

Commission on Social Services
Minutes March 10, 2011

Attending: Peg Koellmer, Susan Chalons-Browne, Cathy Pierce, Roseann De Simone, Edward Raposa, Judy Mabley, Nate Shipp, Judy Zucker

The meeting was held at Comstock Community Center and was called to order by Susan Chalons- Browne at 5:30 pm.

The minutes of the February 10, 2011 meeting were approved.

Guest Speaker – Saras Nair, M.D., Chairman, Department of Pathology–Norwalk Hospital

Dr. Nair provided us with a listing of her professional experience, committee and organizational memberships, training, residencies/fellowships and publications. Her services have and are providing excellent, creative and innovative health care and insight. She is a compassionate and dedicated leader in our greater community!

Dr. Nair said our community hospital is non-profit, with 1800 employees, 500 physicians and 500 volunteers. The budget is 340 million dollars. There were 50,000 emergency visits for the year. It is ranked among the top 5% of hospitals nationally for excellence.

The hospital provides 18 million dollars of charity and free care yearly, has installed 14 million dollars of equipment and infrastructure improvements and operates the CT Avenue Clinic. In addition, Norwalk Hospital departments include Women’s and Children’s Services, Cancer Care, Digestive Diseases, Emergency Care, Cardiovascular Services and Orthopedics Services.

Norwalk Hospital sponsors 350 community events yearly reaching 70,000 people and provides over 400 different kinds of tests in its labs. There are outreach and pick-up services and homebound programs. It is ranked first in Intensive Care in Connecticut.

Wilton Commons

Judy Mabley summarized a report by George Ciaccio of Wilton Commons. He noted there has been a “spectacular” relationship between public and private interests. There was “unanimous approval” at the BOS meeting in March with smiles all around. First Selectman Bill Brennan added “Get it done!” Letters were sent out a week ago to outstanding pledges and Letters to the Editor will continue. Over \$310,000 has been collected since early December. The town must satisfy DEC and Mutual Housing Lease terms. The goal is to be “shovel ready” in July of this year with funding for 51 units and 23 more that could be added.

New Business – Wells Fargo Grant

Cathy Pierce announced the Wells Fargo Grant of \$1000 was given and had not been specifically targeted.

Food Pantry

Over 200 bags of food were donated by customers of the Village Market. 49 households used the pantry in February. The Food Pantry has increased in use this year. Food cards have also been distributed and additional positive publicity has added to the use of The Pantry.

Enthusiastic Accolades

Peg Koellmer was given extended thank yous and applause for her part in the design and installation of the lovely new and upgraded furniture and décor of The Center! The “helpers” were also much appreciated!!

There being no further business, the meeting was adjourned at 7:52 PM

Respectfully Submitted,

Judy Mabley

Co-Secretary

**Next meeting at Comstock Senior Center
April 14, 2011 5:30-7:00 pm**