

Town of Plymouth
80 Main Street
Terryville, Connecticut 06786

Human Services Commission
Telephone: (860)585-4001
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Human Services Meeting Minutes
February 21, 2017

I. Call Meeting to Order: Chairwoman Heidi Caron called the February 21, 2017, Human Services Commission Meeting to order at 7:00 p.m. in the Senior Lounge at Plymouth Town Hall.

Fire Exit Notifications:

Chairman Heidi Caron noted the fire exits.

II. Attendance: Chairwoman Heidi Caron, Commissioner Tracy Dupont, Commissioner Helena Schwalm, Commissioner Fred Schwalm and Reverend Joel D. Kotila. Also in attendance were: Heather Burns, Human Services Director, Councilwoman Sue Murawski and Councilman John Pajewski

III. Pledge of Allegiance:

Chairwoman Heidi Caron led the group in the Pledge of Allegiance.

IV. Public Comments:

Vinnie Klimas from the Housing Authority distributed the resolution on Outreach Services to Gosinski Park. They are opposed to it.

The Housing Authority did a review as to where the housing authority has been in the last 10 years. They are looking for input from the Community.

A discussion took place regarding the goals of Gosinski Park with Vinnie Klimas. He would like to it be financially secure. He would like the finances managed in a professional manner and answer the needs of the residents.

Vinnie Klimas praised Heidi Caron for all her work at Gosinski Park.

Councilman Pajewski asked when does the Human Services Director go over to Gosinski Park.

Chairwoman Caron replied that Heather goes over once a month for half a day.

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Heather Burns stated that there is a person at Gosinski Park that handles everything there on a weekly basis.

Vinnie Klimas stated that person does applications and there is a critical need for Heather to come over to Gosinski Park. He disagrees with Heather's opinion.

Chairwoman Caron stated the woman needs to focus on property management.

V. Minutes December 6, 2016:

A motion was made by Commissioner Tracy Dupont, seconded by Commissioner Helena Schwalm to approve the December 6, 2016 Minutes. This motion was approved unanimously.

VI. Human Services Report:

January 2017 Human Services Report – Director of Human Services

Walk - in -21 Appointments – 28 Telephone calls – 182

Outreach to Elderly Housing – Gosinski Park has a Resident Service Coordinator on a weekly basis. It is the Director's opinion her services are no longer needed on a monthly basis at Gosinski Park. It is a duplication of services. She will continue at Eli Terry Apartments.

Dial – A –Ride –Cook Willow reports for October, November and December 564 trips. The grant for a new vehicle is due in March. The Director has started working on this project.

Rotary Fuel Fund – The Rotary Club has started a fuel fund and funds are available for use. These funds have been utilized for the residents of the town.

Meetings:

CLASS – monthly training- a presenter spoke about Medicare Advocacy and the importance of CHOICES (Health insurance assistance, Outreach, Information and referral, Counseling, Eligibility Screening) counselors in the communities. The Director has been certified in CHOICES since 2006.

Supplemental Commodity Food Program – Currently 10 seniors receive food boxes on a monthly basis on the 3rd Wednesday of every month. This is an income based program. The boxes include juice, cheese, rice, canned veggies, tomato sauce and other assorted non-perishable food items valuing around \$50.00. This program has had people drop out so the Director opened it up to Thomaston as well in hopes of not losing the program for the remaining seniors in Plymouth. Follow up contact with Thomaston Social Services residents are not interested in traveling to Plymouth.

SNAP Education - a nutrition workshop is being provided through the University of Saint Joseph. This program is ongoing, the 3rd Wednesday of every month from 1pm – 2pm in the Community Room. This will end in March. The program offers limited topics and they have been covered. The coordinator of the program felt it would not be beneficial to repeat the topics.

Personnel – A volunteer is coming in occasionally to help with filing.

Date range:	Jan 01, 2017 to Jan 31, 2017	
Summary:		
Assistance amount (\$):	5364.03	
Assistance count:	68	
Assistance Category	Assistance Count	Assistance Amount
Counseling: CHOICES	2	0

Counseling: Crisis Intervention	0	0
Counseling: Domestic Violence Info & Referral	1	0
Counseling: Financial/Budget Counseling	0	0
Counseling: Grief	1	0
Counseling: Legal-info and referral	0	0
Counseling: Mental Health / Substance Abuse Referral	0	0
Counseling: Mobile Crisis Referral	0	0
Counseling: Other	0	0
Counseling: Parenting	0	0
Counseling: Relationship	0	0
Energy Assistance: BCO Referral/Assistance	10	0
Energy Assistance: Operation Fuel	3	775.05
Energy Assistance: Plymouth Fuel Bank	2	583.41
Energy Assistance: Rotary Fuel Fund	4	606.57
Energy Assistance: Salvation Army	0	0
Energy Assistance: Utility Advocacy	0	0
Energy Assistance: Weatherization	0	0
Financial Assistance: Cash assistance-TANF, SAGA or Suppl	1	0
Financial Assistance: Gift Cards-donated	0	0
Financial Assistance: Gift Cards-Small Wonders	0	0
Financial Assistance: Other	3	411
Financial Assistance: Parks and Recreation Hardship Request	0	0
Financial Assistance: Salvation Army- Other than rent or energy assistan	1	283
Food: Commodity Supplemental Food Program	0	0
Food: Farmer's Market Vouchers	0	0

Food: Food Pantry	0	0
Food: Meals On	0	0
Wheels/Congregate Meals		
Food: School Lunch info	0	0
Food: SNAP Applications -	11	0
Food Stamps		
Food: WIC	0	0
Holiday & Back to School:	0	0
Small Wonders - Backpack		
Program		
Holiday & Back to School:	0	0
Small Wonders - Holiday		
program		
Household: Clothing	0	0
Household: CO detectors	0	0
Household: Furniture	0	0
Household: Other	1	0
Household: Smoke Detector	0	0
Housing/Lodging: Eviction	0	0
Prevention Services/Referrals		
Housing/Lodging: Foreclosure	0	0
situations		

Heather Burns gave submitted her resignation. Her last day is March 6th.

Reverend Joel asked Heather why she was resigning.

Heather replied that it was a bunch of stuff and that she loves the work that she does.

A discussion took place regarding her report.

Heather will email the Dial-A-Ride grant to Chairwoman Caron as it is due March 24th.

VII. Old Business:

a. Budget – Chairwoman Caron stated they need to increase the Human Services line item from \$1000 for the recording secretary and to figure out what to do for Heather’s position.

b. Special Accounts – No information.

c. 501c3 Non Profit Status – Chairwoman Caron stated that she got approval from Attorney Bill Hamzy. She can use the town tax id number and she will start working on the application this month.

d. Dial-A-Ride – There were 564 trips. Heather stated the van is still not fixed. May need a new dashboard. The lift is still not working.

e. Grants – Nothing - TSB comes out in May. North Central Aging Grant is done though the Parks and Recreation.

f. Outreach Visit – Vinnie Klimas talked about outreach visits. Heather goes to Eli Terry and Gosinski Park for half days.

Commissioner Schwalm stated if it is needed, then it needs to be continued.

Heather reported that it was less and less when the resident coordinator started. There were more phones calls in the office.

A discussion took place about the resident coordinator as she works mostly on property management.

Heather stated she feels that the Human Services Director should not spend her time at the sites. She feels that her time should be spent writing documents, overseeing Dial a Ride and the food program as the town has 12,000 residents.

Heather stated that the Commission should get a job description of the resident coordinator.

Chairwoman Caron stated that the Housing Authority is looking in the future to work with the Bristol Housing Authority.

A motion was made by Commissioner Helena Schwalm, seconded by Commissioner Tracy Dupont to continue to do outreach visits with Eli Terry and Gosinski Park until it is deemed not necessary. This motion was approved unanimously.

g. Eli Terry Fund – Chairwoman Caron stated she is waiting to make an appointment with Waterbury Hospital. She is waiting for the report. Stated they are in transition with Prospect Health.

Councilman Pajewski asked how this work will.

Chairwoman Caron replied Waterbury Hospital will still manage the fund.

h. Food Bag distribution follow-up – See report from Heather.

i. Small Wonders Holiday Program – Nothing

j. Emergency Needs – Heather stated the laundry bill was \$186. She had 8 comforters. Chairwoman Caron approved this bill to be paid. The IGA bill was \$49.

Chairman Caron stated this resident came to the town hall looking for help. The Mayor's secretary was told by the Human Services Director to have the person go to the food pantry.

Heather stated she has the emails and that the person couldn't go to Food Pantry as she doesn't get mail in town.

Chairwoman Caron stated sometime we must look at whole picture. She stated the woman lived and went to school in Town; in the past. She left a bad situation and came to live with someone. She was going to start a full time job after Thanksgiving. She has three kids. Chairwoman Caron stated she thought there were food bags here. It was a holiday weekend. She was told the town has account at IGA. The woman's son is autistic and was crying because he wanted a candy bar that cost \$1.86. It was put on the receipt. The resident did not have any clean linens for the children.... they were wet and dirty. That is why Chairwoman Caron approved the invoice.

Heather stated there are emergency food bags in her office. She feels the person washed so many clothes. Heather stated the man who washed the clothes stated the person dropped the clothes and picked them off. The fund is specific to helping residents of the town.

The plan in place for emergency funds is to call Heather.

Reverend Joel stated it would be helpful for the future that any situations must go through the Human Services Director.

VIII. New Business:

a. Terryville High School Scholarship – Chairwoman Caron stated that the applications will go out at the end of March and will be presented at the end of May. The money will come out of the old VNA account.

A motion was made by Commissioner Helena Schwalm, seconded by Commissioner Tracy Dupont to award two (2) scholarships in the amount of \$250 each. This motion was approved unanimously.

b. Election of Officers – Chairwoman Caron stated that Sally and Karen resigned and their resignations are on hold, at this point. The position of officers are available: Vice-Chair and Secretary.

A motion was made by Commissioner Tracy Dupont, seconded by Commissioner Helena Schwalm to hold off on the election of officers until there is a full board. This motion was approved unanimously.

c. Commission Vacancies – Commissioner Tracy Dupont stated she has a couple of people interested in applying to be on the board.

Heather stated that a woman named Ellen applied a while ago. Chairwoman Caron will look into it.

IX. Chairwoman's Comments: Chairwoman Caron stated that Dickie sent a thank you card. The residents at Gosinski Park were happy to get the gift bags. They were very appreciative.

Everyone thanked Heather for her services to the Town and wished her good luck!

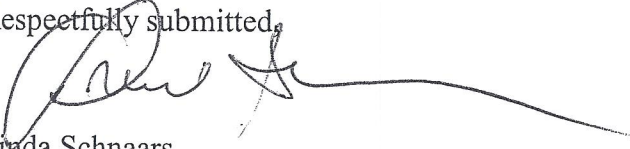
X. Council Liaison's Comments: Councilwoman Murawski thanked Heather on behalf of the Town and said Heather is a great asset and she will miss her a lot.

XII. Next Meeting: Tuesday, March 21st @ 7:00 PM

XI. Adjournment:

There being no further business of the Human Services Commission, a motion was made by Commissioner Tracy Dupont, seconded by Commissioner Helena Schwalm to adjourn. This motion was approved unanimously. The meeting ended at 8:09 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,



Linda Schnaars
Acting Recording Secretary