

# Sherman Commission on Aging

Monday, March 18, 2013

**Present:** Lorna Barrett, John Jenner, Peter Cohen, Carol Voorhees. Lynne Gomez, Clerk. Suzette Berger, coordinator of the Sherman Senior Center.

**Minutes:** Minutes of the Feb. 25 meeting were approved unanimously. Minutes of the March 11 special meeting were approved as amended, which included changing the final NOTE in the minutes to read: New FISH members are predominantly men. . Not all current FISH members.

**Director's Report:** Suzette reported on the budget proposal. Part of the proposal includes changing Suzette's title to coordinator of the Senior Center. It does not include driving in the job description. The proposal also includes a request for a full-time van driver. Discussion ensued on the legality of operating a trip with only the driver, not an assistant. There are occasions in which Suzette has been the driver on a trip, without an assistant, and when participants have a problem she has had to stop the van, assist the participant, and continue the trip. Suzette reported that Debbie is a terrific driver and is great with the senior citizens.

Discussion followed on the cost of two part-time drivers opposed to one full-time driver. Discussion also continued on union negotiations. Suzette's salary will be under union negotiations. The union will be negotiating with the Board of Selectmen. Suzette noted that Beth is not proposing a salary increase for either position, director of social services or coordinator of the Senior Center.

Suzette also noted that she asked for some programming money, approximately \$100 per month. She has been operating the programs of the Senior Center with no programming budget and using mostly volunteer presenters.

Suzette reported that programming at the center is going full force, but the biggest issue at this time of year is parking, especially with the library parking lot out of use. Suzette noted that Lynne is employed for 10 hours a week, which is supposed to be 5 for Senior Center and 5 for Social Services. But Social Services often takes most of the hours. The budget proposal calls for 5 more hours for Lynne, bringing her up to 15 hours per week.

COA members discussed the need to advocate for Beth and Suzette at the Senior Center during budget time. Bottom line: Seniors comprise about 25 percent of Sherman's population, yet the Senior Center budget is less than 2 percent of the total budget. Suzette mentioned her interest in getting a volunteer base mobilized.

**May 18 meeting:** Volunteer breakfast. Format was discussed. An ad hoc committee of this board is needed organize the May 18 meeting. Invitations to volunteer organizations will be sent out by Lynne. The letter has been written by Jeanette. Discussion of the May

18 meeting ensued. Breakfast would be stratas made by John, Carol and Lynne. The purpose of the May 18 meeting is to begin the planning for the Community Volunteer Fair in the Fall.

**Oral History Day:** John reported that 6 people have been interviewed. We need to get photos and write a brief biography. We need to edit the 6 tapes and prepare a copy to give to attendees. We need to pick a date. It will do a wooden display covered in cloth. Each panel has name, 5X7 glossy a bio and other photos if available.

Discussion of the process of editing the tapes.

Louise Edwards did it last time. She made abstracted comments from each of the 6 and made a composite for the presentation. Suzette suggested maybe it could be done from a volunteer at the school. Peter will go to the school to see if Jim Luchsinger has a student he could suggest to do the work.

Invite the people from last year to come as well. John would like to see this Oral History to become an annual event. John recommended that all the tapes from the Bicentennial and other oral histories become archived into a permanent archive. Historical Society has agreed to be the archival location. But to date, it has not been archived. John and Peter will work out the details and target May 17 as the presentation.

**Housing Commission report:** no report.

**Aging Advocate:** Brainstorm aging advocate for a new list at the April meeting. Decide who's going to write what. Lynne will supply the COA with the list of Aging Advocates to date.

**COA: Finalize the bylaws.** Motion by John: A motion was made to officially adopt the COA bylaws and the mission statement as revised and send them to the Board of Selectmen for awareness and approval. Seconded: Lorna. Vote: unanimous approval.

Two changes were made. See attached. These copies will be sent to selectmen for filing.

Discussion followed on the relationship of the COA to the Director of the Senior Center.

**New business:** Kay Scribner, for profit, home health care Synergy Home Healthcare operation, offered to present a program at the senior center. Discussion ensued on home health care. Suzette has similar programs at the senior center with the Coffee and Conversations program.

Decision: Write her back and thank her for her inquiry. We will consider you for a future symposium.

Adjournment.

Next Meeting: April 15, 2013

Submitted, Lynne Gomez

