

Community Services and Recreation

DRAFT MINUTES/APPROVED

To: Community Services Commission Members
From: Edward J. Swinkoski, Director of Community Services and Recreation
Re: Commission Meeting October 5, 2010

Meeting was called to order at 5:34p.m.

I. Attendance:

Present: Walter Heinig, Thomas Balga, Maggie Jensen, Donna Malley, Jim Marshall, Judith Meyers, Krista Polinsky.

Absent: Michael Pepe

Staff: Edward J. Swinkoski and Carla Pelliccio, Secretary.

First Selectman Mike Freda was present upon the commission's request to address questions regarding the transition and structure of the Community Services department. Ms. Jensen opened up the discussion with a question regarding how Ed Swinkoski can blend his current responsibilities with those associated with Community Services in a given work day. Mr. Freda responded about that the team of professionals who work in the departments of Community Services and Recreation perform very well, do not require a great deal of oversight, and that is not necessary for Mr. Swinkoski to micromanage those in the department. Mr. Swinkoski added that he is always available to address questions and issues with the staff as they arise, upholding an "open door policy."

Mr. Freda echoed the goal of the Town, which also applies to Community Services and Recreation, which is that in light of the tough economic climate, ways must be found to reduce costs and provide the same caliber of services to the residents of the town.

With regard to the the introduction of Harbor Health, Mr. Freda discussed how this partnership will allow the Town to create an environment directly linked with the State as well as other municipalities, will allow compliance with appropriate State licensure requirements, will provide oversight by an agency with tremendous experience, as well as will provide the Town with the ability to be more productive from a revenue generating standpoint. He went on to discuss those cost saving enhancements, including the increase of group counseling sessions, increasing the productivity of the counselors, as well as acquiring a new and enhanced billing software system.

Mr. Balga commented on the way that the commission was notified about the elimination of the the Director position. Mr. Freda clarified that notification to the commission is normally channeled through the Chair of the respective Board or commission. In response to Ms. Jensen's question, Mr. Freda repeated that the elimination of the Director of Community Services position was strictly a budget decision and nothing precipitated the quick elimination of the position.

Ms. Meyers asked if the commission be provided an organizational chart of the Town, as she raised the concern of whether the voice of Community Services will be lost if no Director is there to advocate them in a cost cutting environment. Mr. Swinkoski replied that he still represents the Department, as he still would present the budget to the Board of Finance, who ultimately make the final cuts in the budget, ultimately not changing the procedure in which the Department's budget is represented.

Mr. Heinig commented that while the role of the commission does not have to do with personnel issues, it is their responsibility to monitor the health of the programs, and if they feel that something is not working, they will address why it is not working. Mr. Heinig indicated that he wants to make sure the most appropriate information is being reported to the commission. While much information is being

provided to the commission each month, he would like to fine tune the type of information that they receive, ultimately receiving the most useful information. Mr. Freda reviewed the various offerings of the department and reiterated the importance of each. From a budget standpoint, Mr. Freda does not feel that any of these will be affected.

In response to a question posed by Mr. Marshall regarding whether other cost saving models were reviewed that would allow a Director while streamlining the cost structure under the leadership of a director, Mr. Freda responded that any reductions that would have been made would have had an adverse effects on services. Under this model with no director, no adverse effects have been reported.

II. Acceptance of Minutes:

Krista Polinsky made a motion to accept the Minutes of September 7, 2010, seconded by Jim Marshall.

III. Correspondence:

None.

IV. Director's Report:

Community Services

Food Bank: Monthly Food Bank Statistics for September 2010: 360 meals distributed.

Calls for requests to be added to the Thanksgiving and Holiday food distribution have already begun coming in. Names will be added to the list after November 1, 2010. A press release will be submitted to the local media informing residents.

Holiday Toy Distribution / Adopt a Family Program: In addition to the food distribution for the holiday season, the general toy distribution and Adopt a Family Program will take place once again this year. A press release will be submitted to promote these. Last year 17 families were successfully matched with donor families. A discussion will need to take place at the next meeting regarding the eligibility of families, allowing residents who have not participated in the program a chance to be adopted this year.

Energy Assistance: Appointments continue. Appointments are available on Tuesday afternoons and Wednesday mornings.

Community Action Agency Grant: The department received a \$10,000 from this local agency to be applied towards the support of the Energy Assistance program. Through the grant, the department received photocopier/printer and a high volume printer with no cost to the Town.

Daycare:

Enrollment:

Preschool - all slots are filled/ 15 - Wait list -4. 7 new Preschoolers have been enrolled.

School Age – all slots are filled/ 30 - Wait list -2 4 new School Age have been enrolled.

Counseling

Harbor Health Services have begun oversight of the Counseling Services effective October 1st.

Additional discussion regarding Counseling services were addressed by Mr. Freda during his address to the commissioners.

Youth Services

Workforce Alliance: The funding cycle for the current grant ended September 30, 2010. Nine students continues after school/Saturday employment. They did so at the following sites: DJ Comics, Connex Credit Union, Town of North Haven, Department of Finance, Quinnipiac Bank and Trust, NHTV and Agway. A thank you gathering will take place in October at North Haven High School. The date is to be announced.

Community Wide Presentation: A total of 25 people have signed up for Courageous Parenting 101, a parenting course to be held each Tuesday during the month of October. Mr. Freda added that the Courageous Parenting 101 course is a by product of the Substance Abuse Prevention Council allowing a greater awareness of substance abuse throughout the community and compliment the SAPC program. Ms. Jensen suggested this event as another great example of a community effort that would have an appropriate use for the Outreach Fund. Ms. Polinsky echoed that this fund would be great to use for future educational programs for the community.

Senior Center

Mr. Swinkoski touched on a handful of ongoing programs currently taking place including S.W.A.P. Seniors with a Purpose will hold a coat drive during the month of October. Only gently used coats will be accepted. Donations will be given to the local churches, schools, and food banks.

Nutrition Education, Healthy Eating for Older Adults, presented by Care Card of the Hospital of St Raphael's Oct 7 at 10:30 am

A Flu Clinic will be taking place on October 18th from 12:30-1:30 pm and on October 27, from 11am-1:30pm), which will be open for seniors and community members alike.

Show and Sell North Haven High school Saturday October 23rd.

Mr. Swinkoski once again promoted the upcoming Wine Tasting on October 14th hosted by the Lion's Club to be held at St John's Episcopal Church 5-7pm. All proceeds will benefit the Center for the purchase of a Defibrillator.

V. Finance Report:

Budget reports were reviewed by the Commission (report ending August 31, 2010).

Community Services: September 2010 snapshot of Community Services expenditures:
bottom line under budget YTD = 16.1 %

Welfare: September 2010 snapshot of Welfare expenditures (eviction related expenses):
bottom line over budget YTD = 30.4%.

Senior Center: September 2010 snapshot of Senior Center expenditures:
bottom line under budget YTD = 21.9%.

Daycare: Snapshots of expenditures through the Daycare grant were reviewed:
August 2010 snapshot: -\$7,025.97

Mr. Swinkoski provided an end of fiscal year report (09-10) for the commission.

Special Funds : Mr. Swinkoski provided the monthly snapshot of the Special Funds.

Outreach Fund: (as of August 2010) balance of \$19,992.74

Emergency Fund: (as of August 2010) balance of \$66,836.61

Food: \$2,205.00

Fuel: \$26,340.11

Misc: \$37,871.50

Toys: \$420.00

TOTAL: \$66,836.61

VI. Old Business:

Special Funds Draft of Guidelines:

Mr. Swinkoski began his report by discussing the draft of the Special Funds overview as well as their proposed guidelines. Mr. Swinkoski encouraged any recommendations or revisions that the commission sees fit.

Ms. Polinsky commented that while guidelines exist for a resident to apply for the Emergency Fund, it did not include guidelines or parameters for an organization or an individual to apply to the Outreach Fund. An updated draft of guidelines including this process, procedure and parameters will be provided at the next meeting. Ms. Jensen suggested that something the Courageous Parenting programs currently taking place in Town would be a great example appropriate utilization of the Outreach fund.

A brochure outlining the Emergency Fund, Outreach fund as well as the other various offerings of the department were distributed to the Commissioners, of which they were pleased.

Upon the request made by Ms. Meyers at the September 7th meeting, Mr. Swinkoski provided a snapshot of the Emergency fund annual growth from June 30, 2006 to June 30, 2010.

Two Daycare Audits:

During the June 1, 2010 meeting, it was reported by the Daycare that the Department of Public Health made an unannounced inspection.

The outcomes of both of these audit were reported by Mr. Swinkoski. Regarding the outcomes of the DPH licensing inspection of May 11, 2010, a citation was made for insufficient impact absorbing material on the playground. It was corrected by Public Works by adding more wood chips and re-raking the existing wood chips to have at least 8 inches of impact absorbing material to insure safety as required. It will be checked monthly and treated as needed. There was another citation for rusty bolts in the Preschool Playscape. The manufacturer was notified for a replacement of bolts. It is currently still being rectified.

The outcomes of surprise Food Program Review that took place on July 20, 2010 were also reviewed by Mr. Swinkoski. Errors had been found in paperwork: 3 children were incorrectly placed in proper category- reduced instead of over income. This would reduce amount we are reimbursed by the State CACFP program. As a corrective action, the Clerk/Aide will check and recount as backup to insure accuracy. Total Daily Attendance was reported incorrectly, off by one child. This did not affect the monthly numbers. During unannounced visit, the reviewer found that snacks on one day were not recorded, thus not reimbursable. The corrective action will be to assign two staff members duty to do meal count at point of service (as eating) and record. The shift supervisor will check to insure accuracy.

Lion's Club Fundraiser: At the September 7th meeting, it was reported by Judith Amarone, Senior Center Manager, that a Wine Tasting will take place at St. John's Episcopal Church on October 14, 2010, hosted by the Lion's Club. Funds raised will go towards the purchase of a defibrillator for the Senior Center. Donna Malley asked if training will be provided for the staff. Mr. Swinkoski will look into this question and respond at the next meeting.

VII. New Business:

Mr. Swinkoski opened up the discussion as to whether meetings should be revised to meet to every other month, instead of once a month. This will be discussed at the next meeting.

VIII. Public Participation:

No participation.

IX. Adjournment:

Donna Malley asked for a Motion to Adjourn, seconded by Maggie Jensen. The meeting was adjourned at 6:44p.m.

Due to Election Day, the commission voted to move the next meeting from November 2, 2010 to **November 9th** at 5:30pm.