

**Minutes of the Ridgefield Commission on Aging (“CoA”) Special Meeting
September 16, 2024, 1:30 pm, Large Conference Room, Town Hall (400 Main Street)**

Commissioner Ternullo called the meeting to order at 1:30 pm. Commissioners Beebe, Crook, Culhane, Martin, Saleeby, Ternullo, Tewes, and Yaffa were present. Commissioner Nolan was excused due to out of state travel. Student liaison, Rutvi Vohra, and CoA intern Ryssa Swanson were both present. Ridgefield Municipal Agent for Elders, Karen Gaudian, was present. Ridgefield Director of Social Services, Tony Phillips, was absent due to illness.

As the **1st order of business**, Mr. Ternullo invited public comment.

As the **2nd order of business**, Ms. Saleeby moved that the 6/17/24 CoA minutes be approved. Ms. Yaffa seconded. A vote followed. The minutes were unanimously approved.

As the **3rd order of business**, progress reports on the CoA’s 2024 goals were provided as follows:

- (i) Mr. Tewes discussed forward progress in organizing the Expo, including the Rec Center generous donation of space and the cadre of committed volunteers working collaboratively to ensure success.
- (ii) Ms. Yaffa provided an update on the progress on the CoA Digital Divide/Overcoming Social Isolation collaboration with the Library, including the generous donation of Chromebooks thanks to the Superintendent of Schools.
- (iii) Ms. Saleeby provided an update on the CoA’s investigation, in collaboration with Ridgefield Social Services and Rides for Ridgefield, of the possibility of expanding transportation available to seniors.
- (iv) Mr. Ternullo provided an update on the CoA’s efforts, in collaboration with Social Services, to eradicate food insecurity in Ridgefield.

As the **4th order of business**, Ms. Saleeby summarized the good news, thanks to the efforts of Tony Phillips, and Ridgefield First Selectperson Rudy Marconi and others, that a bench will be placed at the Copps Hill shopping plaza within the next week or two, thus enabling seniors to have a safe place to rest with their purchases while waiting for the bus or other transportation home.

As the **5th order of business** relating to ‘housekeeping’ matters:

- Karen Gaudian, reported that the CoA had a grant fund balance of \$5,7728.72 and operating budget balance of \$250. She noted that because an intern is being paid from the grant funds, it will be especially important to track funds carefully to ensure that the CoA does not overspend
- Ms. Yaffa reported that she is in the process of obtaining quotes for those CoA commissioners who have requested business cards
- Mr. Tewes provided a summary of two individuals Rutvi Vohra and Ryssa Swanson, both of whom are supporting the CoA and Ridgefield elders in multiple ways.

As the **6th order of business**, Ms. Yaffa introduced Martha Morris, Compassionate Ridgefield board chair. On October 22, Compassionate Ridgefield will hold a community ambassador meeting focused on the theme of “staying connected as we age in Ridgefield”. This important meeting, intended to elevate the quality of life for Ridgefield’s senior citizens, will have both an educational component and a connecting socially component to it.

As the **7th order of business** Ms. Martin introduced Hugh Salazar, Ridgefield Station Director of Compass Programming, who announced memory care support groups that are offered free of charge to individuals living with memory ailments, family members and caregivers

As the **8th order of business**, Senator Julie Kushner, Senator Ceci Maher, Representative Aimee Berger-Girvalo, and First Selectperson Rudy Marconi presented on new legislation affecting senior citizens and fielded questions from the CoA and members of the public seated in the audience.

There being no other business, Ms Yaffa called for adjournment. Ms. Beebe seconded. The motion to adjourn was unanimously approved at 4:30 pm.

The above is a true and accurate summary of the CoA 9/16/24 meeting. - Joseph Ternullo, Acting Secretary

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