

## **Needham Council on Aging Board Meeting**

**September 8, 2022**

**Present:** Colleen Schaller, Chair; Helen Gregory, Penny Grossman, Sandra Prinn, Lianne Relich, Ed Cosgrove, Carol de Lemos, Kate Robey (new member), Ted Prorok, VFW representative

**COA:** Latanya Steele, Director, Jessica Moss, Social Work, Aicha Kelley, Programming, Stephan Grably, Transportation

**SHINE:** Michelle Gucciardi, Director MetroWest region

**Guests:** Carol Ditmor, Friends of the CATH and Anne Brain, Friends of the CATH and Ross Donald

**1. Meeting called to order by Ms. Schaller, Board Chair at 5:02 pm combination of in person and on Zoom**

**2. Mr. Stephan Grably, Transportation Report**

Mr. Grably noted they are delivering 60 to 70 meals a week and that number will increase to between 80 and 90 in January. Ms. Moss noted they could use a few more volunteers for lunch delivery, especially on Fridays and to cover those who take the winter months off.

The search for drivers continues but the pay is low, so it is difficult to locate. One of their current drivers Marianne from New Hampshire may resign as her commute has been 3 hours. A new driver, Deb Marcus starts next week. The Town is currently paying \$19.01 an hour-the lowest in MetroWest with Wellesley paying \$22.00 and change and Newton \$25.00. Mr. Grably's research shows that only Quincy and Longmeadow MA are paying less than Needham. Mr. Schaller noted she had inquired to the Select Board as to the reasoning behind the school bus drivers making considerably more money but has not heard back, but Mr. Grably noted they require a different 7 level driver's license and different training.

Mr. Grably also noted that all the vehicle repairs have occurred including the new van being equipped with corrected graphics and a backup camera.

**3. Welcoming New Board Member, Kate Robey**

Ms. Schaller welcome Ms. Robey as the newest Board member. She noted her chairperson period officially expired at the end of May 2022 and Ms. De Lemos, Ms. Relich and Ms. Prinn agreed to serve as the nominating committee for the chair and vice chair positions. This will be discussed at the October meeting.

**4. Ms. Latanya Steele, Directors Report** Ms. Steele noted that the MCOA grant had been renewed but Census figures will be released next year, and she will need input/support from the Board in addressing changing demographics. Ms. Steele noted she needed a vote to donate COA's old van to Needham Housing to be used for added family support. It has been fully maintained and a check by the DPW is complete including new tires.

**Mr. Cosgrove made a motion to donate the oldest CATH van to the Needham Housing Authority for their use. Ms. Grossman seconded. The motion passed unanimously; the Van will be donated later this fall.**

Ms. Steele noted the building feasibility study will take place this fall, and the consultants will want to interview Board members as well as staff. Ms. Steele will need volunteers but does not have consultant visit dates yet. Ms. Steele will email the Board when dates are available.

**5. Social Work Report, Ms. Jessica Moss**

Ms. Moss noted COA will be hiring a part-time clinician to assist with home-based short-term therapy. This will be funded by the EOEA grant. This will also help cover for Ms. Cusack who is currently on maternity leave and for herself as her leave is scheduled to start October 28. The new hire will overlap by a week with Ms. Cusack's return and Ms. Moss departure.

Ms. Jess Rice, who was the Cath intern for two years, is the new part-time clinician. Jill McGovern, who started in the spring, is completely on board and working on many projects.

Ms. Moss noted in her role as volunteer coordinator the front desk and gift shop are covered. The only remaining need is meal delivery but due to resource and training issues we really need volunteers that can commit to it two times per week.

**6. SHINE Report, Ms. Michelle Gucciardi, Director**

Ms. Gucciardi noted they are preparing for open enrollment October 15-December 7. The plan is for 600 appointments more than last year but not at the level of pre-COVID yet. Ms. Gucciardi noted Annie Toth, administrative assistant's help with the appointment scheduling. This year there are 68 counselors including 11 new counselors.

**7. Ms. Aicha Kelley, Programming Report**

Ms. Kelley noted that the September 7 open house was a great success with 26 vendors and many new faces. The pens were appreciated. Another is being planned for the spring.

Jen will have the new Compass out by the 17<sup>th</sup> of September.

Programming updates include 2 new fitness programs, the new balance machine with assessments beginning September 12 and those are already reserved to the end of the month showing their popularity.

Volunteer lunch driver requests will also be sent the week of 9/11/2022.

There is more money coming in 3 new facilities have started sponsoring and this is better numbers than before COVID.

Ms. Kelley wanted to thank the late Peter Kenney's wife Christina who is still contributing to the monthly arts and music programs and the occasional Broadway program.

Ms. Kelley also noted the Chin Family is continuing support in memory of Jean and Harry Chin. This is on September 23 at 1 pm Through the Decades with Dance Caliente.

As of September 14, the course evaluations will be online.

**8. Friends of the CATH Report**

Ms. Ditmore invited everyone to the annual strawberry shortcake meeting on September 9<sup>th</sup> which also includes gift certificates and a general Friends meeting. It runs from 1 to 2 pm to accommodate those accessing the transportation.

Friends are doing well financially. They spent less than they brought in as of end of June 2022. Donations were down in July, but the Friends are hopeful they will increase this fall.

The Friends inquired about the kitchen study and Ms. Steele noted that the procurement process is ongoing.

- 9. Minutes June 2022** The vote on the June minutes was postponed until October as the Board needed more time to review.

**10. Ms. Helen Gregory, Housing Subcommittee Report**

Ms. Gregory noted the subgroups have been working since spring and their next meeting is later tonight. They have compiled a long list of recommendations which they will address at tonight's meeting in preparation for the final report mid fall. Ms. Gregory read Mr. Goldberg's email with his concerns about the Avery development not including the independent living portion and a proposed payment to the town of 1.7 million. The Board discussed his concerns and felt it was important to have COA board representation at the September 20 planning board meeting when the public can raise their concerns. Ms. Robey requested an email on the 19<sup>th</sup> to remind members to attend.

**11. Mr. Ted Prorok, VFW Representative Report**

Mr. Prorok raised the issue of a designated Veteran's parking spot near the Town hall as the Common is currently being rebuilt. Mr. Schaller noted his concern but said the VFW would need to pursue the issue with the Select Board following protocol. If the VFW proposes it through the correct channels the COA Board could then gladly support the request via a vote and letter.

Mr. Prorok asked if a private citizen could pursue this parking space issue. Ms. Robey passed on the email for Mr. Matt Borrelli whose family is active in veterans' issues in the Town.

Mr. Prorok also noted the international Voice of Democracy PEN scholarship program which the VFW along with chapters all over the world supports. It was advertised in the Hometown Weekly and the deadline is October 31, 2022. He asked Board members to circulate the information to their children, grandchildren and other interested parties.

**12. Ms. Schaller requested a Motion to Adjourn.**

**Mr. Cosgrove made a motion to adjourn; Ms. Robey seconded this motion. The board unanimously adjourned at 6:00 pm**

Respectfully Submitted,

Faith Crisley

Recording Secretary