

Town of Plymouth
80 Main Street
Terryville, Connecticut 06786

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

Human Services Meeting Minutes
April 16, 2019

I. Call to Order: Chairwoman Sally Bain-Picard called the April 16, 2019, Human Services Commission Meeting to order at 7:00 p.m. in the Senior Lounge at Plymouth Town Hall.

Fire Exit Notifications:

Chairwoman Sally Bain-Picard noted the fire exits.

II. Attendance: Chairwoman Sally Bain-Picard, Commissioner Cathy Beaudoin, Commissioner Reverend Joel D. Kotila, Commissioner Tracy Dupont, Commissioner Helena Schwalm and Commissioner Fred Schwalm. Also, in attendance: Angela Morris, Tomasz Kandybowicz and Juan Berrios from HRA.

Excused Absence: Vice-Chairwoman Heidi Caron and Commissioner Karen Saccu

III. Pledge of Allegiance:

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

IV. Invocation:

Reverend Joel gave the invocation.

V. Public Input: None

VI. Acceptance of Minutes:

A motion was made by Commissioner Helena Schwalm, seconded by Commissioner Tracy Dupont to approve the January 15, 2019 minutes. This motion was approved unanimously.

VII. Human Services Report:

Angela Morris from HRA gave her for report for the months of January – March 2019. Please see attached HRA report.

Juan Berrios talked about the tax preparation service that was done. See attached memo from Juan Berrios and Tom Kandybowicz dated April 16, 2019.

PLYMOUTH, CT
TOWN CLERK'S OFFICE
RECEIVED FOR RECORD
2019 APR 22 AM 11:12
Sally Bain-Picard
TOWN CLERK

Juan Berrios stated the last day to apply for energy assistance is May 1st. If a shut off notice is received, then can apply up to May 15th.

Farmer market will be taking place this year. HRA should be receiving vouchers.

Rentals rebate started April 1st.

VIII. Old Business:

a. Private Fund Procedure – Chairwoman Bain-Picard stated that the procedure is in place and that Angela Morris will be able to document expenses from the Cleveland Trust Fund.

b. Scholarships - Commissioner Tracy Dupont sent out the applications. They are due May 1st. Commissioner Helena Schwalm will be assisting Commissioner Tracy Dupont and Chairwoman Bain-Picard with picking out the recipients.

A motion was made by Commissioner Helena Schwalm, seconded by Commissioner Cathy Beaudoin that there be a Committee of three (3) consisting of the Chairman and two (2) two Commissioners that review the applications and are authorized to make the choice of the scholarships each year. This motion was approved unanimously.

c. Grants – Chairwoman Bain-Picard is waiting to hear back from Vice-Chairwoman Heidi Caron to see if she would take over the grants.

d. AARP Safety Course – Chairwoman Bain-Picard would like to have the Commission sponsor snacks twice a year for this event.

A motion was made by Commissioner Helena Schwalm, seconded by Commissioner Cathy Beaudoin that as long as the Commission is sponsoring the AARP safety course, that \$50.00 will be allotted from the Cleveland Trust Fund to buy snacks. This motion was approved unanimously.

e. Program Budget Review –

A motion was made by Commissioner Cathy Beaudoin, seconded by Commissioner Helen Schwalm allotting up to \$1200.00 to be used for the senior gift bags from the Cleveland Trust Fund, not including the cost of the IGA gift cards. This motion was approved unanimously.

All Commissioners will submit receipts to Chairwoman Bain-Picard. Then she will submit the receipts to get one (1) check for reimbursement. This will assist the Finance Department with only having to create one (1) vendor, for the process.

IX. New Business: None

X. Chairman's Comments: Chairwoman Bain-Picard thanked the Commission for all their help.

Ann Marie Rheault, Director of Finance prepared the budget summaries which were handed out by Chairwoman Bain-Picard.

XI. 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 Commissioner Fred Schwalm to adjourn. This motion was approved unanimously. The meeting ended at 7:45 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,



Linda Schnaars
Recording Secretary



Human Resources Agency of New Britain, Inc.
Community Services Department

Plymouth Human Services Report

January through March 2019

Submitted by: Angela Morris

Reporting Period: January 1, 2019 – March 31, 2019

Services	Total Count
Phone Calls	554
Walk-ins	40
Appointments	82
Rental Assistance	2
Medicare Savings Program	10
SNAP Applications/Renewals	23
Private Fuel Bank	6
Senior Housing Outreach	2
Energy Applications	51
Income Tax Assistance	67

VITA Free Income Tax Preparation: Free Income Tax Assistance services are provided on Wednesdays from 9am to 12pm beginning on January 31st and will end on April 10th. Those in need of an appointment may contact the Human Services Office. A total of 51 Federal and State Income Tax Returns were completed so far this season during the reporting period.

Energy Assistance: Applications for the Energy Assistance for Deliverable Fuel heated homes will be accepted until April 1st, 2019. Those who heat with an utility will need to complete an application by May 1st. The last day to authorize an oil delivery through the program is on April 1st. So far, a total of 51 Energy Applications have been completed by the office during the reporting period.

Private Fuel Bank: There were six requests for assistance approved through the Town's Private Fuel Bank this month. If anyone has an urgent need for an emergency oil delivery, please contact the Human Services office.



Human Resources Agency of New Britain, Inc.
Community Services Department

Plymouth Human Services Report

Renters Rebate: The application for the 2019 Renters Rebate program will be available from April 1st through October 1st, 2019. Please call the Human Services Office to schedule an appointment to complete an application.

Energy Assistance: Applications are being accepted for energy assistance and all those who are interested in applying may call the Human Services office to schedule an appointment. There was a total of 15 applications completed for the month of September.

Outreach at Senior Housing: Outreach was completed at Gosinski Park and Eli Terry senior housing. Services and information were provided to residents. Outreach is completed on the first Monday and Tuesday of every month. Starting on April 1st, renters rebate applications will be completed onsite for all residents that qualify.

Rental Assistance: There were two residents who received rental assistance in the month of January. Each resident received \$500.00 to help with their past due rent. There is a grand total of \$2,450 that has been used for the year leaving a balance of \$550.00 for the remainder of the fiscal year.

Date: April 16th, 2019

To: Plymouth Human Services Commission

From: Juan Berrios, Community and Financial Services Programs Manager
Tomasz Kandybowicz, Financial Services Worker

Re: **Plymouth Human Services VITA Site**

CC: Marlo Greponne, Director of Planning and Programs, HRA
Mayor David V. Merchant
Angela Morris, Community Services Case Manager, HRA



The Plymouth Human Services VITA Site is a site operated by the Human Resources Agency (HRA) of New Britain, Inc. under the Internal Revenue Service's (IRS) Volunteer Income Tax Assistance (VITA) Program. The site was held as part of HRA's VITA Mobile services. HRA's VITA Program Staff, Tomasz Kandybowicz was assigned to the location. In addition HRA had one volunteer, Leeyun Kim, assist in the preparation of returns on-site. The staff worked with Angela Morris, Community Services Case Manager, on the project. Angela provided on-site assistance and scheduled all of the appointments. The expansion of this free service into Plymouth was made possible through the support of Chairwoman Sally Bain-Picard and the commissioners on the Plymouth Human Services Commission.

For its second season, the Plymouth Human Services VITA Site was open to the general public on Wednesdays from 9am-12pm during the tax season. Customers were able to schedule appointments through the Human Services Office and were seen by staff in the Senior Room at Plymouth Town Hall. For its second year of operation, the Plymouth Human Services VITA Site Exceeded all expectations and goals that were set forth by HRA under the VITA Program.

This season, the Plymouth Human Services VITA site completed a grand total of 84 returns. This constitutes a 154.55% increase from last year's total of 33 returns. The total refund amount in the Plymouth area was \$49,082. \$10,180 (20%) derived from the Earned Income Tax Credit and the Adjusted Gross Income of the residents served by the location was \$23,824.

HRA sincerely appreciates the support provided by Town of Plymouth as well as the members of the Plymouth Human Services Commission for their time and dedication to the VITA Program.

The site did an exceptional job this season and was nearly fully booked for the entire 12 week program. The majority of the schedule was booked out one to two weeks ahead. This shows that the community heard about the services offered on site and were interested in taking advantage of the

service. For the site to continue expanding in the future, the following suggested improvements should be reviewed.

Suggestions for Improvement:

1. **Location of Services:** While the Senior Room is an ideal location for the services provided, the location may need to be revisited if the program is to grow moving forward. The current room is just enough for two volunteers to manage the current volume of taxpayers that the site saw this season. While the site did not reach its maximum capacity, there is definitely room to grow by adding additional slots and volunteers.
2. **Additional Volunteers:** For the site to continue to grow, more volunteers from the area would be needed on location to add either additional slots during the operating hours or additional dates and times. This is in line with the previous suggestion where a larger room may be needed for tax preparation sessions to allow space to create privacy for customers and volunteers.
3. **Hours of Operation:** HRA can look into expanding the hours available by either adding an additional date and time or increasing the hours. This suggestion was highly recommended by customers who either visited the location or called the Human Services Office. Customers recommended adding an afternoon option if possible to allow those that work throughout the day to be seen locally.

Final Tally as of 4/16/2019: S10013373 – VITA Mobile (Plymouth Human Services)

2018 Accepted E-Files: 78

2018 Paper Returns: 1

Total Rejections: 0

Rejection Rate: ~0.00%

Earned Income Credit Dollars: \$10,180

Total Refund Dollars: \$49,082

Average Adjusted Gross Income: \$23,824

2017 Completed Returns: 2

2016 Completed Returns: 0

2015 Completed Returns: 0

Amended Returns Completed: 3

GRAND TOTAL NO. OF RETURNS: 84

TY2017 IRS Grant Office Reported Total: 33

Percent Change: 154.55%