

Town of Plymouth
80 Main Street
Terryville, Connecticut 06786

Human Services Commission
Telephone: (860)585-4001
Fax: (860)585-4015

Human Services Meeting Minutes
May 17, 2022

I. Call to Order: Chairwoman Cathy Beaudoin called the May 17, 2022, Human Services Commission Virtual Zoom Meeting to order at 7:02 p.m.

II. Attendance: Chairwoman Cathy Beaudoin, Vice-Chairwoman Donna Dognin and Commission Larry Chiucarello, Commissioner Lee Ulinska (via ZOOM) and Commissioner Karen Saccu (via ZOOM). Also in attendance: Carrie Tedd from HRA and Councilwoman Roxanne McCann.

III. Pledge of Allegiance:

Chairwoman Cathy Beaudoin led the group in the Pledge of Allegiance.

IV. Invocation:

Vice-Chairwoman Donna Dognin gave the invocation.

V. Public Input: None

VI. Acceptance of Minutes:

A motion was made by Commissioner Larry Chiucarello, seconded by Commissioner Karen Saccu to accept the meeting minutes of April 19, 2022. This motion was approved unanimously.

VII. Communications/Correspondence (If Needed): None

VIII. Human Services Report:

Carrie Tedd went over the April 2022 update.

Plymouth Human Services Update: 2020

Submitted by: Carrie Tedd and Juan Berrios

Reporting Period: April 2022

Services	Total Count
Phone Calls	276
VITA Tax Returns To Date	90

Appointments	45
Rental Assistance Applications Taken/Approved	0
Medicare Savings Program	6
SNAP Applications/Renewals	15
Private Fuel Bank	3
New Case Management Clients	4
Energy Applications Processed	pending

Energy Assistance: We continue to receive phone calls for energy assistance, but it has slowed down significantly. Energy assistance was extended by the Federal Government from closing on May 31st to now closing on June 30th, 2022. We will continue to set appointments and process applications as needed.

Private Fuel Bank: There were 3 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. This is the time of year we slow down and by May almost no assistance is needed. If I do get a new Case Management client, then maybe assistance would be a need, since Federal energy assistance closes from June 30th till August. If anyone has an urgent need for an emergency oil delivery, please contact the Human Services office.

VITA Tax Return Service: 90 Tax returns have been processed for Plymouth residents since the open of tax season. The last appointment date was April 13th to have your tax returns processed.

Toiletry Bags: Over 19 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, Epson 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.

Grants & Donations: I will be sending out letters to all the church organizations in town to thank them for their continued support and explain the critical need for donations, as we see an increased need throughout not only the low income families today, but the middle class as well. With the increased prices of gas, heating oil and groceries some families are finding it difficult to make ends meet when they live paycheck to paycheck already and now have additional expenses and larger bills. The cost of groceries keeps rising, and it looks like it's going to stay that way. Food-at-home prices are expected to increase **between 3% and 4% by the end of 2022**, according to a recent U.S. Department of Agriculture forecast.

The increased expenses shoppers can expect according to the USDA:

- Beef and veal: +16.2%
- Pork: +14%

- Poultry: +12.5%
- Fish and seafood: +10.4%
- Eggs: +11.4%
- Dairy: +5.2%
- Fats and oils: +11.7%
- Fresh fruits: +10.6%
- Fresh vegetables: +4.3%
- Processed fruits and vegetables: +7.6%
- Sugars and sweets: +7%
- Cereals and bakery products: +7.8%

As for take-out or dine-in menus, the USDA said those prices are predicted to go up between 5.5 and 6.5% for the remainder of this year.

Additionally, food prices climbed 7.9% for the year ending in February 2022.

This was "the largest 12-month advance since July 1981," according to the department.

I will continued to research grant opportunities in order to properly fund the department and meet the community needs. I have a few that I am going to be applying to that have not opened yet, but will complete the application process and update the Board with any funds received.

Renter's Rebate: Renter's Rebate opened up April 1st and I have processed 48 applications to date and set several appointments for residents. I have 1 to 2 dates every month at Eli Terry Retirement and Gosinski Park for Renter's Rebate Outreach to process applications.

Commissioner Larry Chiucarello would like Carrie Tedd to provide the Commission with the accounting of the Private Fuel Bank and Cleveland Trust each month.

Commissioner Larry Chiucarello would like to look into having a contract with a fuel company.

Vice-Chairwoman Donna Dognin will reach out to the Community representative for Shop Rite to see if there are any donations.

Vice-Chairwoman Donna Dognin would like to see the Commission hold a collection drive for toiletries at the IGA.

Commissioner Lee Ulinskas suggested the Commission look into partnering with the Plymouth Center PTA for fundraising.

IX. Old Business:

a. Review of Bylaws & Private Fund procedures

Commissioner Larry Chiucarello, Chairwoman Cathy Beaudoin and Vice-Chairwoman Donna Dognin will be on the subcommittee to review the Private Fund procedures.

Councilwoman Roxanne McCann confirmed that the changes have to go before the town council for approval.

Commissioner Lee Ulinkas will be on the committee for the bylaws.

Commissioner Mark Malley will be asked to see if he would like to be on the bylaws committee.

b. Small Wonders Review (for new members)

Chairwoman Cathy Beaudoin explained how Ann Marie Rheault has been running the Small Wonders along with a couple of volunteers and would like to come back for the Back to School program.

Carrie Tedd will be meeting with Ann Marie Rheault to get a date for taking applications which will start in July.

Chairwoman Cathy Beaudoin will reach out to Ann Marie Rheault to let her know that the Commission will be forming a sub-committee or provide a liaison to offer guidance and assistance.

A discussion took place about allocating money to the Small Wonders volunteers for incidentals.

A motion was made by Vice-Chairwoman Donna Dognin, seconded by Commissioner Larry Chiucarello that \$100.00 in July and \$100.00 in November be given to help the volunteers that are helping the Small Wonders program. This motion was approved unanimously.

X. New Business:

Vice-Chairwoman Donna Dognin report there was a TRIAD Senior Resource Fair in Bristol in April. Plainville will be having one on June 7th at the Plainville Senior Center which is being done through the United Way.

Veterans Strong Community Center is hosting a Mental Health First Aid Training on Saturday, June 11th from 8:30 am – 5:00 pm. This is being held in conjunction with the Farmington Valley Health District. There will be free refreshments and lunch served. If anyone is interested please let Vice-Chairwoman Donna Dognin know if you are interested.

Commissioner Larry Chiucarello asked if the Commission is interested in meeting with the Mayor regarding Carrie Tedd's position. Vice-Chairwoman replied yes.

Commissioner Larry Chiucarello asked about the ARPA funds.

Councilwoman Roxanne McCann reported that the Committee is half way through their spending. The Committee meets the first Monday of the month at 5:30 PM.

XI. Chairman's Comments:

None

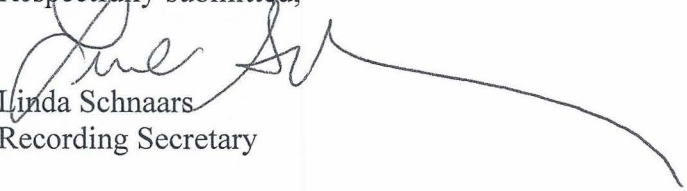
XII. Council Liaison's Comments:

None

XIII. Adjournment:

There being no further business of the Human Services Commission, a motion was made by Vice-Chairwoman Donna Dognin, seconded by Commissioner Larry Chiucarello to adjourn. This motion was approved unanimously. The meeting ended at 7:55 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,


Linda Schnaars
Recording Secretary