



Town of Sherman
Commission on Aging
Monthly Meeting Minutes
July 20, 2026

Commissioners Present: Keith Barton (Chair), Meredith Kroeger, Merialis Lewis, Sheila McMahon, Jeanne McRoberts, Kim Thomson, Janet Wey

Absent: Susan White, Lynne Gomez (Social Services)

Also Present: Don Lowe (First Selectmen), Suzette Berger (Senior Center), Anne Weisberg (Candidate for State Representative in District 5).

The meeting was called to order at 4:02 PM by Chair, Keith Barton

Motion made by: M. Lewis moved to approve the June 15, 2026 minutes with spelling correction.

Seconded by: J. McRoberts

Vote For: Unanimous

Senior Center/Social Services Report:

Senior Center Report

S. Berger provided her annual report for the last fiscal year (July 1, 2025 to June 30, 2026). The senior center helped 229 individuals, who participated more times in offered programs (6,841) despite having 20 people less for this period. 43% of clients are 80 years old plus, while 24% are 90 years old plus. They have to take this into consideration when planning activities as they only have one room.

S. Berger pointed out that speakers' fees are going up so they will need to research more free programs. She wants to bring in other programs that can attract younger seniors such as Pilates. However, classes taught by instructors can be cost prohibitive. Presently, they conduct the Tai Chi class with a video to address this

challenge. These must be attended though by senior center staff for safety purposes unless there is a commissioner who can supervise.

S. Berger emphasized that the center relies heavily on volunteers and stressed the need for more volunteers. J. Wey underscored that the most attended classes – exercise and yoga – are volunteer led.

J. McRoberts inquired if there are more video options available (e.g., Ted Talks from the past which were well attended). K. Barton volunteered to search for more of these with appropriate topics.

J. Wey suggested to also put a call for more volunteers that can share their talents with the senior center in the monthly newsletter.

On a separate topic, J. Wey and S. Berger asked D. Lowe for the parking lot lines to be repainted at the senior center.

Lastly, M. Kroeger asked about the Reach Out program. S. Berger said it is a Social Services program. She does, however, refer volunteers and participants confidentially to Social Services. S. Berger will talk to L. Gomez about the possibility of shortening the commitment time period to potentially attract more volunteers.

Social Services Report

There is no report at this time.

Ongoing Business:

1) Senior Center Building Committee Update

D. Lowe advised they received 14 responses to the request for proposal (RFP) from architectural firm. The Senior Center Building Committee (SCBC) will have a regular meeting tomorrow with two items on the agenda. The first agenda item is to take care of general committee business. The second agenda item is to narrow down the RFPs to four finalists. D. Lowe advised that legally the second item must be conducted in an executive session. K. Thomson will attend the beginning of the meeting prior to the executive session. D. Lowe will email her the four finalists.

D. Lowe added that he thinks the delay in the timeline due to having to select a new architect actually works to the project's benefit for several reasons. The

SCBC is aiming for construction to start in late spring. D. Lowe confirmed for K. Barton that August 14th is still the date for final selection of the architect.

2) Town Hall Night Lighting

D. Lowe explained that the lights are a mixture of the lights maintained by the town and the rest are maintained by the owner of the Town Green. In either case, D. Lowe will take the lead on resolving. A suggestion was made to put solar lights along the walkway down from the Sherman Playhouse to the lower parking lot.

3) COA Email Address on Town Website

Per D. Lowe the town has not made a decision regarding providing individual email addresses to commissions. The commission discussed the pros and cons of having an email address.

K. Thomson **made a motion** that an email specific to the Commission on Aging is not needed and that the email for the Senior Center will be used.

Seconded by: M. Lewis

Vote For: All in favor.

4) Re-Route Traffic

S. McMahon reiterated that the purpose of potentially re-routing the traffic was to make it easier to unload/load the bus. S. Berger recommended not to do it now with the pending new senior center. She explained that older attendees go the right way by ‘muscle memory’ and it will be confusing for attendees. Rather, she would like to see the directional arrows re-painted and more explicit enter signs added for the senior center and social services. D. Lowe added that he spoke with the resident state trooper and Public Works and both think it might be problematic.

K. Thomson added that the request was also made due to the weather (e.g., snow). S. Berger said it is harder for the driver and those that are driving themselves to get out in a snow bank.

J. McRoberts **made a motion** to drop this item from upcoming agendas.

Seconded by: M. Lewis

Vote For: All in favor.

5) Vacancy

K. Barton emphasized that the commission has had a vacancy now for 60 days. He asked D. Lowe if there had been any traction in this area. D. Lowe said the search is still active. M. Kroegeer will reach out to someone in her neighborhood and if they are interested invite them to a meeting. K. Thomson thinks she has two possible prospects and will reach out to them. D. Lowe will put another reminder in his next column and thereafter until the vacancy is filled.

6) Update on Using Senior Center for Medical Appts.

S. Berger said this topic can be removed from future agendas. It was just a policy change on the senior center end that specifies certain requirements. K. Barton asked if they had any requests in the last 30 days. S. Berger said they have not but had heard from F.I.S.H. that there are some that they believe are ready.

7) Reach Out Program

This was discussed earlier in the meeting.

8) Route 37S Shoulder Striping (Completed?)

M. Lewis advised this matter has been handled by the Connecticut Department of Transportation.

New Business:

1) Any New Business that Comes Before the COA

K. Barton shared with the commission that S. White had sent an email before the meeting requesting to know if the meeting could be permanently moved to 5:00 PM to make it easier to attend for some commissioners. The commission agreed to discuss at the next regular meeting.

S. Berger said the commission used to have an article in the paper, in which issues important to seniors were discussed. She added it would be nice to have

that again a couple of times a year. Someone also used to research legislation that would impact seniors that should likewise be communicated.

K. Thomson shared that a new law that recently came out of the state legislature requires real estate wholesalers to now be licensed due to the rising occurrence of deed theft. D. Lowe said the town offers a free service to alert property owners about potential property theft. C. Aruza described how the service works and invited interested commissioners to contact her for instructions on how to sign-up.

K. Barton additionally highlighted L. Gomez's article about scams identified by the AARP that specifically target seniors. J. Wey asked S. Berger if the resident trooper can come to the senior center to talk about scams. She said he had recently done a talk at the Sherman Library but she will look into him also speaking at the senior center.

Comments by Commissioners:

None at this time.

Public Comment:

A. Weisberg attended the meeting. She will speak Thursday at noon at the senior center and wanted to poll commissioners on important topics that should be raised. J. Wey recommended that everyone go as it is important to listen to what other seniors feel are important issues.

Adjournment:

K. Barton moved to adjourn the meeting at 5:02 p.m.

Seconded by: S. McMahon

Vote for: All in favor

Respectfully submitted by Christine Aruza
Next meeting: September 21, 2026 @ 4:00 PM at Mallory Town Hall