

RESULTS OF SENIOR HUNGER LISTENING SESSION

On Tuesday March 6th a Senior Hunger Listening Session was held at the Windsor Senior Center. This event was attended by seniors in the community, Windsor Hunger Action Team Members, Foodshare, and board members from the Windsor Food & Fuel Bank. This was an opportunity for residents to express their concerns and questions about hunger in the community.

Many voices were heard. We appreciate all those who showed up. Residents voiced a variety of concerns and observations. Seniors expressed appreciation for mobile FOODSHARE, the Food Bank and Groceries to Go.

Food Distribution

We heard that individuals in small households don't always use the amount of food they are given, so they give the extra to friends or church members. Also, produce such as potatoes or onions are given in large quantities. We were asked if these items could be given out in smaller quantities when given out to a household of one.

RESPONSE: Guidelines do not allow the food bank or mobile food share to open prepackaged items. Feel free to share extra food with neighbors, friend or church members. At the foodbank, if you receive nonperishable food that you cannot use, you can put it on the free table (or return it).

Food Bank Inventory

A food bank volunteer stated she noticed the food bank receives a lot of food donations coming in during the fall and winter around the holidays. However, during the summer months the food bank inventory is lower and there are fewer donations.

RESPONSE: Social Services staff has ongoing discussions about the need for food drives and collections through the spring and summer. There are food collections at the Concerts on the Green, during special town events, and at local grocery stores through the spring and summer. The Postal Carriers Food collection in May brings in a large amount of nonperishable items. Businesses also hold special food collection events.

Meals On Wheels

One concerned citizen asked about the status of Meals on Wheels, and if home delivered meals are still available to seniors in need.

RESPONSE: Meals on Wheels are still available, through CW Resources. Call 860-229-7700 extension 239 directly to obtain detailed information about meal options, pricing and enrollment.

Senior Center Lunch Program

Many Windsor seniors come to the Senior Center for their main meal of the day and for the programs. The meals are very good, and the social interaction is very important and good for seniors. Even so, how can we get more people to come to the center? Another resident indicated "Everyone knows at least one person who does not use the senior center. Perhaps if people passed out flyers inviting a friend, relative, or neighbor to the center, they would come."

Another person indicated she has a lot of food allergies, and stated food allergies and dietary restrictions prevent some people from participating in the Senior Center lunch program.

RESPONSE: There is currently a very good turnout for lunch *and* programs at the Senior Center. When Windsor residents sign up for the food bank, Social Services provides them with information about other food bank programs, Senior Center programs, meals, and senior transportation. The senior lunch program is published in the monthly Senior Center Newsletter. In February and March special plans were made to invite residents

from Fitch Court and Millbrook Village to the Senior Center. Social Services and the Senior Center encourages residents **to invite and to accompany** a friend or neighbor for lunch and socialization.

Note: The Senior Lunch Program Hot lunch is provided by CRT for seniors 60 years or older in the cafeteria, 12:00 noon, Monday through Friday. Make reservations by noon the day before by calling 860-285-1843. Donation is \$2.50 for seniors; \$5.00 required for guests under age 60.

Transportation

One resident mentioned that **transportation** to the Senior Center is a challenge for some people. Another resident mentioned that she does not have her own transportation and has relied on others for rides, however she recently signed up for the Windsor Dial-A-Ride and now gets rides to the senior center **and** to the grocery store.

RESPONSE: Windsor Transportation Services are a wonderful resource. Call 860-285-1996 for information about the Senior Transportation Dial-A-Ride program. The monthly Senior Center newsletter contains information about Senior Transportation.

Commodity Supplemental Food Program

One of the attendees indicated she participates in the Commodity Supplemental Food Program (CFSP) for persons age 60 and older. This is a United States Dairy Association (USDA) program. A large box of food is available once a month for persons age 60 and older. The Rehoboth Church in Bloomfield is a local distributor for this program.

RESPONSE: The Windsor Food Bank researched this program but determined since there are multiple food programs in town, and residents can choose to participate in CFSP at another location, we would not duplicate it here in Windsor.

Miscellaneous

Several people mentioned dietary restrictions due to food allergies such as lactose intolerance, low sodium, diabetes, etc. One person suggested that even though lactose free milk is more expensive, it tends to last longer and might be worth the extra cost.

One of the HAT members who is also a food bank volunteer suggested that at times the food bank has specialty food items such as spices or foods used by certain cultures. If people are looking for something specific from the food bank, they can write it on the selection sheet. If it is available, the request can be filled.

Another person asked if there is a dietician on staff at the Senior Center. Although there is no dietician on staff, the Senior Center will look into having a dietician come once a month for discussion.

RESPONSE:

The Windsor Hunger Action Team, Senior Center and Social Services will discuss ways to address these concerns.

The Windsor Hunger Action Team meets on the first Wednesday of the month from 9:00-10:30AM in the Ludlow Room at the Town Hall. All are invited to attend. For more information contact Windsor Social Services, 860-285-1839.