



Town of Suffield

Social Services Commission

Thursday, November 9, 2023 - 8:30 AM Meeting Minutes

Held at Suffield Town Hall/Hybrid Teleconference

Call recording available on Town website under Social Services Commission (SSC)

Commission Members Present: Marcia DuFore-Chair, Robin Zatony-Vice Chair, Andrea (Chace) Wessling, and Nathan Prusi

Department Heads Present: Kelly Giannuzzi – Youth Services
Danielle Annibalini – Community Aid
Peter LeClerc – Senior Center

1. Chair Marcia DuFore called the meeting to order at 8:33 am. Commission Members and Department Heads listed above introduced themselves.
2. The minutes from the October 12, 2023 regular meeting were reviewed. Nathan Prusi made a motion to amend the minutes as follows:
Department Heads Present should have Jason Joyce - Suffield Housing Authority added.
6. Old Business a. Affordable Housing Task Force from the third through the sixth sentences should read: “They have identified owners who are open to sell at least two acres of their property as possible affordable housing options. Maps were screen-shared to show areas that were researched in town, existing higher density areas (apartments and condos), and why affordable housing is feared. The Town has about 6.45% of the 10% that the State would like all towns to get to. Things that prevent Affordable Housing are often Zoning Rules and Regulations.”
Vice Chair Robin Zatony seconded the motion to amend the minutes. Motion carried.
3. Public Comment – NONE
4. Department Reports
 - a. Kelly Giannuzzi - Suffield Youth Services – ARPA Funds are being used to help with programs. They are working with Parks & Recreation to expand family events. Help is needed on getting a grant to help with a program for high school seniors which will help them acquire job skills, communication, and helping Seniors in town. Hartford Foundation for Giving does not have any grants available currently. Vice Chair Robin Zatony said that once the program starts to move, she will reach out to the churches in town to get an idea of the need. The Open Lounge will be reopening in January 2024. There are lots of events being offered at no cost. The Youth Leadership Council has 36 students involved. They help design classes for younger students. Peter LeClerc said that the number of volunteers is a direct reflection on Kelly’s hard work!
 - b. Danielle Annibalini – Suffield Community Aid – This is the busiest time of the year! The Friendly Visitor and Caller Program will have a kick-off on Thursday, November 16 from 4 to 5:30 pm. Individuals who are interested in being a caller must be 21 years of age. It is being researched if younger children can help with the friendly visitor piece. This program could pull in the younger seniors in town. Vice Chair Robin Zatony will send notes to all the churches to reach out to more seniors. Holiday baskets will be delivered to individuals and families in the next two weeks. The Food Pantry is having an outpouring of support. At the election, funds and canned food were collected by students.

4. Department Reports (CONTINUED):

- c. Peter LeClerc – Suffield Senior Center – Achievements to celebrate are the new lounge area with a coffee bar and newspaper that is warm and welcoming for socializing. New carpeting has been installed, the exercise room floor has been replaced, and all lights in the building have been with LED lights. Tuesday lunches and more diverse senior programs have been added. They are seeing a lot of crossing over from one program that seniors are attending to other programs. There have been requests for technology help. Tech hour helps with many, many items and will resume next month. There is a new 75” television in the dining room. In December there will be a Lunch & Learn with the Police and what they are doing in town. Minibus drivers are being actively recruited. They are applying for a grant to acquire a new minibus. There are special shuttles to community events. Three pieces of correspondence was shared with the Commission from residents thanking Peter and his Staff regarding transportation, the new additions to the Senior Center, and the donation of \$1,000 to be used where it is needed most at the Senior Center.
- d. Suffield Housing Authority – no one present to provide an update.

5. Old Business

- a. Affordable Housing Task Force – Vice Chair Zatony stated that the Task Force will be meeting next week. The Task Force continues to work on getting everything together to present to the Board of Selectmen.
- b. Food Insecurity –no new updates. May remove from future agendas.
- c. Survey of Senior Center Services in surrounding towns – will be discussed in December.
- d. Suggested instructions for public comment – the policy is in line with other boards and how they handle public comment. Nathan Prusi made a motion to add the verbiage to the Zoom Meeting Script and Directions that are read prior to the meeting being called to order. Vice Chair Robin Zatony seconded the motion. Motion carried.

6. New Business - NONE

- 7. The next meeting for the Suffield Social Services Commission will be held Thursday, December 14, 2023 at 8:30 am at the Town Hall with a Zoom option available.
- 8. Nathan Prusi made a motion to adjourn the regular meeting for the Suffield Social Services Commission on Thursday, November 9, 2023 at 9:22 a.m. Vice Chair Robin Zatony seconded the motion. Motion carried.

Respectfully submitted,

Connie Irwin
Recording Secretary

c: Town Clerk
Commission Members
Department Heads