Commission on Aging
Minutes of the Meeting
September 20, 2010

Present: Chair Christine Robertson; Kathy Brennan;; Marion Freer; Alice Kenny Lucas; Maary Morrisroe; Sheila Silverman; Eileen Wilson
Municipal Agent for the Elderly: Jeanne Wolnick
Absent: Mary Ann O'Grady

The meeting was called to order at 2:30 p.m. by Chair Christine Robertson.

Minutes
Minutes of the August 16, 2010 meeting were sent to members prior to this meeting for their review. The Chair noted several inaccuracies: CCCI has income limits of $31,000 or less for singles; $41,000 or less for married couples—not asset limits. She advised that the Leir Foundation did not discuss the Commission with Rudy Marconi and that "Robertson" was misspelled " Robinson." Sheila Silverman moved that the minutes be approved with corrections. Alice Kenny Lucas seconded the motion. All present agreed.

Miscellaneous
Sheila Silverman advised that AT&T will not give seniors a discount on Uverse TV service.

Chris Robertson reported that a "Drug Take Back Day" for old/expired drugs will be held in the parking lot of the RVNA on Saturday, September 25th from 10 a.m. to 2 p.m. People dropping off drugs are urged to also drop off a contribution to the Food Pantry. Mrs. Robertson distributed the RVNA Family Flu Clinic schedule.

Chris Robertson advised that the "Do Not Call" registry is now permanent. Members discussed the fact that non-profits and political calls are exempt and very annoying.

Non-driver photo IDs are now available from the Department of Motor Vehicles. Applicants must be Connecticut residents. The ID is issued for 5 to 7 years—cost $22.50 The fee is waived for residents of homeless shelters. Eileen Wilson reported that one of her clients handed in a current license and was issued an ID without charge.

Jeanne Wolnick advised that a Ridgefield group "Handy Helpers" will help low income seniors with minor repairs, clean-ups, and rides. Jean works through a contact with St. Mary's Men's Ministry. This group will serve the Ridgefield community, not just members of St. Mary's. Discussion followed about senior's transportation needs. When asked about the Friendly Shopper program, Jeanne advised that there were now just three volunteers in the program. Jean outlined the program—clients are housebound and cannot have a car. It is not just a shopping program—it is a relationship program. An outing is planned for each week. Jeanne plans to recruit more volunteers. Chris Robertson agreed to discuss this program in her "Senior Scene" article. The RVNA is reactivating their "Friendly Visitor" program, visiting the homebound once a week.

State Representative John Frey
John opened his talk by advising of two local accomplishments: John has secured approval for a traffic light on Route 7 at the entrance to Laurel Ridge, Ridgefield Crossing, and the Toll Brothers Regency Complex. While the DMV's traffic study did not prove in the light, John did obtain on "OK" if the three companies mentioned cover the $150,000 cost. John has obtained the agreement of the Chairman of Athena(Laurel Ridge) for $50,000 and is confident that the other companies will also contribute. John also advised that the construction of twelve new units of housing and renovations and improvements to Ballard Green—twenty million dollars worth—have been completed. Governor Rell will attend the ceremony marking the completion.
John advised that he was not successful, but will continue to pursue, exempting pensions from state income tax. In response to questions, John advised he is going to propose a bill to see that political calls are not exempt from the "Do Not Call" list!
Carole Konner questioned what was happening with "Money Follows the Person", adding that if a person has to be in a nursing home for six months to qualify, there may not be a home to come home to!! Representative Frey advised that this involves State and Federal programs—he feels that it should be brought down to 60 days.
Responding to questions about the Route 7 construction, he advised reengineering was necessary, but that the project is on target for completion in July, 2011. He advised that reestablishment of the Department of Aging has been delayed until July 1, 2011. John also feels that it will probably be delayed again because of the State's fiscal condition. A brief discussion followed about the State's financial problems.
John Frey provided members with two handouts(attached) "2010 Laws Affecting Seniors" and another on an act concerning criminal background checks for employees of homemaker-companion agencies and home health agencies.
Mrs. Robertson thanked Representative Frey for his informative talk.

Leir Foundation Grant
As recommended at our August meeting, Chair Robertson and Ridgefield Social Services Director Carole Konner discussed the best use for the $5,000 grant this Commission received from the Leir Foundation. Their recommendation is to provide a bus to take Ridgefield seniors to the Danbury Mall once a month for approximately three hours.
Sheila Silverman moved that this Commission approve using the $5,000 Leir grant to provide a once a month trip to the Danbury Mall for Ridgefield seniors. Alice Kenny Lucas seconded the motion. All seven members present voted in favor of the motion.
Motion approved. Carole advised that the first trip would take place on October 6th. Flyers will go out to advise seniors.

With no further business, the meeting was adjourned at 3:50 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Mary Morrisroe, Secretary

The next meeting of this Commission will be held on October 18, 2010, at 2:30 p.m. in the small Lower Level Conference Room, Ridgefield Town Hall
Anyone requiring special accommodation due to disability is asked to contact Christine Robertson, Chair, on 203-438-6165