

Ridgefield, Connecticut
Commission on Aging
Minutes of March 20, 2023 Meeting

Andrea Beebe, Commission on Aging (CoA) chair, called the meeting to order at 2.37 pm; welcomed all - especially Peter Bancel, the CoA's newest commissioner, who the Board of Selectmen unanimously appointed on 3/15 and was duly sworn-in this morning; and took a roll call - all commissioners: Mr. Bancel, Ms. Beebe, Ms. Culhane, Ms. Franceschini-Gatje (who participated by phone), Mr. Noyes, Ms. Martin, Ms. Saleeby, and Mr. Ternullo. Mr. Tony Phillips, Town of Ridgefield Director of Social Services and CoA ex officio advisor, was also present.

As the 1st order of business, Ms. Beebe invited public comment:

- Mr. Steven Connor, a local resident considering service on the CoA was in the audience and greeted the Commissioners.
- Ms. Olga Barkova, representing Spry Forward, an early-stage start-up entity inquired whether the CoA might convene a focus group of local seniors for the purpose of eliciting input on Spry Forward's proposed business model. Ms. Beebe asked Ms. Barkova to send the CoA a written overview of Spry Forward and details of its focus group request as soon as possible so that the CoA could evaluate the request and identify appropriate next steps.
- Ms. Monica Stromwall, a member of the CT Housing Authority leadership team serving Ballard Green and Prospect Ridge, introduced herself. Because she was on the CoA's agenda as the seventh order of business, as an accommodation to Ms. Stromwell and a formality, Mr. Bancel moved that the CoA reorder its agenda and hear Ms. Stromwell now. Ms. Martin seconded. Discussion was invited. Hearing none, Ms. Beebe called for a vote. The motion was unanimously approved. Ms. Stromwell mentioned that she began working at Ballard Green and Prospect Ridge within the past year. She summarized her activities to-date and stated that her primary purpose in coming before the CoA was to introduce herself and begin a dialogue that might lead to a collaboration with the CoA that advances the wellbeing of Ballard Green and Prospect Ridge residents. A brief interactive discussion followed. The CoA commissioners thanked Ms. Stromwell for her introducing herself, congratulated her on her work, and expressed the sentiment that a collaboration that improved the lives of Prospect Ridge and Ballard Green seniors would be ideal.

As the 2nd order of business, Ms. Beebe, noting that the matter had been deferred twice already, called for a vote for the CoA's 2023 leadership positions and asked for nominations:

- For Chair, Ms. Beebe nominated Mr. Ternullo. Ms. Saleeby seconded. Ms. Beebe invited further discussion. Hearing none, she called for a vote. Mr. Ternullo was unanimously elected.
- For Vice Chair, Ms. Franceschini- Gatje nominated Ms. Beebe. Mr. Ternullo seconded. Ms. Beebe invited further discussion. Hearing none, she called for a vote. Ms. Beebe was unanimously elected.
- For Secretary, Mr. Ternullo nominated Ms. Franceschini- Gatje. Mr. Noyes seconded. Ms. Beebe invited further discussion. Hearing none, she called for a vote. Ms. Franceschini-Gatje was unanimously elected.

Following the elections, Ms. Beebe asked Mr. Ternullo to preside over the remainder of the meeting.

As the 3rd order of business, Mr. Ternullo requested approval of the October 17, 2022, January 23, 2023, and February 27, 2023 CoA meeting minutes. Mr. Noyes moved that all minutes be approved. Ms. Beebe seconded. Mr. Ternullo called for discussion. Ms. Franceschini-Gatje noted that only the commissioners who were present at the respective aforesaid meetings and who are present today may vote to approve or reject said minutes. All commissioners concurred and noted that in each case there was a sufficient quorum to approve the minutes. Hearing no further discussion, Mr. Ternullo called for a

separate vote on each of the minutes. All three passed unanimously with the appropriate individuals approving and the appropriate individuals abstaining.

As the 4th order of business, Mr. Ternullo addressed the *Information and Guidelines for Boards, Committees and Commissions* that the Board of Selectmen approved in 12/2022. Because the document is over 20 pages and was only recently individually distributed to CoA commissioners, in the interest of time, Mr. Ternullo deferred the discussion to the CoA's April meeting.

As the 5th order of business, Ms. Beebe reported that the Charter Review Commission (i) applauded the CoA on its thorough one-page memo recommending that the CoA term of service be reduced from a 3-year term to a 2-year term, and (ii) adopted that recommendation in full.

As the 6th order of business, Mr. Ternullo reported that the CoA's

- April learning event, entitled *Medicare Basics, CT Statewide Respite Care, National Family Caregiver Support* will occur from 1:00 pm – 2:30 pm on 4/24 at the library
- March learning event, presenting various transportation options for seniors, will occur tomorrow, 3/21 from 1:00 pm – 2:30 pm at the library
- Ms. Franceschini-Gatje is developing the CoA's May learning event, currently projected to occur on 5/23 from 1:00 pm – 2:30 pm at the library

As the 7th order of business, Mr. Ternullo reviewed the draft CoA Grant Application Strategy and Guiding Principles (the "Guiding Principles"), which is attached hereto. Ms. Beebe moved that the Guiding Principles be adopted. Mr. Noyes seconded. Discussion followed. Upon conclusion of the discussion, a vote was taken. The motion was unanimously approved.

As the 8th order of business, Mr. Ternullo invited Ms. Saleeby to update the CoA on Senior Event Planning activities. In view of the short time frame between the CoA's February and March meetings (2/27 and 3/20) and the inclement weather, Ms. Saleeby noted that there has been no activity.

As the 9th order of business, in the interest of time, Mr. Ternullo tabled the update on the Senior Guide Booklet to the CoA's May meeting.

As the 10th order of business, Mr. Ternullo invited new business discussions:

- Mr. Ternullo noted that the Ridgefield Assessor's office is accepting applications from qualified homeowners for the "Town Program for Tax Relief" from 1/1/2023 through 4/1/2023 and that this program is especially relevant to seniors:
 - The homeowner must be 65 years of age or older by December 31, 2022 and have resided at or paid real estate taxes on its residence for one year prior to its application
 - The property must be the homeowner's legal domicile and occupied 183 days of the year
 - The homeowner must not be receiving any other exemptions on any properties in any other state or within CT.

Homeowners currently receiving this benefit need not reapply. For applications and more information, contact the Assessor's office at 203-431-2706.

Hearing no new business, Mr. Ternullo called for a motion to adjourn. Ms. Saleeby made the motion. Mr. Noyes seconded. There being no discussion on the matter, the motion to adjourn was unanimously approved. Mr. Ternullo noted that the next CoA meeting will be on 4/17 at 2:30 pm at Town Hall in Small Conference Room, thanked everyone for their participation and adjourned the meeting.

These minutes were prepared by Joseph Ternullo as acting secretary.

Commission on Aging ('CoA')
Ridgefield, CT
Grant Application Strategy and Guiding Principles

The CoA's mission is to recognize the needs of Ridgefield seniors and coordinate municipal programs to meet these needs.

The CoA recognizes that many of the needs of Ridgefield seniors are met through the activities of nonprofit organizations serving the community, including the Ridgefield Senior Positive Initiative Forum (SPIF) organizational members.

One of the CoA's multiple methods to fulfill its mission will be applying for grants and cultivating sources committed to serving Ridgefield seniors.

CoA's grant application efforts will focus primarily on supporting and strengthening SPIF members and other nonprofit entities serving Ridgefield seniors.

It is possible, though unlikely, that CoA will apply for grants solely for its own account.

In its grant application efforts, the CoA deems it logical to coordinate and collaborate with other organizations serving Ridgefield seniors as those organizations have the staffing, facilities, experience, and organizational structure to optimally administrate such grants and programs.

To avoid duplication, a preferred CoA grant application strategy would be for CoA, through dialogue and outreach, to inventory programming presently serving the needs of Ridgefield seniors with a view toward identifying programmatic strengths to be built upon and weaknesses to shore up and, in the process, uncovering unmet needs.

The CoA believes its grant application efforts will be put to their highest and best use when pursuing new funding sources and not competing for or disrupting existing sources.

Coordinating its grant application activities with SPIF organizational members and other relevant organizations in a collaborative, open, and transparent manner, the CoA shall strive to cultivate a reputation as an independent and trusted resource.

Status: Unanimously approved by CoA at its 3.20.2023 public meeting