



Mayor's Office | Phone: 860.584.6250 | Fax: 860-584-3835

NEWS RELEASE

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CITY OF BRISTOL DEPARTMENT OF AGING AND SENIOR CENTER STAFF REMAINS ACTIVE DURING COVID-19

(BRISTOL, CT) –The closure of the Bristol Senior Center due to Covid-19, has the staff adjusting their services of checking in on members, assisting with shopping, providing weekday lunches and support.

Patricia Tomascak, Director of Aging for the City of Bristol reports staff continues the Meals on Wheels services to the homebound. Congregate Meals are available to members for pick up weekdays from 11:30 a.m. -12:30 p.m. "We have been shopping daily for our members who call needing assistance by purchasing gift cards from Shop Rite and using a revolving account fund. The Senior Center staff shop with the gift card and the senior writes a check to the Senior Center to place those monies back into the account," said Ms. Tomascak. In addition, the Senior Center has been working with Shop Rite who has graciously been providing groceries to seniors who are confined at home.

"The Senior Center also received \$250 in Visa gift cards from Anthology to assist covering costs for seniors who cannot afford to pay for items including groceries or other necessities," said Assistant Director Jason Krueger. "For individuals with Food Stamps the staff reached out to the State's Department of Social Services to receive authorization allowing staff members to shop using the members SNAP cards."

"We are very fortunate to have such an engaged Senior Center staff who are offering a variety of supports to our Senior Center members. We understand that seniors are feeling the effects of social isolation and concern about the future," said Mayor Ellen Zoppo-Sassu. "The message we want to get out there is that the City is here to help, and that seniors should reach out if they need help."

Facebook, e-mail blasts and phone calls have kept the membership updated on happenings and the staff continues to provide social services via telephone as needed. The Senior Center main phone is 860-584-7100.

"During this down time, the Senior Center has had a thorough cleaning. The Billiards Room was repainted, the runs have been steam cleaned along with stripping and waxing floors which includes the gym floor," said Councilman Scott Rosado, who is the city council liaison to the Senior Center. "Also, we are being very positive about thinking ahead to May 1st when the Community Gardens will be ready for planting."

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