

# ELDERLY COMMISSION MEETING

## REGULAR MEETING: October 27, 2008 at 5:00pm

### East Windsor Town Hall Meeting Room

---

*Meeting Minutes of October 27, 2008:*

- I. Meeting called to order at 5:16pm, by Claire Badstubner, Chairman.
  
- II. Attendance:
  - Present Members: Elizabeth Burns (Municipal Agent), Claire Badstubner (Chairman), Catherine Drouin (Co-Chairman), Deb Donovan, Trevor Bray
  - Absent Member: Madeleine Thompson
  - Guest: Laura Clynch, Director EW Senior Center
  
- III. Previous Minutes:
  - Regular Meeting 9/22/08:  
**MOTION** to accept the minutes, as presented, by Ms. Donovan. **SECONDED** by Ms. Drouin. **ALL IN FAVOR, MOTION CARRIED.**
  
- IV. Cell Phones for Seniors/ Senior Safety Program:
  - A. Safety Workshop-

Ms. Donovan, Ms. Drouin, Ms. Badstubner and Mr. Bray attended the 10/16/08 Safety Workshop at the Senior Center. Feedback was very positive and well-received with a high level of interest in the cell phone program from those who attended. Calls/inquiries are still coming into the Senior Center regarding the program.

Elderly Commission will present Ralph Ciaburri from "Simply Wireless" with a Certificate of Appreciation for his participation and expertise in launching the program.

The following participants at the Safety Workshop will also be acknowledged with Thank You letters: Jane Simpkins (Human Services), Fire Marshal Blaine Simpkins, Fire Chief Cal Myers and Officer Marisol Rodriguez.

All phones were distributed at the Safety Workshop to those interested seniors. A waiting list was started and as more phones come in, those residents will be contacted.

Commission members discussed what the best way might be to do a follow-up to insure that the phones are being used and seniors understand the purpose of them. Ms. Donovan suggested that those with the phones be presented (via telephone) with a questionnaire. The questionnaire would include questions such as: Do you understand the program? Is the phone visible and easy to read? How are you carrying your phone? Do you understand when to charge the phone? Etc.

Commission members also discussed presenting a periodic lunchtime discussion at the senior center to re-enforce the cell phone program and to allow seniors another opportunity to ask questions or for their phone to be "tested" to 9-1-1 service. Members

also discussed inviting safety officers (fire, police, ambulance) to the discussion. Doing so would re-enforce with the seniors when they should utilize 9-1-1 services. Ms. Clynch stated that she will schedule such a discussion (“coffee community conversations”) quarterly. Commission members and Ms. Clynch will schedule this for the first Thursday in December (12:30-1:30).

Ms. Clynch requested a contact person (name and phone number) that she can refer callers to. Ms. Clynch also added that she felt the safety workshop was well-received and that as long as the senior understands the program, they will likely do it. Ms. Clynch stressed that the program should be presented periodically to re-iterate it, to re-educate the seniors on both the cell phones (use & purpose) and on 9-1-1 services.

Ms. Clynch brought in more cell phones and chargers to donate to the program. Ms. Donovan will try to get these phones ready for distribution by the December lunch/discussion at the Senior Center.

Ms. Clynch further suggested that the commission consider developing a Fact Sheet to go along with the phones. She felt this would be helpful to seniors – something they can reference. Fact Sheet might include a contact name/number for questions, purpose of the program, when to use the phone, etc. Ms. Clynch also suggested putting a disclaimer on the Fact Sheet to state that the cell phone is to aid you in need, not replace the use/need of “Life Line”. Ms. Donovan stated that this was emphasized at the workshop. Members agreed that a disclaimer would be a good idea.

Mr. Bray expressed his concern that if the commission can not verify that the program is working, than it may not be worth doing. Mr. Bray questioned whether the commission can find out from 9-1-1 services if they have received calls from those phones handed out. Commission members discussed this issue further, at length – verification of use would be difficult.

Mr. Bray also stated that the cell phone program may intimidate the elderly and although a senior may say they will use it, they won’t. Discussion followed regarding the role of the Elderly Commission in this program and following up with those seniors who have the phones.

In summary, commission members agreed to the following:

1. Schedule Quarterly meetings to re-emphasize program
2. One-on-one follow up (via phone) utilizing a questionnaire
3. Develop a Fact Sheet to go with the phones (Ms. Drouin to create)

V. Seniors/Active Adult Survey:

- A. Ms. Donovan states that over 100 surveys have been collected so far, however, that is not enough to evaluate and present to the BOS. The surveys, so far, will be very valuable when presenting to the BOS and participants are expressing interest in the Senior Center and activities.

Ms. Donovan and Ms. Drouin stated that there will need to be more “leader/captain” training in order to develop a good, solid core group to collect surveys. Ms. Donovan expressed the need for all commission members to commit to doing this project as a group and make decisions as a group, not just a few members. Currently, there are about ten

“captains” ready to go out to collect surveys. Ms. Donovan stated that surveying 10% of the East Windsor population should yield true results.

Ms. Drouin also stated that she will look into recruiting a UCONN student as part of their curriculum requirements. This student could help with obtaining surveys and compiling information.

Ms. Clynch stated that she has reached out to the Senior Center community to gather survey information. Ms. Clynch reminded the members that, although more activities may be requested, there is limited space in the building to provide many activities. Also, due to the fact that the building is shared with the Fire Department, there can not be any fixed objects (i.e. pool table, organ) in the building. Ms. Clynch also stated that it can sometimes be difficult to schedule a couple of activities at the same time – she needs to insure that “quiet” activities are scheduled together because of space limitations.

It was agreed that the issue of surveys and leader training will be discussed further at the next regular meeting.

VI. Miscellaneous Business:

A. Ms. Drouin requested an update on ITN at a future meeting. Ms. Burns will invite Margaret from ITN as a guest speaker for the January 26, 2009 meeting.

B. The 2009 meeting schedule was discussed. Meetings will remain on the 4<sup>th</sup> Monday of each month, 5:00pm in the Town Hall Meeting Room. A memo, with the 2009 meeting dates, will be sent to the Town Clerk for posting.

VII. Adjournment:

**MOTION** made by Ms. Drouin to adjourn meeting at 6:24pm. **SECONDED BY** Ms. Donovan.

Respectfully Submitted,

Christine Pellegrini