

**MINUTES**  
**SENIOR SERVICES COMMITTEE**

Mar. 5, 2014

**ROLL CALL**

Present: Andy Kehr, Chairman, Betty A'Brial, Betty Bader, Jeanne Duntz, Richard Franklin, Don Peterson, Ed Sandfort  
Also Present: Brenda Cagle, Town Board Liaison  
Absent: Nick LaCourte, Rose Rider

**CALL TO ORDER**

Chairman Andy Kehr called the meeting to order at 9:20 A.M.

**APPROVAL OF MINUTES, JAN. 9, 2014 MEETINGS**

Andy asked if there were any changes or modifications to the Minutes. Hearing none, Dick made a motion to accept the Minutes as written. The motion was seconded by Jeanne and all were in favor. Andy noted that this was the first meeting since January as the February meeting had to be cancelled due to inclement weather.

**TRANSPORTATION/HANNAFORD BUS ROUTE**

Brenda said that she heard from Cynthia Ruiz and the county has not been able to hire enough drivers to handle the proposed Hannaford route. Cynthia suggested that it might be possible to do so next year.

**UPDATING OF SR. BROCHURE**

Update reports have been given on all of the current sections of the brochure. However the following new items must be added in order to complete the process of updating:

1. A section listing businesses which offer senior and veteran discounts. Betty Bader is looking into that. For the next meeting she will bring the Growing Older in Rhinebeck brochure which has such a listing.
2. A section on urgent care and walk-in clinics. This will be added to Page 8 after the section on hospitals. Betty is also working on that.

It is hoped that the revision of the brochure will be completed by early Spring. Brenda noted that the Committee has been given more money this year and this might be applied to the brochure or other plans to improve transportation in the area.

**AGING IN PLACE PROGRAMS**

Andy said that the aging in place program which is forming in Clinton is taking a social approach. There will be some presentations, but primarily it will be a place for seniors to meet and socialize. At present, they are meeting informally.. Andy will contact one of the key people in that organization, Meg Heshner, and will ask her to come to the next Committee meeting.

Andy asked if the Committee thinks Red Hook should try to tap into existing programs or do something new. Betty A'Brial said that Red Hook already has a Seniors program. Jeanne said that the Red Hook Seniors is a growing organization. She will give Andy the telephone number of the President, Janice Saggese.

Jeanne said that meetings of the Red Hook Seniors take place each Tuesday at the Firehouse from 1:00 to 3:00 P.M. They open with the Pledge of Allegiance and the Minutes of the previous meeting. This may be followed by a social event and then bingo. At times there are presentations on aging. Recent offerings have been by the Office for the Aging, Hospice, a funeral director and a nutritionist. The group has also helped with the food drives conducted by the Committee. Another project involves supporting the veterans at Castle Point by collecting soda can tabs. Trips are also offered occasionally. The cost is an average of \$45 to \$60, which includes bus fare and entertainment.

An average of forty people attend each meeting. It is a friendly group and people look out for one another. Each month there is a cake for those having birthdays and anniversaries. There is an annual picnic at the recreation park in August as well as an annual Christmas dinner which is held at the Mason's Lodge. At the latter event, money is collected to be contributed to the veterans.

Andy said that Rhinebeck at Home is also socially focused, but they charge a fee. Clinton does not have a fee. Jeanne said that the Red Hook Seniors are already serving an aging in place function. Andy asked how the organization is funded. Jeanne said that some money is provided by the Town and annual dues of \$12 per person are charged. The Firehouse used to charge the group for the use of the hall, but they now offer it free of charge. They also set up the tables, which is a great help.

Don said that there is also a Southern Tier Seniors group which meets at the Clermont Firehouse. He will e-mail contact information to Andy on this group.

Since the Seniors are already performing almost all the functions of an aging in place organization, with the exception of providing physical help around the house, Andy questioned whether there is a need for an aging in place organization in Red Hook. He said that he felt that the activities of the Red Hook Seniors should be publicized. Dick said that he thought he could get the Observer to do that and Andy approved of that idea. People should know what we are doing here, he said. Jeanne said that the group has been ongoing for at least twenty or twenty five years. It is one of the longest standing groups in the area.

Andy concluded the discussion by saying that he will be contacting Meg from the Clinton program as well as Janice from the Red Hook Seniors.

## **TRANSPORTATION**

### **SUSAN DAVIDSON, FRIENDS OF SENIORS OF DUTCHESS COUNTY**

Andy introduced Susan Davidson of Friends of Seniors of Dutchess County and said that transportation is an important issue in our community. He said that the organization is interested in expanding the area serviced by their program and that might prove helpful to the people in the Red Hook area. Susan said that Friends of Seniors has been operating for ten years, having been incorporated in 2004. Since then all the other non-profit transportation organizations have gone.

With the recent discontinuation of transportation services by Northern Dutchess Caregivers, Friends of Seniors has been expanding rapidly. When Caregivers called and asked if we would take over for them we agreed, she said because we knew that people would be calling upon us anyhow. We were told, she said, that Northern Dutchess Caregivers had 94 volunteers; however only about twenty came to us.

Friends of Seniors serves all of Dutchess County and also goes to parts of Columbia County, to Kingston, Putnam, Westchester and New York City. There are only four towns in Dutchess County which are not served: Pawling, Amenia, Northeast and Pine Plains. These towns offer their own transportation.

In order to be scheduled for a long trip, the rider must present a referral from a physician. Services are free and include driving to medical appointments, grocery shopping, visiting services for lonely and isolated elderly people, telephone reassurance and respite for caregivers, which usually involves doing errands for the caregiver.

Andy inquired about liability issues. Susan said that they are covered by an umbrella insurance service. After the use of the volunteer's own insurance, the umbrella insurance of the organization would cover any expenses not already covered. Their Board of Directors is also insured. They do not do background checks on volunteers; however they do require the volunteer to show their driver's license, registration and driving record.

They have a screening process to determine how ill an individual is before offering visiting services. They come as a companion and do not handle medications or offer cleaning or transportation services. Visiting services are most frequently requested by the families of people with Alzheimers disease.

For transportation services to medical appointments and special events, one has to call two weeks in advance in order to schedule a trip. At present, Susan said the organization has about 82 volunteers. A grocery trip does not require reservations two weeks in advance. However since taking over for Northern Dutchess Caregivers, the volume of calls has been overwhelming, she said. In January the organization made 443 trips ( one way) for 105 clients. The same driver will usually take a person both ways on a trip. The driver's time is his or her own while the rider has their appointment. On shopping trips, sometimes the driver will go into the store with the rider to offer assistance.

Andy said that if they are amenable, he would like to see an article in the Observer on the organization. Susan said that services are free and are supported by grants. The operating budget for this year is \$142,000. Volunteers are paid \$.40 a mile. There is a \$34,000 budget for gas reimbursement.

Brenda asked Susan if she would attend a Town Board meeting. They will be discussing that possibility.

Susan said that the service provided is a door to door service and walkers and wheelchairs can be accommodated. If necessary, they will help a rider to get into or out of their home or the place of their appointment. However the rider must be capable of getting into and out of a car. The volunteers are very proud of that fact that the service is free. It is a personal group of people. Once a year they have a picnic for their clients and everyone gets a small gift.

At present there are about twenty volunteers for Red Hook. Brenda suggested that e-mail lists be used to try to get more people in the area to volunteer.

**MEETING SCHEDULE**

The next meeting will be held on April 2, 2014 at 9:15 A.M. at the Town Hall.

**ADJOURNMENT**

Dick made a motion to adjourn the meeting. The motion was seconded by Andy and all were in favor. The meeting was adjourned at 11:40 A.M.

Minutes submitted by:  
Sheila Franklin, Secretary  
Sr. Services Committee