



## Town of Middlefield Council on Aging

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### MINUTES – SEPTEMBER 25, 2013

The meeting was called by Marge Pierre at 6:00 PM at the senior center. Members present were Marge Pierre, Priscilla Suriner, Judy Artioli, Judy White, Kim Baker and Howard Knickerbocker.

George Reichert introduced himself and gave a summary of the COA consortium. The purpose of this group is for small towns to share his time and for all to share ideas and inputs. He is funded by both the towns and the State. He provides liaison between the towns and state - and helps negotiate funding for COA programs. The 2010 Federal census showed dramatic increases in the number of local seniors.

The trend is to intergenerational representatives on COA boards. The goal is to keep seniors away from nursing homes and maintaining them in their home with support and services. This is accomplished by COAs doing needs assessments - such as meals, rides to appointments and social events - to site specific solutions like providing sand buckets to seniors who are threatened with winter ice.

The Board introduced themselves and expressed their individual areas of interest: Marge is interested in home bound seniors, their safety, and what COA can offer.

Judy A. has lots of ideas and wants to see where they can fit in.

Judy W. is willing to serve where needed.

Howard is interested in reducing energy use in our building. He wants to caucus all seniors and find out what they want. 120 people could be attending. We should investigate getting back to the days of people going out to dinner and a circulating newsletter.

Priscilla suggests picnics, photos, silver tea, art classes and shows and wants to see services continue. She said people came from other towns to attend art classes and said meals delivered to homebound were not always wanted by them.

Kim wants to maximize services and nutrition. He wants to look at past to see what worked, analyze, plan, budget and to maximize what people receive.

George reiterated that needs assessments should be done by phone, and callers must be prepared to LISTEN to get the important information and to document elder needs.

The Consortium sign in sheet was passed around to record the attendees and to collect telephone numbers and email addresses. This sheet is to keep a record for the State of member participation. \$13 per hour is the value placed by the State on each volunteer hour.

Cathy Roth discussed the many tasks required on a weekly basis. They include meal coverage, brown bag service and rides.

A discussion followed on the merits of hiring a Meal Coordinator to be responsible for operations at the senior center. It was felt that the exploding senior population requires more emphasis than volunteers alone can provide. A second position will be considered for an Activities Coordinator at a future date. Kim asked how we could combine services with other towns to get best value. A motion was made and seconded to recommend to the Select Board the hiring of a Meal Coordinator. Vote: 5 yes, 1 abstention.

A sub-committee was appointed to draw up a job description for this position and report back to the full board. The committee consists of Marge, Howard, Judy W and Priscilla. George will provide a previous job description as a starting point.

Howard motioned that a COA Board Chairperson be elected. Kim seconded. Marge is nominated and says her interests and abilities are more suited to outreach but agrees to accept with support and a team approach. Marge is unanimously elected.

A COA training session is scheduled for Nov. 12<sup>th</sup> in Pittsfield and George encourages participation. The COA Consortium meeting is the first Friday of each month at 1:00 PM at the Russell town hall. Ethics training is required for all COA Board members.

The next COA board meeting is scheduled for Thursday, October 10<sup>th</sup>, 2013 at 4:30 PM at the senior center.

The meeting was adjourned at 7:32 PM.

Minutes submitted by Howard Knickerbocker

Minutes accepted with / without changes:

Marge Pierre, Chair