

**Town of Somers
Advisory Committee for Seniors
Meeting Minutes
May 12, 2026
Senior Center Library**

Present: Pat Bachetti, Matthew Cox, Eileen Fedorowich, Marilyn Gaskell, Phyllis Gwilliam, Ailene Henry, John Kelleher, Annette Ramsdell, Donna Richardson, Joan Sizer

Guest: Todd Rolland, Department of Public works and Emergency Management Director
Matthew introduced and welcomed Mr. Rolland and all members introduced themselves.

Call to order at 1:00 p.m. by chairperson Matthew.

Approval of Minutes of April 14: Eileen moved and Pat seconded a motion to approve the minutes as presented. There was no discussion. Motion carried.

New Business:

- **Status of Proposal for Senior Center Renovations/Expansions:** Mr. Rolland distributed copies of the Senior Center Ad Hoc Building Committee Schedule as well as an architect's rendering of proposed Senior Center renovations and a picture of proposed parking changes. He said the changes would approximately double the size of the existing Senior Center and would cost approximately five million dollars. There will be a public presentation of the plans this summer. The project would need approval by the Board of Selectmen, the Capital Improvements Projects Committee and the Board of Finance. If approved it could be on the referendum May or November 2027.

A robust discussion followed, with many questions and suggestions about capacity of the building, restrooms, and food preparation areas.

Thanks to Mr. Rolland for taking time to present this to us.

- **See attached Senior Center Report presented by Donna Richardson and the Human Services Report presented by Annette Ramsdell.**
- Annette presented the Human Services report, highlighting among other things, that she and Matthew have visited Woodcrest three days recently to process Renters' Rebate applications, seeing several dozen residents. Additional days will be added as needed. She also mentioned that her "coffee talk" visits to the senior center have gone very well, with lots of interest and engagement. She also mentioned a growing need for volunteers to make food pantry and mobile food pantry deliveries to homebound seniors and people with disabilities who have no way to access this assistance due to lack of mobility, lack of transportation, etc. She suggested this might be a way to further engage Meals on Wheels and other volunteers. John volunteered to help.
- Donna presented the Senior Center report, announcing that Samantha Charette will be the new Director of Recreation and Leisure. Samantha will start work on June 1. Donna noted that in observance of National Elder Abuse Awareness month in June, that the Senior Center would again produce t-shirts to highlight the cause, share resources, and work to raise awareness. She also mentioned highlights from her written report: goats will return soon, the Father's Day

breakfast is in the planning stages, that a Somers HS student will host pizza and bingo as part of her capstone project.

Eileen noted that the summer concert series, organized by the Cultural Commission, will begin June 18th.

Adjournment: With no further business, Marilyn moved, and Eileen seconded a motion to adjourn the meeting at 2:15 p.m. There was no discussion and the motion was carried.

Next meeting will be Tuesday June 9, 1:00 p.m.

There will be no meetings in July and August.

Respectfully submitted

Ailene Henry, Secretary

Minutes not official until approved at subsequent meeting.

Somers Senior Advisory Meeting – Tuesday, April 14, 2026, 1:00 PM

Somers Human Services Report

March 2026 Activity Summary

Seasonal Transition: Energy Assistance & Benefits

As winter programs concluded, focus shifted from heating stability to seasonal benefit transitions. Final processing of CEAP applications ensured households received last fuel deliveries before the April 1 deadline. Concurrently, preparation began for Renters Rebate applications, including client education and document readiness. Medicare assistance remained ongoing to support continued access to healthcare coverage and cost-saving programs.

Client Outreach & Direct Engagement

Throughout March, consistent outreach was conducted through phone calls and home visits to maintain engagement with clients. These interactions supported wellness monitoring, addressed emerging needs, and strengthened service connections. Emphasis was placed on identifying changes in health, living conditions, and access to essential resources.

Food Security, Housing Support & Mental Health Awareness

Efforts focused on addressing food insecurity and housing stability through referrals, application assistance, and coordination with community resources. Additional attention was given to senior mental health, including awareness of isolation, depression, and suicide risk. Supportive conversations and resource connections were prioritized to promote overall well-being.

Upcoming Priorities – April 2026

- Renters Rebate Program: April 1 – September 30
- Farmers Market Nutrition Program: May 1 – November 30
- TEARS Annual Elder Abuse Conference – April 9
- Complex Casework Grand Rounds Training (SHIP) – April 16
- Aging Matters Conference – April 22

Services Provided

- Case Management/Senior Case Management/Follow-Ups/Financial Coaching: 70
- Meals on Wheels Recipients and CHAMP's Referrals: - 26
- Application Assistance including CEAP - 21
- Emergency Assistance – 4
- Gift Cards - 2
- CHOICES Consultation - 6
- Walk-Ins and Calls: 100+

Respectfully submitted,

Annette Ramsdell
Social and Senior Services Specialist

Senior Advisory Meeting – Tuesday, April 14, 2026, 1:00pm

Senior Center Updates

- Town interviewing for new Recreation & Leisure Director
- Tina Toohey's donation of Peter Pan Bus service to Majestic Theatre "Come from Away" play is Saturday, 4/18. We have 90 people signed up
- Coach Judy Groff, AIC softball alumni & former Dean Marcia Conrad will hold a celebration of life for Tina Toohey on June 6, 2026, from 2:00–4:00 PM at Bay Path University
- Rescheduled Suicide Prevention Training (QPR) to Tuesday, May 12th at 11am at the Sr. Center
- Donation funds used to purchase new outdoor patio furniture

Programs/Activities

- Fri, 5/1 – Kentucky Derby Party
- Mon, 5/4 – Craft with Darlene
- Wed, 5/6 – Painting with Sandy
- Fri, 5/8 - Mother's Day Tea Party
- Fri, 5/15 – Breakfast with Chef Pam
- Wed, 5/27 – Ask the Attorney is back with Kraner & Hess Law Firm
- Fri, 6/12 - Hawaiian Luau w/ Jose Paulo and highlight Elder Abuse Awareness by wearing purple
- Tues, 6/16 – Father's Day Breakfast with the Ivy
- Wed, 7/1 - Independence Day & 250th Anniversary of our nation celebration w/ Tom Callinan-Ct. 1st Official State Troubadour

Trips

- Friendship Tours - Thursday, June 11th - Essex Steam Train and Riverboat - \$176
- The Travel Group Trip - Tuesday, July 14th - "The History of Rock N' Roll" at the Log Cabin \$104
- Friendship Tours – Tuesday, October 13th – The Turkey Train Winnepesaukee Railroad - \$192
- Friendship Tours – Thursday, December 10th - Fireplace Feast - Salem Cross Inn - \$166

Respectfully submitted,

Donna Richardson
Senior Center Supervisor