WATERTOWN COMMISSION ON AGING
REGULAR MEETING MINUTES

WATERTOWN TOWN HALL
FIRST FLOOR CONFERENCE ROOM
61 ECHO LAKE ROAD, WATERTOWN, CT

Thursday, October 15, 2026

I. The meeting was called to order at 6:30 PM by Melanie Flaherty, Chair

II. Roll Call

PRESENT: Melanie Flaherty, Chair
Debra Desena
Alan Mickel
Wilbur Hughes, Vice Chair
Sally Kuslis
Amy Quinnan
Andrea Corcoran

ABSENT: Cynthia Blanchard
Tracy Dasilva

OTHERS PRESENT: Michael Ganem, Director of Parks and Recreation

III. Public Participation – NONE

IV. Correspondence –

- Grant award letter from the Thomaston Savings Bank Foundation for 2 vacuum cleaners to be used at the food pantry.
- Invitation from the staff at the FASC to participate in the Thanksgiving Luncheon on November 20, 2026.

V. Approval of Minutes:
Thursday, September 17, 2026, Regular Meeting

Motion to approve the minutes of the September 17, 2026, meeting by Al Mickel. Seconded by Wilbur Hughes.

Motion to amend the minutes of the August 20, 2026, meeting by Alan Mickel. Seconded by Wilbur Hughes.

The motion passed unanimously

VI. Reports

A. Chairman – no report

B. Parks & Recreation Director
Michael Ganem:
- Written report is attached to the minutes
- The director thanked the staff and the volunteers who work at the FASC. Special note to the "chef" and the Kayner Tech students

C. Senior Center Coordinator/Municipal Services
Laura Garay:
- Provided a written report (attached to the packet)

D. Sub-Committee on Mission Statement

Amy Quinnan reported that she has or will be scheduling meetings with both Jeanne Vichioli, Social Services, and Laura Garay, FASC, to learn more about their perspectives in "working to identify the community's priority needs and the ways to deliver/meet those priorities."

The Commission discussed the feasibility of a type of tax relief for qualifying seniors. Through the State, there is a circuit breaker program as well as programs for veterans.

VII. Old Business- Alan Mickel stated for the record that the report received from the FASC for tonight's meeting was very well drafted.

VIII. New Business – None

IX. Adjournment -

Motion: Alan Mickel, seconded by Sally Kuslis to adjourn the Regular Meeting at 7:05 P.M.

The motion passed unanimously.

Respectfully submitted,

_____
Melanie Flaherty, Chair
Watertown Commission on Aging

Approved: _____
Susan King, Clerk

To: The Commission on Aging
From: Michael Ganem, Director of Parks and Recreation
Date: October 16, 2026
Subject: Director's Report – October 2026 Updates

1. Expressions of Gratitude & Senior Center Appreciation

- **Community & Staff Recognition:** I want to take this opportunity to reinforce my sincere gratitude to the seniors in our town, all active participants at the Falls Avenue Senior Center (FASC), and our dedicated staff team.
- **Appreciation Luncheon:** I recently had the honor of attending the Appreciation Luncheon held at the center and dining with our patrons. Sharing in their conversations was a truly wonderful experience. It is with deep gratitude that I reflect on our interactions—the members themselves make the work we do here genuinely meaningful and important. The hard work of our staff and the vibrant energy of our members continue to make the center a special place for our community.

2. Facilities, Operations & Site Improvements

- **Sidewalk & Accessibility Upgrades:** As of my last site inspection, the new sidewalk installation is nearly complete. Handrails have been fully installed where appropriate along the path. Despite the inherent topography and site challenges within the landscape and lot, this project represents a significant safety improvement for our senior patrons navigating the facility grounds.
- **Transit Fleet Update:** Preparations remain on track regarding our transportation assets as we await the delivery of our new 5310 grant bus and manage the scheduled transition and optimal use of our current fleet.

Respectfully Submitted,
Michael Ganem
Director of Parks and Recreation
Town of Watertown, CT