. They were also given a tour of the Department. Ms. Hannon encouraged the Commission to also visit the Department. Feel that the office is very welcoming and they left with a great feeling.

October Meeting: There are scheduling conflicts with Ms. Hannon and Ms. McKeon for the October 7th meeting. It was proposed to the Commission that the meeting be rescheduled for one week later, October 14, 2008 at the same time and location. Since Ms. MacKay had to leave early, only four Commissioners were present and this could not be voted on. Secretary Carla Pelliccio contacted each Commissioner to poll each member regarding their availability for the proposed Tuesday October 14th date. If majority were unable do 10/14/08, then Wednesday, October 15th was the backup date.

The majority of members have stated that they would be available for the the rescheduled date. Thus, the October meeting will take place on October 14, 2008.

VIII. Public Participation:

No people were in attendance.

IX. Adjournment:

Laurie Jean Hannon asked for a Motion to Adjourn, seconded by William Carey. The meeting was adjourned at 6:34 p.m.