



TOWN OF BERLIN

COMMISSION FOR THE AGING

Minutes of Monday June 26, 2023

5:00 P.M.

Meeting held in person & open to the Public, on Zoom or by phone.

Note that meeting date was changed due to Juneteenth Celebration on June 19th.

Attendance:

Barbara Gombotz- Chairwoman, Frank J. Slogeris, Ann Gamelin and Kay Murray.

Staff: Jen Ochoa, Director of Community & Recreation Services, Tina Doyle, Senior Center Director
Juliet Benjamin, Secretary

1.

Call to Order:

Chairwoman Gombotz called the meeting to order at 5:05 P.M.

2.

Roll Call:

Present: Barbara Gombotz- Chairwoman, Frank Slogeris, Kay Murray and Ann Gamelin.

3.

Approval of Minutes – May 15, 2023 Meeting:

Commissioner Slogeris made a motion to accept the Minutes of the May 15, 2023 meeting, as written. Commissioner Murray seconded the motion and the Minutes were approved.

4.

Guest Speaker – Joseph Bajorski, Chairman Berlin Housing Authority – Q & A Session following.

Chairman Bajorski introduced himself and supplied information on the Berlin Housing Board. He noted there are five commissioners on the Berlin Housing Authority and they meet monthly on the second Wednesday, 5:00 at Marjorie Moore. Anyone is welcome to attend and speak at these meetings. He also noted that if any of the residents have a concern that they feel is not being answered by way of filing a work order that they can call him at 860-982-1489.

Residents of Percival Heights expressed concern about the carpet in the hallway, which is very often wet, and when it will be replaced. Chairman Bajorski said that he will look into it, but reminded residents that money would have to be budgeted for that item. Residents expressed other concerns and Chairman Bajorski asked that they file a work order and call him if the problem is not corrected within a

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reasonable time. Problems that need correcting need to be brought to the attention of the Berlin Housing Authority. The Commission for the Aging works to make life better for all the seniors in Berlin and is not responsible for correcting problems at the two Town senior housing locations.

Chairman Bajorski explained that residents are allowed to have Service and Emotional Support Animals. Call the Housing Authority for further information.

Chairman Bajorski discussed the progress on the Knights of Columbus property. He is hoping for a closing with the Town of Berlin on July 11, 2023 with the demolition of the building sometime in September. Depending on the Town he hopes for ground breaking in the fall or Spring 2024. Due to the way the Grant was filed, all the units, fifty-one, will be age restricted. Geothermal & solar are being utilized for heating & cooling of the building and the cost of the heat and air conditioning will be included in the rent.

Chairman Bajorski explained that residents of Percival Heights and Marjorie Moore will be the first people allowed to apply for units in the new building, as long as they qualify.

Chairwoman Gombotz noted that Chairman Bajorski has been working on the Knights of Columbus property for many years and we owe him gratitude for being persistent.

5.

Audience of Citizens:

13 Berlin Senior Citizens were in attendance to hear Chairman Bajorski's update and stayed for most of the meeting.

Attending Residents said that they would like to see more active programs for citizens, such as Pickleball or more energetic exercise classes. Senior Director Doyle explained that space is very limited at the Senior Center and they now have exercise classes every day at the center. And there is no place that could be used for Pickleball. The Senior Center is at its limit as to what programs could be offered. Commissioners noted that that was the reason they were trying to get a new Senior/Park & Recreation Center. There has been no action on the new building and they believe the Town is still talking with the YMCA about their taking over the project. But, as the Commission has been told, the YMCA does not have any programs for Senior Citizens and any other programs would come with membership fees, etc.

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One of the residents said she would like to see the Senior Center set up a Nutrition Program, such as a Farmers Market, where seniors could get healthy, fresh vegetables and fruits. That sounds like a great idea but someone would have to take it over and set it up, procure the vegetables and fruits, etc. The Senior Center does not have staff for a project such as this. Senior Center Director Doyle did say that she would check with Hartford Healthcare about any programs that are available regarding healthy nutrition and Diabetes prevention.

Chairman Ochoa noted that residents are always welcome to come to a Park & Recreation Commission meeting to express their concerns and what programs they would like to see.

6.

June 26th, 2023

To: Commission for Aging Members

From: Tina Doyle

Re: Senior Center Director's Report

Current Activities:

Our Average Daily Attendance is as follows:

Avg Per Weekday	Monday	50
	Tuesday	73
	Wednesday	50.67
	Thursday	81.75
	Friday	40.5

Avg Per Day by Month June 59.41

Avg Per Day by Month

January	65.5
February	72.44
March	64.3
April	70.42
May	69.41
June	59.41

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Our Transportation service requests have increased. We are providing transportation currently to 130 individuals to 118 different locations. We have provided 3706 rides (dup) from January to today.

MYSenior Center- As of today, 1180 seniors have their key tags. That is an increase of 18 since our last meeting in May 2023.

7.

Report – Commissioner Frank Slogeris:

Commissioner Slogeris had an invitation to attend a Republican Town Committee Meeting. He has since become a member of the committee and plans to attend their meetings and give a short report on what the Commission for the Aging covered during their meeting. He feels this would be a positive thing and a good connection to support the good and welfare of the Senior community. He noted that there are 6,000 Seniors in Berlin and any outlet that information can be passed onto residents is a good thing. It gives residents and officials a better understanding of what is happening in the Senior community and what their needs are.

8.

Senior Housing Report – Ann Gamelin:

Commissioner Gamelin felt that most of the resident's problems were addressed during the meeting and they now know to contact the Berlin Housing Authority with any concerns regarding their residents.

9.

Senior Center/Community Center Report – B. Gombotz:

Chairwoman Gombotz noted that she has heard nothing from the Town regarding the new building and has no information to share with the Commission for the Aging.

10.

Old Business:

11.

New Business:

Chairwoman Gombotz stated that she is concerned that the Commission for the Aging is now short one member with the retirement of Commissioner Ustanowski. She would urge anyone who is interested in serving on the Commission to contact Town Clerk Kate Wall @860-828-7075 and volunteer. There are only five meetings per year and they start at 5:00 on scheduled Mondays. The volunteer needs to be either a

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Democrat or Unaffiliated. This is an important Commission serving to assist the senior community of Berlin.

Commissioner Murray noted that she has not been receiving the Robo calls on Friday that Senior Director Doyle sends out. Director Doyle will check into it.

12.

Motion to Adjourn:

Commissioner Slogeris made a motion to adjourn the meeting at 6:50 p.m. Commissioner Murray seconded the motion and it was unanimously approved.

Respectfully submitted,
Juliet Benjamin Secretary

RECEIVED FOR RECORD
BERLIN TOWN CLERK

2023 JUL 10 PM 3:53

Kathryn Wall

BERLIN, CT.