

**SENIOR ADVISORY BOARD  
REGULAR MEETING MINUTES  
January 24, 2024**

**PRESENT:** Elaine Cote-Chair, Roselani Ferguson, Pamela Wilcox-Dapkus, Gail Landry

**ABSENT:** Janet Colonghi

**OTHERS PRESENT:** Sarah Elliott-Caratasios Senior Services Administrator, Carlotta Lord  
(Resident)

**1. CHAIR CALLS MEETING TO ORDER:**

Chairwoman Cote called the meeting to order at 11:24 a.m. in the Main Floor Room of the Senior Center, located at 7 Waverly Avenue, Portland, CT 06480.

**2. ROLL CALL:**

Members were introduced

**3. Review/Approve Minutes:**

Roselani Ferguson called for motion to approve the meeting minutes of October 25, 2023, motion seconded by Gail Landry. Vote unanimous, motion carried.

**4. Review /Approve Agenda**

Elaine Cote made a motion to approve the Agenda as presented, motion seconded by Roselani Ferguson. Vote unanimous, motion carried.

**5. OLD BUSINESS:**

**A. UCONN Nutritional Program**

Sarah Elliott-Caratasios mentioned the UCONN Nutritional Program class went well on January 18,2024. There were approximately six student/residents involved and all of students/residents presented positive feedback. The program assisted students/residents in speaking with a Dietician/Nutritionist to assist in planning healthier meals for their medical needs. It was also mentioned at this time that CRT for Meals on Wheels is being replaced by Estuary, and there are various local markets that are part of the SNAP program.

Sarah stated she receives daily calls from residents in need of assistance, whether it be for assistance with Rent, Food, housing or Transportation. She would like to have a grant be written

to possibly fund a “Social Services, Mental Health” position for the town which will better guide our seniors or anyone in need of assistance.

Sarah is aware there are more Portland residents in need of assistance and for various reasons that do not seek assistance or are not aware there is assistance available to them. The group discussed ways to get the word out about the programs available to those in need.

#### **B. Senior Center Bus / Other forms of Transportation**

Sarah announced the new bus did arrive to Portland, however it need minor adjustments before it could be placed into the fleet. While discussing the New Senior Bus, the “Dial A Ride” program was mentioned. This program is in the towns budget, and services our town and the surrounding towns. However, the feedback on this program is poor. There are complaints of inconvenience, cost more money to use, and is late in picking up seniors and at times leaves seniors waiting hours for a ride home. It was suggested that we look into if anyone from our town utilizes this program and if not possibly take the money that is sanctioned to the program and place it into Portland’s Ride Program.

It was also announced the ARPA grant for twenty-five thousand dollars will help differ the cost in the acquisition of a new Chrysler Pacifica minivan for the Waverly Senior Center which will add to the fleet, to help reduce transportation barriers and isolation among our senior community.

### **6. NEW BUSINESS:**

#### **A. Habitat for Humanity**

While discussing the needs of our Seniors, Sarah mentioned many of our seniors need assistance around their homes. Whether it be helping with small minor repairs, landscaping, shoveling sidewalks/walk ways. She mentioned if we could work with Habitat for Humanity and get the youth involved with helping their neighbor, or someone in need around their home, this could be a great benefit for both. Not only would the home owner be assisted in a chore to difficult or dangerous for them, but it would create a relationship, bonding experience by bringing two generations together to learn from one another. Ideas suggested were to reach out to Seniors in need of Community Service hours or Service Hours for those whose Religious practices encourage community service.

#### **B. New Camera System**

Sarah mentioned there was some grant money left over from the kitchen renovation, so the remainder was put towards the purchase of seven new cameras in and around the Senior Center.

### **7. PUBLIC COMMENT**

Carlotta Lord asked about the increase in the transportation fee should the resident need to be picked up at their residence. She stated there is an increase of \$5.00 on top of the already \$5.00 fee to utilize the bus. She was inquiring whether that fee could be removed due to the fact it's a burden to some residents, and stated in times prior there was no additional fee should a resident need to be picked up.

**8. ADJOURN MEETING**

The meeting was adjourned at 12:43 p.m.

Respectfully Submitted,

*Pamela Wilcox Daphus*