

COMMISSION on SOCIAL SERVICES

Town of Wilton

Minutes of September 11, 2014

Attending: Betty Jo Corridon, Cathy Pierce, Virginia Smith, Christine Tenore, Judy Zucker Michael O'Connell, David Graybill and Roseann De Simone.

Absent: Peg Koellmer

Guests: Elizabeth Rudolph, Lauren Hughes, Liz Doty, Colleen Fawcett, Margaret Creeth, Patricia Kapsinow

The meeting was called to order at 5:30 pm. by Virginia Smith, co-chair.

There were no corrections and or discussion of the June 12 meeting minutes, which were approved.

Announcement: Christine Tenore announced that Judy Mabley has resigned her position as Commissioner, leaving a Republican vacancy. Elizabeth Rudolph is a potential candidate for this position.

Members of the Social Services Department staff gave an overview of services and programs in their respective departments and noted their plans and goals for the coming year:

Directors Report: Cathy Pierce reported that she has attended meetings of the Safe Homes Task Force, which is developing community responses for individuals with hoarding issues. This is a costly problem for towns, and a team effort is required to address it.

Cathy also has attended Emergency Management planning meetings with representatives from other towns. She reported on establishing emergency shelters and addressing the shelter needs of disabled and other special populations with physical needs.

Senior Services: Lauren Hughes gave an overview of the programs that she oversees, including assisting people who are newly eligible for Medicare. This year the back-to-school backpack and school supply program served 89 Wilton children. Lauren also discussed ongoing efforts to stock the food pantry, including contributions of produce from Ambler Farm and other local gardens, food drives, and donations from area grocery stores.

Senior Center: Liz Doty presented a summary of the mission of the Wilton Senior Center, along with its programs and bi-monthly newsletter. Goals for the coming year include increasing participation in the Senior Center and enhancing the marketing of Senior Center opportunities through the newsletter, newspaper articles, website, and personal outreach.

Youth Services: Colleen Fawcett and Margaret Creeth gave an overview of services and programs planned for the coming year. In an effort to address prescriptions drug abuse and substance abuse among student athletes, Chris Herren, a former NBA player whose career was derailed by substance

abuse, will be presenting programs to Wilton High School students and parents on Tuesday, October 21. A new initiative involves the recently-hired Garden Coordinator, who will be involving youth in planting gardens at the YMCA and Trackside and teaching kids about growing, eating, and preparing healthy foods.

Benefits Coordinator: Patricia Kapsinow described her work in assisting clients in obtaining benefits from the state Department of Social Services. Particular issues include helping individuals navigate the bureaucracy and obtaining health care benefits for individual who have too many assets to qualify for Medicaid but who lack the means to pay for ACA health insurance.

Liaison Reports: Due to the length of The Social Services Presentations, it was agreed that these reports will be deferred until the October meeting.

Other business: Betty Jo Corridon volunteered to take minutes for the September meeting.

Motion to adjourn was made at 6:45 by David Graybill and seconded by Judy Zucker. Next meeting will be on October 9, 2014 at 5: 30 pm at the Comstock Community Center.

Respectfully submitted,

Virginia Smith- Chair

Roseann De Simone- Vice-Chair