

Community Services and Recreation

DRAFT MINUTES/UNAPPROVED

To: Community Services Commission Members
From: Edward J. Swinkoski, Director of Community Services and Recreation
Re: Commission Meeting November 9, 2010

Meeting was called to order at 5:33p.m.

I. Attendance:

Present: Walter Heinig, Donna Malley, Jim Marshall, Judith Meyers, Michael Pepe.
Absent: Thomas Balga, Maggie Jensen, Krista Polinsky.
Staff: Edward J. Swinkoski and Carla Pelliccio, Secretary.

II. Acceptance of Minutes:

Judith Meyers made a motion to accept the Minutes of October 5, 2010, seconded by Donna Malley.

III. Correspondence:

None.

IV. Finance Report:

Mr. Swinkoski began by reviewing the YTD snapshot of the Emergency Fund, followed by the Outreach Fund.

Emergency Fund: (as of October 2010):

Fuel: \$3,477.30 spent YTD.	Balance	\$24,112.81
Misc: \$497.67 spent YTD.	Balance	\$37,627.58
Food: \$50.00 spent YTD.	Balance	\$2,205.00
Toys: \$0.00 spent YTD	Balance	\$420.00
	TOTAL:	\$64,365.39

Outreach Fund: (as of October 2010):

\$125.40 spent MTD.	Balance	\$22,828.11
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Budget reports were reviewed by the Commission (reports ending October 31, 2010).

Community Services: October 2010 snapshot of Community Services expenditures:
25.0 % of budget expended YTD

Welfare: October 2010 snapshot of Welfare expenditures (eviction related expenses):
38.3 % of budget expended YTD

Senior Center: October 2010 snapshot of Senior Center expenditures:
34.2 % of budget expended YTD

Daycare: Snapshots of expenditures through the Daycare grant were reviewed:
October 2010 snapshot: -\$62,747.06

IV. Director's Report:

No formal Director's Report was given in light of the conversation that took place under Old Business, however the following items were distributed to the Commission.

Food Bank: Monthly Food Bank Statistics for October 2010 were distributed to the commissioners: 306 meals were distributed.

2010 Season of Giving Program: Drafts of the 2010 Season of Giving Program details were distributed to the commissioners for their review and comment. All were in favor that the program details and guidelines were acceptable. Ms. Meyers recommended that the name of the "Adopt-A-Family" Program be changed.

The program will be referred to as the "Family Match" Program.

Senior Center brochure: November 2010 Senior Happenings were distributed.

V. Old Business:

As a follow up to his suggestion at the October meeting, Mr. Heinig opened up the conversation as to the what information they should be receiving on a monthly basis, in their continued role as commissioners in the monitoring of the health of the Community Services department. The concern had been voiced by the commission in previous months that they are not sure if they are receiving the most appropriate information in the Director's Report.

Mr. Heinig reviewed the description of the charge of the Community Services Commission from the Town website which states the following,

"The commission is an advisory authority which oversees the activities of the Community Services Department, reports to the Selectmen on the activities and performance of the Community Services Department and its Director, studies the needs in the community for programs which might be administered by the Community Services Department, suggests the addition or removal of programs conducted by the Department, reviews the budget prior to its submission by the Director to the Selectmen and monitors the expenditures, receipts and operations of the Department. A monthly report is presented by the Director to the commission."

Based upon this description, Mr. Heinig commented that the commission is not performing much of this role. Mr. Marhsall further added that it is important to know as the needs of the community change, how is the department equipped to address these needs? The commission agreed that perhaps a needs assessment should be performed or comparative analysis reviewed of like communities.

They went on to further comment that a snapshot of demographic information of the community needs to be captured. Based upon the snapshot, the questions that should be asked should include, "Do we have resources to meet these needs? Are the programs effective? Is there a segment of the population not being served or underserved? Are there needs that we are unable to meet?"

The commission agreed that an assessment of the community needs and a plan to meet those needs must be provided by each department. It was decided that the commission would like this comprehensive study be done on the following areas: Senior Center, Youth Services, Daycare, Mental Health/ Counseling Services, Emergency Services and the lower income population. It was decided that a comprehensive review of each department should be addressed at the upcoming meetings over the course of the next 6-7 months. Each department should take 1-2 meetings to address.

The commission suggested that each of the determined areas (Senior Center, Youth Services, Daycare, Mental Health/ Counseling Services, Emergency Services and the lower income population) should

provide a 3-5 year strategic plan outlining items that can be measured to determine if community needs are being met. They indicated would like a type of "SWOT" analysis (outlining strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, threats) be done for each division. The questions should address how the respective environments are going to change over the course of time and are the departments ready to handle them.

The commission anticipates that this comprehensive study will take approximately 6-7 months. Once each division of the department is reviewed, an overall review of the department will be done, determining if budget reallocations need to take place or new programs introduced. Upon the conclusion of this study, the findings will be presented to the First Selectman. Then there will be tangible measurable outcomes that each department will be able to track on.

It was agreed by the commission that they would like the Senior Center be the first division of the Community Services Department to begin this comprehensive review. Mr. Swinkoski will speak with Senior Center Manager, Judy Amarone regarding this task. Thus, the next two meetings will be dedicated to Senior Center. Mr. Heinig stressed that Ms. Amarone does not have to provide a big presentation, but rather to come to the meeting prepared to discuss the demographics of the population, how the Senior Center programs compare to the programs in like towns, as well be as prepared to discuss some ideas of the strengths and weaknesses of the program that she anticipates in the next five years, including the direction that she sees the program needing to move in, and what needs are not being addressed. Questions that the commissioners raised included if the programs being marketed in the right place, and whether the Senior Center has the infrastructure to handle the needs of the increasing aging population.

With regards to revising the agenda for future meetings, Ms. Meyers made the recommendation that the Finance Report be reported on a quarterly basis (instead of monthly), seconded by Donna Malley.

Additionally, the Director's Report will be changed to simply reflect pertinent updates on either seasonal or holiday related events, as well as Harbor Health and counseling services updates

Based upon the new charge of the next 6-7 months, it was decided that the meetings will remain as monthly for the time being.

Special Funds Draft of Guidelines: A revised draft of guidelines as well as draft of the Outreach Funds application were distributed to the Commission. Comments and recommendations were slated for discussion, however it did not get addressed at this meeting. It will be added for discussion at the next meeting.

VII. New Business:

None.

VIII. Public Participation:

No participation.

IX. Adjournment:

Donna Malley asked for a Motion to Adjourn, seconded by Jim Marshall. The meeting was adjourned at 6:46p.m.

The next meeting will take place on December 7th at 5:30pm in the **Game Room**.