

**NEEDHAM COUNCIL ON AGING**  
**June 11, 2009**  
**MINUTES**

**PRESENT:** Susanne Hughes, Helen Hicks, Dan Goldberg,  
Nina Silverstein, Mary Elizabeth Weadock,  
Andrea Rae, Colleen Schaller, Jim Dolan, Carol  
deLemos, Roma Jean

**NOT PRESENT:** Risa Greendlinger, Derrek Shulman

**STAFF:** Jamie Brenner Gutner and Sherry Jackson

**CONVENE:** 7:00 p.m. - Stephen Palmer Senior Center

**DISCUSSION:**

- I. **Call To Order - 7:00 p.m. - S. Hughes**  
S. Hughes, Chair, called the June 11, 2009 Council on Aging Board Meeting to order.
  
- II. **Approve Minutes:**  
**Motion by A. Rae that the Board vote to approve the May 14, 2009 Council on Aging Board Meeting Minutes.**  
**Second by R.J. Brown. Unanimously approved.**
  
- III. **Selectman Dan Matthews**  
Board of Selectman Dan Matthews appeared before the COA Board to address some questions that the COA Board has regarding its role in the Town and with the senior center project. He first stated that with regard to appointments to various boards and committees within the Town, the Board of Selectmen adopted a policy that calls for the Vice-Chairman to recruit, interview and recommend appointments to vacant positions within the Town. He stated that the Board of Selectmen welcomes input and recommendations during the selection process.  
  
Secondly, he addressed the issue of the role of the COA Board. He stated that the Town is still adjusting to the switch to a Town Manager form of government, which did change the roles and responsibilities of a number of boards and committees in Town. He stated that he feels the role of the COA Board is to act as the voice of seniors within the Town and advise Town management.

Lastly, Mr. Matthews wanted to acknowledge that there has been some miscommunication regarding the pursuit of a new senior center. He stated that there is agreement on the need for a new senior center but still some big questions to answer such as where, how big, and how to pay for it.

A. Rae shared her concern that the COA Board is not being asked to engage fully in the senior center development process and contribute its expertise. Mr. Matthews stated that the Board of Selectmen decided to establish the Senior Center Exploratory Committee in order to provide some structure to the objective of getting a new senior center. C. Schaller stated that three members of the COA Board are actively participating on the Committee and working to represent the COA Board.

S. Hughes stated that her understanding of the role of the COA Board is to advocate for seniors and help to set policy and advise the staff on programming. She also stated that there does need to be more communication between the COA Board and the Board of Selectmen as the COA Board sometimes feels left out of the loop.

D. Goldberg stated that the Town Manager had initially brought the Ridge Hill option for a potential Senior Center to the COA Board. Mr. Matthews stated that this was not clear to everyone.

N. Silverstein stated that the role of the COA Board has been diminished over the years. She expressed her feelings about how the Senior Center Exploratory Committee's work was proceeding.

A. Rae stated that there needs to be a strong COA in Town to help the growing senior population.

The Board agreed that more communication is necessary moving forward. Mr. Matthews stated that the senior center effort needs to have a lot of public process. Mr. Matthews suggested that communication between the two Board chairs on issues such as hiring, appointments and major policy issues should become a common occurrence.

**IV. Chairperson's Report - S. Hughes**

- A. S. Hughes stated that the display at the Town Fair was excellent and thanked A. Rae and S. Jackson for all their work.
- B. N. Silverstein asked if the Board would send a letter of congratulations to Ann Hartstein for being appointed Secretary of Elder Affairs. The Board agreed to send a letter.
- C. S. Hughes announced that tonight is the last night Greg Cooper will be acting as recording secretary for the Board.
- D. S. Hughes asked that the Board appoint an executive committee to act over the summer if necessary. **Motion by A. Rae that the Board vote to appoint Susanne Hughes, Carol deLemos, Dan Goldberg, and Jim Dolan to serve on the Executive Committee until the full Board reconvenes in September. Second by C. Schaller. Unanimously approved.**
- E. S. Hughes suggested the Board vote to provide a stipend to Lois Camberg of up to \$2,500 from the Donations Account for the anticipated work leading the COA's effort at reaccreditation. The Board briefly discussed the timeline. **Motion by R.J. Brown that the Board vote to provide up to \$2,500 from the Donations Account as a stipend to Lois Camberg to act as lead in the reaccreditation of the senior center. Second by M.E. Weadock. Unanimously approved.**
- F. C. Schaller asked for a clearer picture of the various accounts. J. Brenner Gutner stated that she would look forward to meeting with members to provide information.

**V. Executive Director - J. Brenner Gutner:**

M.E. Weadock was fascinated to see Hindi being offered through the senior center programming. R.J. Brown asked how much it would cost to repair the awning at the entrance of the Senior Center. J. Brenner Gutner stated that she thought that the Town was going to be covering the cost.

**VII. Friends of the Needham Elderly, Inc. Report - R.J.**

**Brown:**

R.J. Brown stated that the FRIENDS were planning on having their annual meeting and ice cream social on July 20, 2009 at 2:00 p.m. Nominations for officers will also be made at the meeting.

**VIII. Committee Updates:**

**1. Visibility Committee - A. Rae:**

A. Rae stated that the display worked well at the Town Fair.

**2. Springwell - M.E. Weadock**

M.E. Weadock reviewed the items covered at the most recent Springwell Board meeting including:

- A presentation was given on the roles of the Springwell staff.
- Springwell is surveying clients and receiving very positive input on its services.
- A new Veteran's Project is being implemented that provides up to \$1,000 a month to assist seniors in staying in their homes.
- There is a new protective services manager at Springwell.

**3. Senior Center Exploratory Committee - C. Schaller:**

C. Schaller stated that the Committee held a public meeting for abutters to the four potential sites. She did not feel it was well attended. There were about fifty people. C. Schaller stated that the general public is still very uninformed on the senior center project.

C. Schaller stated that the Green's Field neighborhood is well organized and examining the will of the property to see if it requires the property to be open space.

IX. Adjourn (9:00 p.m.):

Motion by N. Silverstein that the Board vote to adjourn the June 11, 2009 Council on Aging Board Meeting. Second by R.J. Brown.  
Unanimously approved.