Commission on Aging

Town Hall
5866 Main Street
Trumbull, Connecticut 06611

TOWN OF TRUMBULL
CONNECTICUT

Commission on Aging Meeting
Friday, August 28, 2026
Council Chambers, Trumbull Town Hall
2:00 pm

Present: Chairman Ron Foligno, Mark Ryan, Linda Randall, Kathleen Bordelon, Paul McGeary, Debra Gilbert Taylor and Eve Rothbard

Also Present: First Selectman Tesoro; Michele Jakab, Director of Senior Services; George Estrada, Director of Pubic Works and Cindy Katske, Chief Administrative Officer

Absent: Evelyn Wiesner

The meeting was called to order at 2:00 pm by Mr. Foligno followed by the Pledge of Allegiance.

Public Comment
Mr. Foligno addressed the attendees noting comments on the proposed data center will not be entertained as that topic does not fall under the purview of the Commission on Aging; comments should be addressed at the appropriate Town meetings.

Michael Ganino, 3 Canterbury Lane – submitted his comments (attached to the minutes). He also thanked the Staff at the Center for the wonderful work they do for the seniors.

Robert Abercrombie, 10 Pleasant Street – spoke on the recent flooding at the Center noting equipment was missing that could have been used to clean up the building; the back room smells like mold; the sump pumps were not operational as one did not have the drain connected to the outside because it was clogged. Work on the drainage on the patio was done this past week; walkway in the front was recently upgraded but the doorway was not made ADA compliant; ADA bathroom facilities are lacking. Feels the maintenance of the building is not up to par. Water has been leaking into the building for a while; humidifiers have been placed in the cafeteria. Pictures of the Center after the event were presented to the Chairman.

Past Minutes

Ms. Gilbert Taylor motioned to approve the minutes of June 26, 2026; seconded by Mr. McGeary. Motion approved with one abstention from Ms. Rothbard.

Discussion of Referendum Strategies for the Proposed Senior Center

Mrs. Tesoro addressed the Commission on the failed referendum in November and strategies moving forward noting:

1. The Town conducted a survey regarding the referendum asking questions about the Center and what the Town was willing to do or not do. Unfortunately, the survey results were closely in line with the outcome of the referendum. There is no mandate in this town to support a new senior center. The Town was looking for information to make an informed decision as to future steps.
2. Mr. Ryan discussed how the information was disseminated and described as well as one particular CT company that specializes in turning failed referendums into positive outcomes. The Town Council would need to be addressed for any decisions moving forward.
3. Information on a new building versus renovations were presented to the residents prior to the vote.
4. Funding approved by the Town Council was necessary for any option moving forward.
5. The Commission needs a direction to take to help facilitate the process.

Mr. Estrada noted he was disappointed in the outcome of the vote; they anticipated support from the community for a new center. Discussions are being held to strategize and develop a plan going forward. They are weighing options and working with Town departments on avenues to be explored. Revenue sources are being investigated. The Town will be looking at immediate investment on the property; water mitigation, windows and proper ADA access are being evaluated. Discussion was held regarding the possibility of other Town buildings being renovated.

6. The current Center could possibly be closed if deemed unsafe – this was made clear with the information provided to the residents about the Center.

Suggestion made to reach out to the Town Council and discuss the subject.

The Homestead Act is being seriously discussed but has many steps including new legislative changes taking effect in 2027. The same amount of funding needs to be raised; taxes will not go down; the Act places the burden on the commercial side versus residential side.

Mrs. Hayes-O'Brien, Chair of the Community Facilities Building Committee, encouraged the Commission to remain positive and continue to provide information to residents so they understand the Center's function in the community.

Grant funding was discussed for the proposed center. This is being discussed with the State representatives as they have expressed an interest in the project. The Town cannot apply for funding for the center until there is an approved project unlike the schools that have funding approved prior to project approval.

Reports

Senior Center Report

Ms. Jakab reported the following for Ms. Mogensen:

1. Excited to welcome Kaylee as our new Lead Bus Driver, she is a great addition to our team! We are also currently accepting applications for a Part-Time Building Attendant, anyone interested in applying can visit the town's website.
2. September is National Senior Center Month. We will be celebrating on Tuesday, September 15th from 1:00 to 3:00 PM with a dance. There will be a DJ, dancing, refreshments, raffles and more. Members are welcome to bring one guest to experience everything the Senior Center has to offer!
3. On Friday, September 18th, we will be collaborating with the American Red Cross and Trumbull Health Department to host a blood drive from 9:00 AM to 2:00 PM. Appointments can be made by visiting RedCrossBlood.org.
4. The Trumbull Rotary Club will be hosting their Annual Senior Picnic on Friday, September 25th at 12:00 PM at the Trumbull Town Green. The senior center will be accepting reservations on behalf of the Rotary Club.

Mrs. Jakab also noted with National Senior Center Month, they are trying to bring attention to the Center and would like to hear from the seniors what matters to them, relationships they have made and how the current building impacts them and their ability to participate. Agism is a concern and often includes politics and red tape on issues. There is a need to bring information back to the community and focus on how we treat our elders. Any testimonials will be shared on Facebook, the Center newsletter and the First Selectman's newsletter.

Stern Village

No report.

Chairman's Report

Mr. Foligno noted the following:

1. My Friend Abby will be holding a program at the Town Green on September 10 at 6:00 pm. The American Legion has the Be The One initiative. Both programs raises awareness of suicide and its impacts.
2. Fishing Derby will be held on September 26 in Monroe.

New Business

No new business.

Old Business

1. COACT Meeting Update – no additional information.
2. Update – Website Content – Ms. Gilbert Taylor and Ms. Bordelon discussed the resource document. It is intended to be a PDF document but one copy could be made available at the Center for reference.
3. Concerns of and Concerns for Senior Citizens – previously discussed.

Next Meeting

Friday, September 25, 2026.

Adjournment

There being no further business, Ms. Rothbard motioned to adjourn the meeting at 3:25 pm; seconded by Ms. Randall and approved by unanimous consent.

Respectfully submitted,

Barbara Crandall
Clerk

The Need for a Clear Strategy for Trumbull's Senior Community Center

The time has come for Trumbull's elected officials to adopt a clear and decisive strategy regarding the future of the Senior Community Center. Trumbull's senior citizens deserve a safe, clean, accessible, and welcoming facility where they can gather, participate in programs, maintain social connections, and remain active members of the community. Continuing to operate in a facility with inadequate physical conditions should not be considered a viable long-term solution. The condition of Priscilla Place requires serious attention and a firm commitment to action.

At the same time, FS Tesoro and the Town Council deserve recognition and appreciation for their past efforts to support Trumbull's seniors and address the needs of the Senior Community Center. Their work reflects a meaningful commitment to the community, and those efforts provide an important foundation for the thoughtful, transparent planning that must continue.

Our elected officials should establish a transparent process that thoroughly evaluates two viable options: identifying and acquiring an appropriate property for a new Trumbull Senior Community Center, or developing a specific, fully funded plan to comprehensively rehabilitate Priscilla Place. If rehabilitation is determined to be the preferred option, residents deserve a clear understanding of the required work, projected costs, necessary improvements, implementation timeline, and financing plan. If the building cannot reasonably be brought up to the standards our seniors deserve, the town should be prepared to pursue an alternative property and develop a plan for a new facility.

This is not simply a question of infrastructure; it reflects how Trumbull values its senior citizens. Our seniors have spent decades contributing to our families, neighborhoods, businesses, schools, civic organizations, and community as a whole. They deserve more than temporary fixes or continued uncertainty. They deserve elected officials who will address the condition of Priscilla Place candidly, evaluate all realistic alternatives, and provide the public with a sustainable, long-term solution.

Trumbull should not continue debating this issue without establishing a clearly defined path forward. The ~~Board of Selectmen~~, Town Council, and other appropriate town officials should work collaboratively to develop a comprehensive strategy, obtain professional assessments and cost estimates, identify potential properties, explore available funding opportunities, and present residents with realistic alternatives. Our seniors deserve action, not further delay. Whether the ultimate solution is a new Senior Community Center or a complete rehabilitation of Priscilla Place, Trumbull must commit to providing a facility that is safe, dignified, functional, and worthy of the people it serves.