

COVID 19 forced the Center to close its doors on March 16, 2020. But the Center did not close. The “Senior Center without Walls” model, born out of this pandemic, was launched, with a full array of online and virtual offerings. Under the direction of state and local officials, the Executive Director and SSC Board have initiated plans to re-open the Center in early summer of 2021, while maintaining the virtual programs we’ve implemented over the last year. State and City guidelines will dictate how many people we can have at the Center or in a class at any given time. We anticipate that the Center will be required to adopt a hybrid approach to the delivery of its services in order to reach those seniors who cannot or will not come to the Center, even after it reopens. That will put greater demands on an already limited staff to run on site programs and simultaneously bring these programs into the living rooms of seniors throughout Stamford.

#### Capital Expenses for 2021/22:

- Upgrade sound system and purchase a ceiling mounted Zoom camera to be able to record and stream live classes to broadcast to seniors at home.
- Renovate layout of café to remove self -serve coffee station and implement counter service due to COVID restrictions. Replace counter and cabinets and install new sink and touchless faucet.
- Replace water the two fountains with touchless bottle fill water fountains due to COVID.

#### New/Expanded Services in 2021/22:

We will continue our model of being a “Senior Center without Walls” by:

- Offering as many of our classes as possible online through Zoom so that members who cannot come to the Center can still participate from home.
- Recording our lifelong learning and health & wellness lectures to post on YouTube for our members to watch on demand.
- Continuing our Drive-Through themed lunches into foreseeable future and until we can resume large gatherings at the Center.
- Continuing to provide education, information and assistance to seniors with regards to the COVID vaccine.

#### Abandoned or Curtailed Services in 2021/22:

- This remains to be seen, based on state and local restrictions in place, and other issues which remain to be solved such as mandatory vaccine requirements. For example, our ability to host large in person indoor luncheons may be curtailed for the foreseeable future. The congregate meal program also remains in question due to COVID.

Key Challenges or Changes in 2021/22: Challenges will be to maintain all expanded virtual services when we re-open, while overseeing participants at the Center and enforcing required social distancing and mask mandates.

#### Highlights, Efficiencies and Service Improvements in 2020/21: [Watch our short YouTube video](#)

- We moved many of our fitness, lifelong learning and discussion groups online via Zoom.
- We held fitness classes in the Park, so seniors could socially distance outside and see their friends while getting some physical exercise.
- We identified seniors who were in need of meals and worked with the Patio Café to prepare meals for staff and volunteers to deliver. In the height of the pandemic, we were delivering 200 meals per week. In the past year, we have delivered 6,800 meals to seniors in need.
- We delivered 2,500 bags of groceries, providing over 25,000 meals to Stamford seniors (in partnership with the Southwestern CT Agency on Aging, SilverSource and the Over 60 Club).
- We worked closely with Person to Person who stepped in to provide monthly grocery boxes from their mobile food pantry to several of our most vulnerable seniors.
- We launched drive-through themed lunches. Since May of 2020, we have conducted 12 drive-through events, serving over 1,800 meals to seniors.
- We became the call center for seniors in Phases 1B of vaccine roll-out to help answer questions and register seniors for an appointment. To date, we’ve assisted over 4,000 seniors in getting the vaccine.
- We partnered with Stamford’s Social Services Dept. and the Mayor’s office to get vaccine clinics set up at senior housing sites in Stamford, including providing manpower to staff the clinics.