



Town of Wilmington

Finance Committee

121 Glen Road Wilmington, 01887

Meeting Minutes

Thursday, February 4, 2021

Finance Committee Vice-Chairman, Theresa M. Manganelli called the meeting to order at 7:00 pm. Members present via video conferencing on ZOOM were, Jonathan Dugas, Marianne Gallezzo, Leigh Martinson, Bernard P. Nally and Kevin Stokes. Chairman John F. Doherty III was excused and Michele Kincaid was absent.

To begin the meeting Ms. Manganelli read a statement regarding Open Meeting Law and public access to the meeting via technological means, then took a verbal roll call of the attendees.

FY 22 BUDGET OVERVIEW

PRESENT IN INTEREST: Jeffrey Hull, Town Manager; Kerry Colburn-Dion, Assistant Town Manager; Bryan Perry, Finance Director

VETERANS' SERVICES

PRESENT IN INTEREST: Louis Cimaglia IV, Director of Veterans' Services

Mr. Cimaglia presented his FY2022 Budget. The department is level-funded apart from a decline in Assistance – Veterans. Mr. Cimaglia noted that Chapter 115 cases have declined due to a combination of Veterans who had passed and those who were now working.

Ms. Manganelli asked how the pandemic had affected Veterans, specifically if isolation was an issue. Mr. Cimaglia commented that it has been difficult for some and even led to suicides. He noted that telehealth and mental health visits do help but, like everyone, they are struggling.

Mr. Nally asked how many suicides happened in the past year. Mr. Cimaglia said the national average is 22 per day and that the department has lost 3 who were personal to the office. Mr. Cimaglia urged that if anyone is aware of any Veterans in crisis that they please send them his way so that staff in the office can give assistance to anyone in need.

Town Manager Hull then asked to take a moment to acknowledge the Memorial Day events that took place at Wildwood Cemetery and the Town Common. He noted that despite many differences this year with the pandemic situation the Veterans' Services office put forth a lot of effort, also mentioning the Eagle Scout project that contributed to the event and then reading a letter of thanks from a recent recipient of help by the office.

Mr. Cimaglia noted that the office is staying busy finding ways to honor Veterans, including being able to have a street, Sgt. Veloza Way, named this year in honor of Sergeant George Veloza, U. S. Army Veteran WWII, recipient of the Silver Star and Purple Heart.

ELDERLY SERVICES

PRESENT IN INTEREST: Terri Marciello, Director of Elderly Services

Ms. Marciello presented her FY2022 Budget. The department is mostly level-funded. Miscellaneous Contractual Services has declined slightly as one of the exercise classes will be covered by a grant from the Executive Office of Elderly Affairs.

Ms. Manganelli asked if the pandemic was affecting the elderly, especially the isolation. Ms. Marciello said that the elderly population is severely affected by the pandemic, and that isolation was a big factor in the increase in deaths throughout 2020. She noted that 88 elders from the Senior Center had passed away by the end of 2020. In addition to isolation, many people who were sickened due to ailments then contracted COVID-19 and died. Ms. Marciello told of one case of a previously very active elder who would come to the Senior Center on Mondays and how they could see the effects of isolation and loneliness on this person. She said everyone is learning how important it is to stay connected.

Ms. Marciello then recounted the early days of the pandemic and the department's focus on how to be responsive and push forward throughout the year. She named numerous community contributions from throughout the year that allowed the department to continue to stay connected and provide services to elders, including and not limited to: Designs by Don, Lucci's Market, Nichols Funeral Home, AJs Kitchen, As Good As it Gets, and Winchester Hospital (which donated \$2000 to help with the drive-up lunch pickup program).

As the Home Delivered Meals drivers are primarily in the age risk category for COVID-19, Ms. Marciello stated that staff took over the delivery of meals and included notes with the meals to brighten the elder's days. In 2020, 16, 341 meals were delivered. Meals delivery has gone up to approximately 75 per day from Monday through Friday.

The department hosted a drive-up lunch pickup program for an opportunity to safely interact with elders and have the chance to connect with and check on them. During the warmer weather months, many outdoor exercise programs were available including yoga, tai chi and bocce as well as non-exercise classes like art class and book club. In June and July tax clinics were offered as the Federal government had extended the 2020 deadline. Transportation for one person at a time was offered beginning again in May.

Ms. Marciello praised the members of her team, naming each of them, for their continued contributions to the elderly population. The next focus, she said, would be on giving assistance for vaccine registrations. The department works to help the elders through the registration process and reminds them of their appointments. Ms. Marciello said she is working with Senior Housing for Deming Way to try to get this area designated as a focus for vaccines.

To end her presentation Ms. Marciello shared photos of business partners and supporters and groups of students interacting with elders, to showcase all the assistance and support the department has received from the community.

Ms. Manganelli thanks Ms. Marciello, stating that she out-does herself every year and thanked her for reaching out for grant opportunities.

Ms. Gallezzo asked if there were any plans for small indoor classes for the winter and during bad weather. Ms. Marciello stated she would like to be able to but due to the necessity of maintaining safety for everyone it would not be possible. However, there are Zoom classes and a trivia program through WCTV to keep everyone engaged while being indoors.

Mr. Stokes offered kudos to Ms. Marciello and her staff. He asked, given the innovation that came about over the past year, what does think the new "normal" will look like for Elderly Services. Ms. Marciello answered that her word of the year is "pivot." She also said that it was because of the great ideas that people and participants came up with and the feedback they offered that allowed the department to continue to pivot.

Coming up for this year, Ms. Marciello said that the department will be offering the tax program in February, March and April but that it will look different this year, and that it could be necessary to meet in the parking lot to hand over paperwork to the accountant and then the resident can come back and pick up the completed return later. She said it is important to stay as routine as possible so that people feel seen and heard.

Town Manager Hull then spoke briefly about the new Senior Center that is entering the design phase and how the needs of the center have changed to allow for adaption to different circumstances, like the COVID pandemic. Ms. Marciello agreed that the limitations they currently face are due to the amount of space available and the ventilation issues that COVID presents. She said they are now more prepared for what to ask for and what the needs in the future will be. Ms. Manganelli suggested that outdoor space is critical too. Ms. Marciello noted that a structure to allow for functional outdoor space is proposed from donations received from various families of those who passed in 2020. There was a brief discussion on the likelihood of seniors returning to the center post-vaccine.

Mr. Nally complimented Ms. Marciello for all her hard work and Ms. Manganelli offered condolences on behalf of the Finance Committee to Ms. Marciello and her staff on the passing of elders from the center.

PUBLIC COMMENTS

There were no public comments.

OTHER BUSINESS

Mr. Hull spoke about a call received from a grateful family member whose father had received exceptional care from staff of the Elderly Services department. There was a brief discussion of assistance for snow removal.

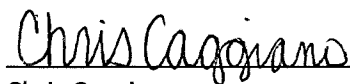
Ms. Gallezzo asked Mr. Hull if there had been any more effort to explore a grant-writer position for the Town. Mr. Hull noted that many departments seek and receive grants independently.

At the conclusion of the discussion, there being no further business to come before the Committee, a motion was made by Ms. Gallezzo and seconded by Mr. Dugas, it was unanimously and by roll call:

VOTED: That the Finance Committee adjourn.

Meeting adjourned at 7:50 pm

Respectfully Submitted,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Chris Caggiano". The signature is written in dark ink and is positioned above a horizontal line.

Chris Caggiano

Recording Secretary