

**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  
January 26, 2021

**I. Call to Order:** Chairwoman Sally Bain-Picard called the January 26, 2021, Human Services Commission Virtual Zoom Special Meeting to order at 7:04 p.m.

**Fire Exit Notifications:** N/A

**II. Attendance:** Chairwoman Sally Bain-Picard, Vice-Chairwoman Cathy Beaudoin, Commissioner Karen Saccu and Commissioner Lee Ulinskas. Also, in attendance: Ann Marie Rheault, Director of Finance and Carrie Tedd from HRA.

Excused absences: Commissioner Reverend Joel D. Kotila, Commissioner Tracy Dupont, Commissioner Helena Schwalm and Alternate Commissioner Fred Schwalm.

**III. Pledge of Allegiance:**

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

**IV. Invocation:**

Chairwoman Sally Bain-Picard gave the invocation.

**V. Public Input:**

Ann Marie Rheault gave an update on the Small Wonders program. The virtual toy drive that was set up on Amazon was fantastic. The virtual toy drive will continue in the future.

**VI. Acceptance of Minutes:**

*A motion was made by Vice-Chairwoman Cathy Beaudoin, seconded by Commissioner Lee Ulinskas to approve the October 20, 2020 minutes. This motion was approved unanimously.*

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

*Erica Colizza*  
TOWN CLERK  
2021 JAN 28 AM 11:37  
PLYMOUTH, CT  
TOWN CLERK'S OFFICE  
100 STATE STREET  
PLYMOUTH, CT 06786

**VII. 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: September - December - 2020

Services	Total Count
Phone Calls	1404
Walk-ins – NOT ACCEPTING WALK-INS due to Pandemic	0
Appointments	303
Rental Assistance Applications Taken/Approved	6 - 3
Medicare Savings Program	5
SNAP Applications/Renewals	26
Private Fuel Bank	25
Senior Housing Outreach	4
Energy Applications Processed	190

**Energy Assistance:** I began taking energy applications at the end of September, but did not starting processing them till October 1<sup>st</sup>, as we needed to complete the Renter’s Rebate applications for the deadline of October 31<sup>st</sup>. To date 190 applications were processed and 143 approved. \$20,277.48 is the total energy assistance award to date. We continue to receive phone calls for energy assistance, many being new clients to the program. We will continue to set appointments and process applications.

**Private Fuel Bank:** There were 25 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.

**Renters Rebate:** We had a successful 2020 completing the Renter’s Rebate program. All who applied had their applications processed and received their checks by mid-November. One applicant who applied was ineligible due to expenses not being enough to qualify for the program, one client was

deceased and someone was trying to process their renter's rebate. I notified the State and a flag was notated on the client's profile. The Mayor is planning a meeting with Human Services and the Tax Accessor office to determine which department will handle renter's rebates in the future.

**Rental/Mortgage Assistance:** We have had 6 applications processed for rental/mortgage assistance. 3 have been approved and 9 more are in the process of collecting documentation to complete application process. A total of \$3500.00 has been used for the rental/mortgage assistance program through the CARES ACT.

**Covid-19:** The Town Hall is now open Monday through Friday for all public services. Markers are placed on the flooring to insure all safety procedures are taken in regards to Government guidelines. Masks are required in the building at all times. The Human Service office is open Monday through Thursday for office and home visits by appointment only. This will insure that no clients are waiting in the human service waiting room at the same time. (This was requested by the Mayor) Friday is a blocked day for computer and paperwork. Ann Marie used FEMA funding to purchase a new plexi glass barrier that reaches from the desk to the ceiling on all corners. This will ensure the safety to the client, as well as employee, since the distance of 6ft is not met through the office space. All employees of the Town Hall are following the safety guidelines of space when speaking with one another. The Director of the Plymouth Food pantry has canceled self-shop service at pantry due to the increased number of Covid cases in the town of Plymouth. A new online order form was developed and pantry clients can submit their requests and pick up their food on designated time slots on the pantry open days. A flyer was sent to all pantry clients of the changes and new online order system.

**Outreach at Senior Housing:** The Human Services office completed the 3 outreach Energy Assistance event dates at Gosinski Park with much success. We completed 1 successful outreach event at Eli Terry Retirement Center, and the Director canceled the remaining 2 dates due to the increased cases with Covid. Any resident who signed up for the dates that were canceled, was sent an Energy Assistance Packet with instructions on documentation needed and forms to be signed and returned.

**Small Wonders Christmas Program:** Another year of a successful Christmas program. 90 children from 38 different families were provided for this year. We received a generous amount of donations and had many sponsors for this year's program. Ann Marie will be sending out the thank you cards and writing the thank you advertisement for the Plymouth Connection Newspaper.

**Toiletry Bags:** Over 98 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.

**Salvation Army Food Boxes/Terryville Congregational Gift Bags:** 25 Salvation Army Food Boxes have been delivered and or given to clients at appointments. The Salvation Army food box program has come to an end with much success. Clients have expressed how these food boxes made an impact in savings on grocery expenses. Terryville Congregational Church no longer provides individual care bags, but supplies the individual essential items in bulk. Reverend Zack reached out to Carrie to discuss the bags being provided and Carrie expressed how grateful she was to receive them, but to save them time, as well as her, she provided a list of items most used and told him that they can donate the items in bulk and do not have to bag them up for individual clients. This will ensure items are not given that will not be used and the clients can pick out the items they need at the office appointment.

**Winter Coats 4 Kids Program:** Carrie provided a proposal for a new program for the Human Services Department to the Zukowski Family Foundation. The department was granted \$5000 to purchase winter coats, hats and gloves for Plymouth school children and Case Management clients. The program closed January 14<sup>th</sup> with much success, helping 57 children throughout Plymouth with a warm winter coat.

**Intern:** Ann Marie has an intern in the finance department that she was willing to loan the Human Services office, since the increased volume due to the pandemic. Mayor Merchant approved the hours of the intern for the Human Services office. Jenna works 2 hours every Wednesday, either filing or making copies for the department, this is very helpful when time is so limited.

Carrie will be looking into how to get residents signed up to receive the vaccine as the Mayor inquired to see if she can do a sign up. Eli Terry residents received the vaccine. Gosinski Park does not have anything planned to offer the vaccine to their residents. Walgreens in town is providing the vaccine.

VITA passes - They are not doing in person appointments due to COVID. Carrie is waiting to get more information. She has received 49 calls to date. The IRS pushed back the date that taxes can be filed to February 22<sup>nd</sup>.

Carrie stated she received 5 applications for the Medicare Savings Program.

#### **VIII. New Business:**

**a. Dial-a-Ride** – Chairwoman Bain-Picard reported the new van was in repairs since the fall of last year. It is now parked in the back parking lot of town hall. She is trying to see if it is going to be used again. She is waiting to hear back from Public Works regarding the contract with Cook Willow.

**b. COVID-19 Funding** – Chairwoman Bain-Picard stated that the funding will be reevaluated when necessary.

c. **Volunteer Income Tax Assistance** – See Carrie Tedd's notes above in the HRA report.

d. **Thomaston Savings Bank** – Vice-Chairwoman Beaudoin reported that the Commission received a grant from the Thomaston Savings Bank Foundation this past October for personal toiletries and IGA gift cards. 63 residents from Gosinski Park and 35 residents from Eli Terry received the senior gift bags which were distributed in November and December. The follow-up paperwork for the grant is due February 19<sup>th</sup>.

e. **Scholarships** - Chairwoman Bain-Picard asked the Commission members if the scholarship amount should be increased. After a brief discussion, the Commission decided to keep it as is.

**IX. New Business:**

a. **Budget** – Chairwoman Bain-Picard submitted the budget.

**X. Chairman's Comments:** Chairwoman Bain-Picard stated that things are going as smooth as possible. She stated if any members have any questions or concerns, please reach out to her.

**XI. Council Liaison's Comments:** None

**XII. Adjournment:**

*There being no further business of the Human Services Commission, a motion was made by Vice-Chairwoman Cathy Beaudoin, seconded by Commissioner Karen Saccu to adjourn. This motion was approved unanimously. The meeting ended at 7:45 p.m.*

Respectfully submitted,



Linda Schnaars  
Recording Secretary