

**Commission on Social Services
Minutes March 12, 2009**

Attending: Betty-Jo Corridon, Cathy Pierce, Peg Koellmer, Beth Mason, Judy Mabley, Ed Raposa, Judy Zucker, Leslie Rogers, Lauren Hughes, Steve Lanza

The meeting was called to order at 5:40 pm.

The February 12 minutes were approved.

Director's report - Cathy Pierce

The Department has been receiving significant help from the Wilton community in response to increased numbers of people applying for assistance. The Kiwanis and Rotary Clubs of Wilton, Our Lady of Fatima Church, Wilton Baptist Church, United Way's Neighbor-to-Neighbor program, and NEON (Norwalk Economic Opportunity Now) all have been recent donors of money and/or food. The majority of requests from clients are for fuel assistance (applications up almost 100% from this time last year).

Although Cathy can refer clients seeking help with mortgage payments to the Mutual Housing Association of Southwestern Connecticut, she feels more help is needed. Peg Koellmer volunteered to be an additional resource for this.

Plans for the proposed regional conference on the economy, which was to be held at Norwalk Community College on April 18, are being revised and will be announced at a later date.

Liaison updates

Wilton Commons – Judy Mabley read some recent email correspondence from local legislators regarding their advocacy efforts to obtain state funding for the project.

Senior Center – Judy Zucker and Malcolm Whyte are continuing to meet and brainstorm with Bill Brennan.

Domestic Violence Task Force – A panel presentation on teen dating violence will be presented on April 21 at the Wilton Library at 7:30 pm. The future of the Task Force is presently under discussion. After four years, its leaders need to pass the torch, and new members are being sought. Ideas and help from the members of the Commission would be welcomed.

Program – Steve Lanza, Executive Director, Family ReEntry

Steve Lanza gave an outstanding presentation on the origin, history and programs of Family ReEntry (now in its 25th year) and its efforts at comprehensively and effectively addressing the social problems related to crime, violence, abuse, and the unprecedented rates of costly incarceration.

The meeting was adjourned at 7:25 pm.

Next Meeting: Thursday April 2, 2009 5:30 pm

Respectfully submitted,

Beth Mason
Co-Secretary