

**COMMUNITY SERVICES DEPARTMENT
DIRECTOR'S REPORT
AUGUST, 2025**

SUBMITTED TO: Jill Goldsmith, Town Manager
SUBMITTED BY: Leah LaCross, Director of Community Services

FROM THE DIRECTOR OF COMMUNITY SERVICES:

I'm pleased to report that August was another highly productive month for the Community Services Department, marked by teamwork and continued momentum. As we inch closer to our anticipated move date of October 6th, the number of mini working group meetings increased as well; ensuring that no detail, large or small, is overlooked. Anna Milan, our Programs and Communications Coordinator, and I finalized our formal communication plan (with input from Shanna Nealy, the Town's Communications Manager), and began to put it into motion. Several social media posts were prepared, full page announcements were placed in upcoming newsletters, and a "Lunch and Learn" regarding the temporary move and renovations is scheduled for early September at the Center for Active Living. Additionally, Ms. Milan will be working with the staff at Chatham TV to produce a series of video shorts that give mini tours at the Community Center and explain the transition in more detail.

Also, in anticipation of the move, Josephine Fennel, Director of the Ryder's Cove Respite Program, and I, will be providing an intensive training on ***"Dealing with those with Dementia"*** to the staff of the Community Center. Ms. Fennel will also provide information on what to expect when you have an Adult Supportive Day Program in your building.

Another successful year of the Summer Recreational Program came to a close on August 8th, with an average of **211 kids per day** participating over the 7-week program.

Finally, I participated in a mock emergency drill at the Chatham Fire Department on August 27th. The drill, held by the Town's Emergency Management staff, focused on the scenario that our public drinking water became suddenly contaminated. It was a great discussion amongst the various Department Heads, and I look forward to participating in more drills in the future.

Adult Behavioral Health Clinician:

The Adult Behavioral Health Clinician had 61 interactions with 24 individuals at both the Chatham Police Department (CPD) and the Chatham Center for Active Living (CFAL).

COA DIVISION:

Outreach:

August proved to be busy for outreach with 218 separate interactions for 99 individuals.

Outreach had 4 individual referrals from Chatham Police, Fire and EMS services, leading 4 consultations. Some of these referrals were existing clients, leading to continued and coordinated follow-up services. We received 4 referrals from the Town Clinician. We also had 3 new multi-agency consultations to coordinate care and services for members.

The Outreach Coordinator made 16 home visits for 15 separate individuals. We had 7 safety checks on 3 individual members. There were also 13 continued follow-up consultations on 9 individuals, from previous months.

Outreach had 126 phone interactions, serving 57 individuals. We had 79 in-person office consultations at CFAL for 60 members. This month we saw an increase in caregivers/families coming in looking for assistance with end-of-life support. Families sought help with navigating hospice care and grief, and how to plan to move forward after the death of a loved one.

Outreach also saw an increase in requests for support for new diagnoses and navigating healthcare systems here on the Cape. We referred 31 individuals to 9 different community partners for support this month.

Healthy Meals in Motion (HMIM) served 42 families this month, including the addition of two new accounts. We are planning on moving the HMIM operation to the Department of Public Works (DPW) for the next ten months while the CFA building is under construction. Outreach greatly appreciated the support from the other Town agencies that have assisted the COA and the staff in the renovation project.

This month, through our Durable Medical Equipment (DME) loan program, 23 items were lent to 15 individuals. The inventory has been low on rollators and wheelchairs, our biggest requests. We did have 3 new donations of multiple DME items. Outreach sorted through our stock in preparation for the move.

This month Outreach attended the Ice cream social on 8/19 and Lunch and Learn on 8/27. We were also asked to attend the Summer Residents Advisory Council on 8/12. Outreach had a table with resources for the summer residents and offered incite on the programming and services offered here at the Council on Aging.

Transportation:

August is always a busy month in Chatham, with many families gathering for one last visit before summer winds down. As the warm days of August draw to a close, our transportation

services have continued to operate at a steady and reliable pace. Transportation services provided in August included:

Orleans Supportive Day Program

- 4 participants
- 28 round trips

Ryders Cove Respite Program

- 4 participants
- 24 round trips

Medical Appointments

- 49 round trips

Grocery Access

- 6 pantry deliveries
- 25 resident trips to Stop & Shop (Thursdays)
- 19 deliveries from The Chatham Village Market

Pharmacy Support

- 5 prescription deliveries

Center for Active Living (CFAL) Program Participation

A total of 11 participants received transportation to a variety of CFAL programs, including:

- CFAL “Golden Oldies” movie programs
- Bingo
- Busy Fingers
- Chair Yoga
- Lunch and Learn
- SHINE
- Ice Cream Social
- Sound Meditation
- Footcare
- Reiki

Additional Transportation Services Provided

We were able to accommodate more personal transportation requests, including trips to:

- Banking
- Beach
- Chatham Village Market
- Law Offices
- Library
- Personal errands
- Xfinity for Phone Assistance

While we strive to accommodate these requests whenever possible, medical appointments remain our top priority. In the event of a scheduling conflict, personal trips may be rescheduled to ensure timely access to essential medical care.

Program Highlights & Updates

Chatham Village Market deliveries have remained steady at 19 deliveries; a number that has been consistent as we continue to serve the same individuals on a weekly basis. There is no limit on the number of participants we are able to serve.

Recently, one participant reached out in need of additional food after the long weekend. Our driver, Mark, kindly adjusted his schedule during his break to bring her to Chatham Village Market, ensuring she had what she needed and would not be without food.

Delivery Services

Deliveries are provided on Mondays and Thursdays, which include Chatham Village Market groceries and prescription pick-ups from CVS (Chatham/Harwich) and Stop & Shop pharmacies. Please note that all prescriptions must be paid for in advance. While we do not deliver groceries from Stop & Shop, a weekly grocery shopping trip is available every Thursday from 11:00 a.m. to 12:00 p.m. To reserve a spot, please contact Madiline Ittner at the Front Desk.

Due to increased demand on Thursdays, we will now be running with three drivers most weeks. We are fortunate to have Huntley Harrison join the team, and he is fitting in well with both our drivers and participants.

Looking Ahead

- On **September 4, 2025**, we will provide transportation for the LGBTQ+ group's year-end celebration, which includes a train ride and lunch on the Cape Cod Central Railroad.

- On **September 19, 2025**, we will provide transportation for *Chatham Better Together* to attend a performance at the Harwich Junior Theater, followed by lunch.

Programming:

This monthly report outlines the activities and achievements of the Chatham Council on Aging Program Coordinator for the month of August in the year 2025.

Chatham was a buzz with visitors, activities, and summer fun this August, and the Center for Active Living was no different. Our participants learned tips and tricks to staying safe online at the **Lunch & Learn featuring Sgt. William Massey**, enjoyed new and old friends at our annual **Ice Cream Social**, and shared their daily activities with visiting loved ones during rousing games of **Cribbage, Bridge, Scrabble**, and more. August always brings lovely weather, fun community events, and traffic. Luckily this month our participants were able to avoid downtown traffic for at least one of their errands, as every Friday, the **Eldredge Public Library (EPL) offered remote drop off and pick up at the CFAL**. This collaboration was a great way to alleviate participant stress, and road congestion downtown, CFAL and EPL staff look forward to bringing this program back in 2026.

August was a month of fun and connection, as well as preparation, for the upcoming temporary relocation. Back in May at the Annual Town Meeting, voters decided to approve a project renovating and expanding of the Center for Active Living at 193 Stony Hill Rd. While construction is taking place, Council on Aging staff and operations will be temporarily relocated to the Chatham Community Center. Preparing for this cohabitation has been a joint effort between the divisions of the Department of Community Services, and no small feat. Communications have been mapped out to ensure community members are informed, and aware of the impending changes. Room reservations have been made to ensure programs can continue mostly uninterrupted, plans have been put into place to guarantee services will continue without issue, and logistics have been poured over to make certain nothing, and no one falls through the cracks.

There was never a dull moment at the Center for Active Living in August. Between offering lively programs, providing essential support services, and constructing plans for the future, the CFAL staff continues to dedicate time, energy, and resources to the Older Adult community members.

Ryder's Cove Respite Program:

I'm pleased to share the latest updates from Ryder's Cove Adult Supportive Day Program. August was marked by the welcome addition of two new participants—one a seasonal visitor joining us through early September, and the other a year-round resident of Chatham. Both women have already made meaningful contributions to our community, bringing warmth,

insight, and a positive presence that have enriched our daily experience at Ryder’s Cove Respite.

Program Overview

Our programming continues to reflect the individuality, creativity, and wellness goals of our participants. One highlight this month was a multi-step resin-framed art project featuring ocean scenes and shells. Each participant created a personalized piece with staff guidance. Though the process spanned two weeks, the final artwork was both beautiful and rewarding.

Physical activity remains an integral part of our daily rhythm. Two recent additions—the “newspaper foot challenge” and our seated basketball game—have quickly become favorites. These activities have inspired laughter, friendly competition, and high engagement.

The addition of our newest members has also contributed to deeper social bonds and more vibrant peer interactions, reinforcing our commitment to fostering connection, inclusion, and belonging.

One member’s journey in our program stands out as a powerful example of growth and change. When this person first joined, they faced significant challenges — they frequently displayed wandering behavior, appeared agitated, and often asked to go home shortly after arriving. It was clear that adjusting to the new environment was difficult for this individual.

However, over the past six months, we’ve seen remarkable progress. This individual’s episodes of agitation and wandering have decreased significantly, and they now engage more calmly and consistently throughout the day. In the last two months, this person has expressed that they love coming to the program and even referred to us as a family. This shift is not only heartwarming but also deeply meaningful.

As this individual has grown more relaxed and secure in our environment, we’ve noticed that they are experiencing moments of clarity—sharing memories from their past and speaking about their family and earlier life with greater ease. It is possible that the sense of safety and belonging this individual now feels is helping to access long-term memories that were previously difficult to reach.

This individual’s journey is a testament to the power of consistency, compassion, and community in fostering emotional well-being and connection.

Communication Books

Our communication books continue to serve as a meaningful bridge between participants and their families. In addition to therapy updates, we’ve incorporated mood snapshots and participant quotes to provide a more personal window into daily experiences.

Health & Fitness

Physical engagement continues to thrive. Our participants are now self-initiating additional repetitions or opting for slightly heavier weights—an encouraging sign of growing confidence and strength. We've also introduced gentle chair yoga and seated Tai Chi, both of which have been enthusiastically received. This steady progress reflects not only individual commitment but the supportive, motivating atmosphere created by our team.

Therapeutic Programming

- **Music Therapy:** The continued use of percussion instruments has elevated group engagement. Rhythmic drumming and spontaneous jam sessions have sparked joy and deeper participation.
- **Pet Therapy:** Brewster and Fiona, our certified therapy dogs, visit twice monthly. Their presence brings comfort, encourages affectionate interaction, and inspires spirited conversation.

Staffing & Professional Development

Our program remains fully staffed with a team that continues to demonstrate outstanding dedication and professionalism. With the staff participating in a training focused on Dementia-Related Behaviors, it proved invaluable with one of our new members and displayed like behaviors, the training provided practical strategies and enabled the staff to support this participant experiencing cognitive changes. We remain committed to compassionate, informed care.

Looking Ahead

Despite a dip in attendance due to a family emergency, we maintained a strong average attendance of 84% throughout August. We were especially excited to welcome two new individuals into the program. One new participant has presented with increased wandering behaviors and oppositional speech patterns related to dementia. Our staff responded with flexibility and attentiveness, offering intermittent one-on-one support and successfully adapting the environment to ensure her comfort and safety.

As summer winds down, our focus remains on cultivating a warm, secure, and engaging space where each adult feels respected, seen, and supported.

Facility Update: Temporary Relocation

Preparations are progressing smoothly for our temporary relocation to the Community Center, as renovations begin at the Center for Active Living (CFAL) site. While transitions can be challenging—especially for those living with memory loss—we are approaching this move with optimism and careful planning. Families and guardians were notified well in advance, and

formal confirmation of the move date was issued last week. We are working diligently to ensure a seamless transition for all involved.

Council on Aging Board of Directors:

The Council on Aging Board of Directors met on Monday, August 11th and the Goals and Objectives of the Board were passed unanimously. They are:

- 1. Support the Chatham older adult community*
- 2. Continue to identify and support at-risk older populations*
- 3. Maximize the utilization of the expanded space before and after the renovation*

Pat Burke, Board Chair, reported that she has asked Gloria McPherson, Housing and Sustainability Director, to speak on affordable housing for older adults. Ms. McPherson will speak at the September meeting.

Leah provided the Board an update on the upcoming temporary move to the Community Center.

The Human Services Committee:

The Human Services Committee met on Monday, August 25th and reviewed the four grant requests from local non-profit organizations that serve Chatham residents. Applications reviewed were:

1. The Lower Cape Outreach Council
2. The Alzheimer's Family Support Center
3. Salty Paws Therapy Dogs
4. Sight Loss Services

RECREATION AND BEACHES DIVISION

The Recreation & Beaches Division is committed to enhancing the quality of life for all Chatham Residents, by striving to provide the best recreational programming and park facilities possible.

Programming

Adults:

Summer Tuesday Night Pickleball- 65 participants

Summer Thursday Night Pickleball-65 participants

Chatham Pickleball Members- 383 Members

Summer Pickleball Lessons- 16 Participants

Summer Adult Basketball- 47 participants
 Yoga with Jackie! (Hatha Mondays)- 28 participants
 Yoga with Jackie! (Restorative Thursdays)- 32 participants
 Yoga on the Beach- 9 Participants
 Functional Strength Training (Fridays)-36 Participants
 Functional Strength Training (Saturdays)-25 Participants

Youth

June Sumer of the Sword Karate-7 participants
 June Summer of the Sword Tai Chi- 7 participants
 Summer Youth Tennis- 14 participants
 Summer Youth Tennic Clinic- 23 Participants
 Beast'M Multi Sports Camp- 18 Participants
 Beast'M Basketball Camp- 17 Participants
 Beach Soccer- 30 Participants

Summer Rec

Early Care (7:30am-9:00am)

	Week 1	Week 2	Week 3	Week 4	Week 5	Week 6	Week 7
Total Participants	33	33	32	29	30	30	30

Morning Program (9:00am-12:00pm)

	Grades 1 & 2	Grades 3&4	Grades 5&6	Grades 7&8	Total
Week 1 (6/23-6/27)	44	55	76	40	215
Week 2 (6/30-7/4)	44	55	74	37	210
Week 3 (7/7-7/11)	45	53	73	37	208
Week 4 (7/14-7/18)	44	53	73	39	209
Week 5	45	53	73	37	208

(7/21-7/25)					
Week 6 (7/28-7/1)	46	53	75	39	213
Week 7 (8/4-8/8)	45	55	75	39	214

Afternoon Program (1:00pm-4:30pm) Grades 3-8

	Week 1	Week 2	Week 3	Week 4	Week 5	Week 6	Week 7
Average Per Day	75	75	75	75	75	75	75

Summer Rec Special Events Week 1: Gaming Truck, Lazertag, Chillers, Nova, Onsite Inflatables Friday

Summer Rec Special Events Week 2: Wicked Waves Water Park, Ryans Airpark and Bowling, Onsite Mini Golf, Orpheum Theatre, Ice Skating

Summer Rec Special Events Week 3: Water Wizz Water Park, Orpheum Theatre, Color Wars, Wicked Waves Water Park, Gaming Truck, Urban Air, Onsite Inflatables Friday

Summer Rec Special Events Week 4: Orpheum Theatre, Ryans Airpark and Bowling, Water Wizz Water Park, Chillers, Wicked Waves Water Park, Onsite Inflatable Friday

Summer Rec Special Events Week 5: Orpheum, Theatre, Nova Trampoline Park, Camp Olympics, Gaming Truck, Ryan's Airpark and Bowling, Onsite Inflatable Friday

Summer Rec Special Events Week 6: Orpheum Theatre, The Adventure Park at Heritage, Buttonwood Park Zoo, Camp Talent Show, Gaming Truck, Nova Trampoline Park, Onsite Inflatable Friday

Summer Rec Special Events Week 7: Orpheum Theatre, Wicked Waves Water Park, Field Day, NOVA Trampoline Park, Onsite Inflatable Friday, Camp Cookout

Beaches

August Beach Gate Non-Resident Ticket Sales (August 1st-August 31st)

	Daily	Weekly	Seasonal	Total Revenue
Hardings	2,401	163	0	\$60,245
Ridgevale	1,147	96	0	\$30,140
Cockle Cove	221	17	0	\$5,695
Total	3,742	227	27	\$96,080

August Online Non-Resident Ticket Sales (August 1st-August 31st)

	June	July	August
Daily	57	172	128
Weekly	93	29	159
Seasonal	39	201	2
Total Revenue	\$14,940	\$23,590	\$14,835

Community Center Use

Aerobics Room – 61 Reservations

Lite Fitness with Susan Hunter, Full body circuit with Rachel, CFAL Chair Yoga, CFAL Full body fitness, Hatha Yoga, Restorative Yoga, Functional Strength Training, Wuji Sword/Tai Chi, Samurai Bokken, Dance Rehearsal, Heisig Belly Dance.

Club Room – 22 Reservations

Women’s Club knitting group, Behavioral Health Innovators, Chatham/Harwich Fiber Arts, Atlantic White Shark Conservancy, Men’s Club weekly discussion group, Bolus Card games, CMEA meeting, Mary Byrne/What Now?, Chatham Democratic Committee.

Conference Room – 12 Reservations

CMEA meeting, Chatham Golf Advisory Committee, Chatham Bikeways Committee, Friends of Chatham Council on Aging, Chatham Orpheum Board meeting, Art Journaling Group, Chatham Ecumenical Council for the Homeless.

Gymnasium – 34 Reservations

Summer Rec early drop off, Summer Rec grade 1-2, Monday & Wednesday adult basketball, Tuesday night pickleball, Thursday night pickleball, Pickleball clinic, Beast Em multi-sports camp, Beast Em Basketball camp, beginner pickleball lessons.

Large Meeting Room – 4 Reservations

USCG Flotilla, Chatham Historical Society, Broad Reach Hospice, USCG monthly meeting.

Serving Room – 9 Reservations

Community Mahjong, Mahjong (private), Chatham Republican Town Committee.

Fitness Room Access Scans

	Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday	Total
May	40	125	138	132	157	168	131	891
June	23	242	146	154	96	145	130	936
July	CLOSED	197	209	205	224	117	156	1,108
August	CLOSED	175	132	152	149	175	153	936

Active Fitness Room Memberships: Family Members- 542 Individual Members- 182

Parks & Recreation Commission

The Parks and Recreation monthly meeting was held on Monday August 18th. The meeting started with Use of the following Town Facility requests:

Dee Dee Holt and Jeanne Branson from *Chatham Friends of Trees* presented different options for a natural sound barrier at the Pickleball courts. Six species of shrubs and trees were discussed with pros and cons of each species. The Commission asked for an onsite meeting to better understand what a natural barrier would look like at the pickleball courts.

Principal Project Manager Terry Whalen, and Assistant Project Manager Sawyer Bengston, gave an update on the CFAL renovation and relocation project. Specifics of the trailer's location and size were presented to the Commission.

Chatham Chamber Executive Director Angel Bucar gave an update on the *Beautification Committees'* plans for Kate Gould Park. The Committee will be presenting their design to the Commission at a later meeting.

The Town's Beach Raking procedures were discussed with the Commission. The town was notified 2 days prior that piping plovers had fledged and that normal beach raking procedures could proceed.

Deputy Director Howell reported there are 27 guards on staff this year, while 2024 had 17. The Junior Lifeguard program works well for increasing staff. An increase in the hourly rate for the 2026 season will be requested

Golf Advisory Committee

The Golf Advisory Committee monthly meeting was held on Thursday August 28th. The meeting began voting for the yearly Committee reorganization. The Committee voted to keep the current structure.

Jason Laramie of Johnson Golf presented the Committee with a quote to remove the remaining invasives from a previous project. Town staff will be seeking out 2 more quotes following procurement law and will finalize the project in the coming months.

Costs associated with adding netting to an abutter's property line was presented to the Committee. The Committee voted to split the cost with the abutter pending any liability or insurance concerns from the Town. The Committee also approved the installation of a piece of fencing to block an abutters view of the porta john on the course.

Jason Laramée presented Johnson Golfs' request to raise fees starting in 2026 for the golf course. The Committee unanimously approved the increase. Johnson Golf will now go to the Select Board for approval.

The Committee approved a request by an abutter to have invasives removed from town property. The town's DPW will handle the removal.

The Committee reviewed the ongoing project list and agreed to update the irrigation software splitting the cost with Johnson Golf.

Respectfully submitted,

Leah LaCross

Leah LaCross, MPA
Director of Community Services