

NEEDHAM COUNCIL ON AGING
September 15, 2016
MEETING MINUTES

PRESENT: Colleen Schaller, Carol deLemos, Ed Cosgrove, Phyllis Fanger, Dan Goldberg, Monica Graham, Penny Grossman, Susanne Hughes, Tom Keating, Lianne Relich
STAFF: Jamie Brenner Gutner, Latanya Steele
GUEST: Kate Fitzpatrick, Town Manager and Christopher Coleman, Assistant Manager
CONVENE: 5:00 p.m. – The Center at The Heights, 300 Hillside Avenue, Needham, MA

Call To Order – 5:02 p.m. –Colleen Schaller, and Carol deLemos Co-Chairs

Carol deLemos called the meeting to order at 5:02 p.m.

Approve Minutes: There were no minutes to approve.

Chairperson’s Report – Carol deLemos & Colleen Schaller

C. deLemos welcomed guest, Kate Fitzpatrick and Christopher Coleman.

Human Services Reorganization

Ms. Fitzpatrick spoke about her conversation with C. Schaller and C. deLemos on the combined budgets that were approved at the Annual Town Meeting and the creation of a Health and Human Service Director position. She emphasized the importance of ensuring that Council on Aging and the Health Department are on the same page and creating the Health and Human Service position would help with this. Ms. Fitzpatrick stated that she is mindful of the Board’s pursuit of classification increase for the Council on Aging Director and will be recommending this to the Personnel Board. She spoke briefly about the model under consideration. She stated that Director’s of Public Health, Council on Aging and Youth Services would report to the Director of Health and Human Services. Ms. Fitzpatrick stated that next steps would involve the Personnel Board agreeing to the positions.

D. Goldberg expressed concerns about the position and hierarchy being suggested to include the position description and responsibilities for the Director of Health and Human Services. D. Goldberg stated that Mr. Coleman was correct in stating that value of the department would rise in prominence under this model. He also expressed concerns that the value of persons in lower positions, such the Council on Aging and Youth Service Directors, would be diminished. A general conversation then followed on the logistics of managing the Health Department, which oversees so many activities and the additional Environmental Health Agent position. C. Cosgrove spoke about the Board of Health’s position and their concerns on how Health Department Director would continue to be a benefit to the Health Department. E. Cosgrove spoke about the Healthy Aging Grant that was secured collaboratively with J. Brenner Gutner. C. Cosgrove stated that this grant

would bring in very good data that will be useful in the future. The discussion also followed on the good work that Tim McDonald does in finding grant money and his work with J. Brenner Gutner in finding a grant that secured a 16-month social worker position.

C. Schaller stated that she and C. deLemos are fairly comfortable with the benefits of the Health and Human Services position. She added that her concern is that she has not seen a job description for the position and that it would be helpful to know what the duties would be. A general conversation ensued on the collaborative relationship of all three directors.

S. Hughes expressed concern that the role of the Council on Aging Board has had diminishing duties over time since the change in the Town structure years ago. S. Hughes asked about the role of the COA Board in the future. Ms. Fitzpatrick stated that the Board remains involved in hiring of the Director of the Council on Aging per Town Charter and that the Board would partner with the Board of Selectmen on senior issues to include but not limited to those related to housing. J. Brenner Gutner noted the collaborative nature between departments that has existed for over ten years.

C. Schaller asked about the potential for an Assistant Director of Health and Human Services position. Ms. Fitzpatrick stated that this position is not a consideration at this time. She noted that it would not diminish J. Brenner Gutner's role. C. Schaller noted that consolidation of the budgets have worked out well. Conversation veered to the role of the Council on Aging to the Needham Housing Authority and the Housing Authority's role in moving the Linden-Chambers mixed use housing redevelopment forward.

J. Brenner Gutner spoke about the strong relationship of the Council on Aging Board and the Council on Aging Executive Director. Ms. Fitzpatrick suggested convening a meeting with all three Boards in the future. Ms. Fitzpatrick stated that she has not yet met with the Youth Services Board of Directors.

Chairperson's Report continued

The Chair's report continued with a conversation on the upcoming Harvest Fair that takes place on Saturday, October 2, 2016. C. Schaller, E. Cosgove, D. Goldberg, M. Graham, T. Keating, and L. Relich will be available to man the event. L. Relich will work with J. Brenner Gutner on printing materials.

C. deLemos stated that there would be a memorial service for Helen Hicks on Saturday, October 8th at 2p.m. in the First Parish Unitarian Universalist Church on Dedham Avenue, Needham MA.

C. deLemos spoke about the Sunshine Fund.

Executive Director Report – J. Brenner Gutner

The Board expressed their appreciation for great and informative Executive Director's Report. A general conversation ensued. J. B. Gutner stated that one of her goals continues to be working with the Friends to obtain more secure funding for the Fitness Center . One

of the benefits of the department consolidation is access to grants that might be geared to public health. J. Brenner Gutner spoke about the collaborative relationship with Tim McDonald and possible funding opportunities with and BIDN and other organizations. A conversation ensued on the need to come up with a plan for continued funding of the Health and Fitness Center.

J. Brenner Gutner stated that staff members are looking forward to attending future meetings with the Board to present their work. J. Brenner Gutner referenced the handout with staff member contact information. J. Brenner Gutner stated that L. Steele and staff are working collaboratively and have a good working relationship.

D. Goldberg asked for further explanation related to running the Fitness Center such as expanding hours since there are more and more participants. J. Brenner Gutner stated that more paid staff would be needed to oversee the room in order to keep the room open longer and this requires more funding. J. Brenner Gutner stated that there might be grants related to public health and fitness for older adults.

S. Hughes stated that Thursday, September 20 is the special election on the referendum about Minuteman High School. She stated that this would take place at The Center of The Heights from 12pm-8pm. S. Hughes asked if this would disrupt the day-to-day operations. J. Brenner responded that it would not be much of a disruption and was manageable. The conversation veered to a discussion on early voting from October to November 4.

Nominating Committee

The Nominating Committee of S. Hughes, L. Relich and D. Goldberg met on June 14, 2016 to discuss nominating a Vice Chairperson for the Council on Aging. S. Hughes summarized the Nominating Committee's deliberations. S. Hughes stated it was the unanimous consideration of the Nominating Committee to nominate Penny Grossman as Vice Chair of the Council on Aging starting October 1, 2016. S. Hughes stated that Penny Grossman has accepted the nomination.

Motion and Vote

Susanne Hughes made a motion to nominate Penny Grossman as Vice Chair of the Council of Aging beginning at the first October meeting. Monica Graham seconded the motion. The motion carried. Unanimous vote.

Board Member Updates

S. Hughes stated that she is meeting with members of the Needham Housing Authority Board of Commissioners this evening at 7:30 p.m.

T. Keating stated he has written an article for the Home Town Weekly related to Veterans.

M. Graham stated that Representative Denise Garlick attended a meeting here at The Center for the Heights recently. Kerrie Attwood, Social Worker, hosted the meeting. The

subject matter was on substance use by older adults.

S. Hughes stated that Representative Garlick is the Chair of the House Committee on Elder Affairs and she has a new Aide.

Adjournment

Motion and Vote

D. Goldberg made a motion to adjourn the September 15, 2016 COA Board Meeting. E. Cosgrove seconded the motion. The motion carried. Unanimous Vote. The meeting adjourned at 6:05p.m.

Respectfully submitted by, Cheryl Gosmon, Notetaker