

Commission on Social Services
Minutes, November 10, 2011

Attending: Roseann De Simone, Betty-Jo Corridon, Nate Shipp, Judy Zucker, Peg Koellmer, Beth Mason, Cathy Pierce, Judy Mabley

The meeting was called to order by Peg Koellmer at 5:35. Minutes of the October 13, 2011 were approved.

New Business

Peg updated attendees on the following Commission housekeeping matters:

- 1) Membership changes: Recognition of retired member Ed Raposa for long and faithful service will be forthcoming. Susan Chalons-Browne's resignation was accepted, also with gratitude for her years of service. Peg has been in touch with Al Alper, Republican Town Chairman, and consulted with him on some of the demographics and desired qualifications for two new Republicans to be brought on board.
- 2) Commissioners have communicated their interests in liaison positions. These are being reviewed, and Peg will email liaison assignments to members within the week.
- 3) New handbooks were distributed and reviewed. These contain information on all Commission matters, member and staff contacts, schedules, recent agendas, minutes, monthly reports, and Wilton Interfaith Council bylaws.

Upcoming holiday giving programs: There are 90 children in town who qualify for this year's Holiday Gift program, and new ways to appeal for public support are needed. Business-size cards explaining the giving program and asking for help are being designed and printed for wide distribution throughout the community. A second card soliciting donations to support the Interfaith Council's Warming Fund will be distributed after the first of the year.

Director's report: Cathy Pierce described her experience (totaling 52 hours) managing the town shelter at Miller-Driscoll for the 5 days and 4 nights following the Halloween nor'easter. She reported that overall things ran smoothly; however, for future emergencies, more help is essential. A trained co-manager of the shelter is needed. In addition, a communications coordinator is needed to work with the Social Services staff to ensure that residents at risk can be contacted. (It was very difficult to reach people by phone in the aftermath of the storm. Since there was no dedicated phone for the shelter, Cathy had to resort to using her personal cell phone for all communications while she was there.) Lists of frail elderly and infirm residents need constant updating with accurate contact information. Cathy suggested that a volunteer coordinator might work with the various service organizations in town to establish and maintain a reliable communications system. She also described Weston's very effective neighbor-to-neighbor hotline, which Wilton might be able to adopt.

Old Business: Liaison Updates

Trackside – Peg Koellmer

Usage continues to be way up, with the Trackside building now functioning as a true community center as well as a teen center. A flat budget request will be presented for the second year. The board is preparing for its annual appeal, and Trackside will host a fundraiser for Wilton Social Services on December 2nd.

Wilton Commons – Betty-Jo Corridon

A town meeting to vote on an extended and amended lease for the Wilton Commons property will be held on Thursday December 1st.

There being no further business, the meeting was adjourned at 6:50 pm.

Respectfully submitted,

Beth Mason
Co-Secretary

**NEXT MEETING: THURSDAY DECEMBER 8th
5:30 PM AT COMSTOCK**