

Rhode Island

**Citizens' Commission for the
Care and Safety of the Elderly**

Minutes

April 14, 2005

Anna Prior, Acting Chairperson of the Commission, called the meeting to order at 10:05 a.m. at the Cumberland Senior Center. John Smollins, Esq. distributed a sign in sheet.

Attendance: Anna M. Prior, Steve Dresner, Esq., Gloria Heisler, Mary Francis Campbell, John F. Smollins, Jr., Esq, John E. Quigley, Lu Brennan, Norm Chapman, Gloria K. Williams, Norma A. Garnett, and Cliff Largess.

Anna M. Tucker, Alfred Cardente, Cindy Soccio, Esq., and Chief Peter Brousseau were excused.

Mary Cerra, Lt. Mark Bilodeau, and Nona Caputi were absent.

Anna Prior thanks John Smollins for his service as administrative liaison for the Commission and his updates to her.

Anna Prior introduces Lu Brennan who advocates for Medicare

coverage and payment for the Macugen shot for those afflicted with Macular Degeneration. Lu reports that the shot costs \$1060 prepaid and that Medicare has not set a policy date for Medicare coverage.

Lu Brennan has written to the Rhode Island Congressional Delegation urging Medicare coverage and payment for this shot. Lu appeals to the Commission for support of Medicare coverage and payment for this expensive shot.

Anna Prior salutes Lu Brennan for bringing this problem to the Commission.

Cliff Lagress suggests a letter of support for this coverage to federal authorities.

Gloria Heisler concurs. Lu Brennan suggests a letter be sent by the Commission to the appropriate authorities. Jack Quigley makes a motion to do whatever is necessary to support Lu's request. His motion was seconded by Anna Prior, Norm Chapman and Gloria Heisler. The vote was unanimous.

Lu Brennan introduces Sgt. Michael Kinch, the Cumberland Senior Police advocate who will report on his activities. He introduces Ellen Murphy who speaks briefly on her company, "A Place for Mom". It is a new company that tries to find a suitable place for mom or dad when needed. It works with the family to achieve this goal. Anna

Prior endorses this concept.

Norma Garnett makes a motion to get Lu's story out. Jack Quigley, Norm Chapman seconds the motion and the group concurs.

Sgt. Kinch highlights his work with Attorney General Lynch to get tougher laws for those who exploit the elderly. He endorses Attorney General Lynch's legislation to get a prosecutorial team to root out financial exploitation of the elderly.

Sgt. Kinch advocates that financial exploitation of the elderly should be classified as a "violent crime".

Steve Dresner, Esq. objects by stating that the crime is not violent and should not be considered so for constitutional reasons. A brief discussion ensued.

Anna Prior comments on a North Kingstown former school teacher who was scammed but retrieved the bulk of her money through the work of senior police advocate, Dan Ormand, and the RI Attorney General.

Jack Quigley observed that many facilities are "fleecing the elderly".

Norm Chapman provides members with a copy of Commission's Annual Report for the General Assembly submitted by Anna Prior and

updates the status of an elderly friend.

Anna Prior thanks Norman Chapman and Cindy Soccio, Esq., for their help in preparing the report.

Norm Chapman advised members that the next meeting is Thursday, May 12, 2005, at Tamarisk, 3 Shalom Drive, Warwick, RI at 10:00 a.m. Directions are attached for your convenience.

Lori Gagnon, Center Director is commended for her coffee and sumptuous fruit tray. A beautiful cake was presented by Lu Brennan and a rousing rendition of Happy Birthday to Anna Prior on her 96th birthday was led by Fran Campbell.

Cliff Largess provided valuable information on macugen therapy.

The meeting was adjourned at 11:30 a.m.

Respectfully submitted,

John Smollins, Jr., Esq.

DEA Legal Counsel