

Town of Plymouth
80 Main Street
Terryville, Connecticut 06786

Human Services Commission
Telephone: (860)585-4001
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Human Services Special Meeting Minutes
April 20, 2021

I. Call to Order: Chairwoman Sally Bain-Picard called the April 20, 2021, Human Services Commission Virtual Zoom Meeting to order at 7:00 p.m.

Fire Exit Notifications: N/A

II. Attendance: Chairwoman Sally Bain-Picard, Vice-Chairwoman Cathy Beaudoin, Commissioner Lee Ulinskas, Commissioner Tracy Dupont, Commissioner Reverend Joel D. Kotila, Commissioner Helena Schwalm, Alternate Commissioner Donna Dognin and Alternate Commissioner Fred Schwalm. Also, in attendance: Carrie Tedd from HRA.

Excused absence: Commissioner Karen Saccu

III. Pledge of Allegiance:

Chairwoman Sally Bain-Picard led the group in the Pledge of Allegiance.

IV. Invocation:

Commissioner Reverend Joel D. Kotila gave the invocation.

V. Public Input: None

VI. Acceptance of Minutes:

A motion was made by Commissioner Helena Schwalm, seconded by Vice-Chairwoman Cathy Beaudoin to approve the March 16, 2021 minutes. This motion was approved unanimously.

VII. Communications//Correspondence (if Needed) - None

VIII. Human Services Report:

Carrie Tedd from Human Resources Agency (HRA) went over her report.

Plymouth Human Services Update: 2020

Submitted by: Carrie Tedd and Juan Berrios

Reporting Period: March - 2021

2021 MAY -4 PM 4:48
PLYMOUTH, CT
TOWN CLERK'S OFFICE
Eileen Calhoun
TOWN CLERK

Services	Total Count
Phone Calls	331
VITA Tax Returns To Date	90
Appointments	66
Rental Assistance Applications Taken/Approved	3
Medicare Savings Program	5
SNAP Applications/Renewals	9
Private Fuel Bank	4
New Case Management Clients	21
Energy Applications Processed	16

Energy Assistance: We continue to receive phone calls for energy assistance, many being new clients to the program, but it has slowed down in the last month, but 211 is still referring any assistance for energy to our office. 16 applications were completed in March, as you can see it starts to slow down towards the end of the season. 253 applications were processed for the year and 209 were approved. This is 82% and the total award amount to date is \$64,612. Energy assistance was extended till June 15th, and that also includes oil delivery clients. We will continue to set appointments and process applications as needed.

Private Fuel Bank: There were 8 requests for utility payment assistance through the Town's Private Fuel Bank and or the Rotary Club of Plymouth. The payments were for Eversource, CT Water Company and oil deliveries from Armstrong Fuel & Propane. If anyone has an urgent need for an emergency oil delivery, please contact the Human Services office.

Vaccine/Covid: I continue to receive phone calls in regards to nearby vaccination sites, as well as issues with the VAMS appointment site. I do whatever I can do to assist the residents in finding a vaccination site and establishing an appointment, whether it be research, making phone calls, emails, and collaborating with Gretchen at the library, but have been successful 99% of the time in assisting the residents.

Rental/Mortgage Assistance: We have had 3 applications processed for rental/mortgage assistance, but nothing has been approved at this time. I continue to receive phone calls in regards to rental/mortgage assistance and will continue setting appointments and processing applications.

VITA Tax Return Service: 90 Tax returns have been processed for Plymouth residents since the open of tax season. That is a 18.42 % increase from last year.

Toiletry Bags: Over 23 toiletry bags have been given out to either women or men, mostly women. The toiletry bags consist of shampoo, conditioner, body wash, bar soap, hand soap, sanitizer, deodorant, Q-tips, disposable shaving razors, body lotion, mouthwash, toothpaste, tooth brushes, dental flossers, baby powder, facial wash, feminine products, masks, shower sponges, Epsom salt, magnet note pads and facial & body wipes. Clients are extremely grateful for these basic necessities, as SNAP (foodstamps) does not pay for these items. During times as these, individuals are under much financial stresses and this assistance is essential to stretching their limited income. Many clients have made an effort to express how much they like the toiletry bags and express their gratefulness. The Human Services Commission purchased plastic bins to organize the toiletry closet of all toiletry items. The Department is grateful for the assistance Cathy has provided going out and purchasing the toiletry items for the Case Manager, providing more time for client appointments and phone calls.

Salvation Army – Received an email from Kathy at the Salvation Army that we will be getting the back to school gift cards for our Small Wonders Back to School program. I did request an estimated amount, and she stated around 50 gift cards. I also asked if we needed more gift cards to fulfill all the applicants, could we use the money that is designated from the Salvation Army Plymouth funding and I have yet to receive a response.

Grants & Donations: I did write a letter to IGA requesting sponsorship for the round up program to assist with the Human Services Department. This program would ask IGA customer's if they would like to round up to the nearest dollar to assist with the Human Services Department. I was told by Bonnie that she would submit the request to the main office.

Renter's Rebate: Renter's Rebate began April 1st and will continue through October 1st, 2021. I will be setting dates to do Outreach events at Gosinski Park and Eli Terry Retirement, to assist the residents in applying for the Renter's Rebate.

IX. Old Business:

a. Scholarships – Commissioner Tracy Dupont reported that the scholarships are being put together. Pat Borda is in charge of the scholarships. The deadline for the applicants is May 3rd. Commissioner Lee Ulinskas will help with this. The Commission is giving out two - \$500 scholarships for a student in the healthcare field. Scholarship night is Thursday May 27th.

The Commission is in agreement to have Commissioner Dupont and Ulinskas use their judgment to pick the scholarship recipients.

The Commission will get further guidance for the possibility of the scholarship recipients to be recognized in the Plymouth Connection newspaper.

b. Ledgers – Chairwoman Bain-Picard stated that Vice-Chairwoman Beaudoin reviewed financials dated through March 31, 2021.

Carrie from Human Resources Agency, will create an excel spreadsheet separately to provide additional documentation for Fuel Bank expenditures.

X. New Business:

a. Fundraiser ideas – The Commission discussed additional ideas for future fundraising possibilities.

XI. Chairman's Comments: Chairwoman Bain-Picard stated she attended the Board of Finance/Town Council and joint meeting with Board of Education. The 2021 – 2022 budget passed as presented.

XII. Council Liaison's Comments: None

XII. Adjournment:

There being no further business of the Human Services Commission, a motion was made by Commissioner Helena Schwalm, seconded by Alternate Commissioner Donna Dognin to adjourn. This motion was approved unanimously. The meeting ended at 8:00 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Lirida Schnaars', with a long horizontal flourish extending to the right.

Lirida Schnaars
Recording Secretary