

March 25, 2013

Gabe and Jay:

Thank you for meeting with me and Sheryl Morrison to review our annual budget request. I'm delighted that you find the SSC to be a place that provides valuable programs and services to seniors. I agree with you, having the center located at the Government Center makes it convenient for seniors to come to one place for multiple services.

Our membership growth and increased participation demonstrates that value our community sees in the SSC. Our 1,100+ members attend often. The center averages 3,025 visits per month. We deliver over 264 hours of direct programs monthly. In addition, through a number of partnerships we bring valuable services to the community. The Catholic Charities lunch program serves an average of 1,500 individuals. AARP brings Medicare Part D, Driver Safety and Tax Assistance programs to the SSC. This past year, AARP volunteers assisted in over 600 tax returns, at the SSC. My background as a bilingual expert in dementia care has strengthened our information & referral services. The SSC is seen by many in the community as the first place to call when they need help for an elderly family member.

Per your request, here are the reasons why the additional \$25,000 funding is requested:

1. The funding will help pay for the restoration of a full time Executive Director Assistant. This position was cut two years ago when the city reduced our funding from \$195,000 to \$150,000. Today we have increased our programs and services as well as the level of participation while doing so with far fewer funds. Staff includes a full time ED, a fulltime ED Assistant and two part-time Receptionist/Office Assistants.
2. Although, the SSC has been successful at securing additional funding from the community, the 24% budget cut to our small budget in 2010 has an expanding impact. In the last three years, the cost of operations has increased by about 15%. This means our 2010 cut has an effective impact of 39% cut and costs continue rising. The \$25,000 increase is desperately needed. The restoration of the fulltime ED Assistant is vital. On a typical day, one full-time ED and a PT receptionist/office assistant were running the center. If a staff member gets sick, one of our volunteer board members would have to come in to help so that we could safely run the center.
3. We increased our offerings of programs and services to meet the growing needs of our culturally and ethnically diverse membership. This requires additional staff. This year, we expanded classes promoting health and wellness. We added new exercise classes, multicultural events, cultural trips, and educational seminars. We offer Easy Access tickets and CT transit tokens to members so that seniors can come to the center for programs, services, and to a nutritious lunch. Our members tell us that we are the best value in town.

4. A year ago, we expanded operational hours (9-5pm) to meet demand. People are now asking for evening programs. A grant award less than \$175,000 will force the center to reduce service hours and to increase fees to cover increased costs. This will hurt those who least can afford it.
5. The ED alone is responsible for running the center's operations and is increasingly responding to ongoing information and referral calls. This leaves no time to search for additional funding revenue.

We are grateful to the City of Stamford for the continuing support of the Stamford Senior Center and would appreciate any additional funding support so that we can continue to serve Stamford's senior tax-paying citizens.

Best Regards,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Ana M. Nelson".

President & Executive Director

