

## COMMISSION ON SOCIAL SERVICES

### Minutes

October 9, 2014

Present: Virginia Smith, Christine Tenore, Roseann DeSimone, Peg Koellmer, Michael O'Connell, Judy Zucker, Cathy Pierce

Absent: Betty Jo Corridon and David Graybill

Co-chairman Christine Tenore called the meeting to order at 5:30 p.m.

Upon motion by Roseann DeSimone, seconded by Virginia Smith, the minutes of the September 11, 2014 meeting were unanimously approved with the following amendment: under "other business" the sentence reads "Judy Zucker offered to take minutes at the October meeting."

During a discussion of the vacancy in the position of commission secretary, Michael O'Connell volunteered to serve in that capacity. Upon motion by Peg Koellmer, seconded by Christine Tenore, the commission voted unanimously to appoint Michael O'Connell commission secretary, effective immediately following the close of the October 9<sup>th</sup> meeting.

#### Directors Report:

Cathy Pierce informed the commission about recent changes in staffing at Wilton Commons. She reported that the income- and asset-restricted energy assistance program has begun; new clients are arriving and former clients returning. She explained the need for the extracurricular fund that helps families in need meet the costs of school extracurricular fees. Cathy mentioned that the Comstock food pantry keeps busy with a steady flow of continuing and new clients.

#### Liaison Reports:

Peg Koellmer reported that the Safe Rides program is "going well." New programs at Trackside include tutoring, cooking classes and photobooth.

Roseann DeSimone urged the commission to attend the Chris Herren presentation on October 21 at 6:30 p.m. in the Clune Center, co-sponsored by the Wilton Youth Council, Wilton Youth Services, Wilton Public Schools and Silver Hill Hospital. The former NBA player will recount his personal story of recovery from substance abuse. The community-at-large is invited to the evening program; during school hours the program will be presented to the high school juniors and seniors.

Roseann also commented on the recent swastika defacings at the high school. The high school has addressed this issue via appropriate and subject-specific curriculum within the social studies and english

classes as well as subject-based discussion during Advisory. The administration will follow approved disciplinary policies and procedures in dealing with this matter.

Judy Zucker explained that the Senior Center Advisory Council will suspend its activities until the Comstock renovation project nears completion.

Virginia Smith reported that the Wilton Youth Council currently has six vacancies and continues its search for volunteers. She described the enthusiasm created by a new gardening program.

New business:

Christine Tenore asked commission members to advise her in advance, if possible, when they are unable to attend a commission meeting. Copies of the directory of commission members were distributed.

Speakers for the coming months include: Lauren Hughes on the department's gift-giving program (November 13); Cathy Pierce on the FY 2015 department budget (December 11); and Jeff Weiser, President and CEO of Homes with Hope (January 8.)

Upon motion by Peg Koellmer, seconded by Roseann DeSimone, a motion to adjourn the meeting at 6:20 p.m. was unanimously approved.

Respectfully submitted,

Judy Zucker, secretary pro-tem