

NEEDHAM COUNCIL ON AGING
February 12, 2009
MINUTES

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

NOT PRESENT: Roma Jean Brown

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 February 12, 2009
Council on Aging Board Meeting to order.

- II. **Approve Minutes:**
Motion by A. Rae that the Board vote to approve the
January 8, 2009 Council on Aging Board Meeting
Minutes as presented.
Second by M.E. Weadock. Unanimously approved.

- III. **Chairperson's Report - S. Hughes**
 - A. S. Hughes introduced the Board's newest
members - Jim Dolan and Risa Greendlinger.
Both new Board members provided some
background on their experience and interest in
serving on the Board. The Board welcomed the
new members and introduced themselves. S.
Hughes stated that she had discussions with
Board of Selectmen Dan Matthews to express
disappointment that the COA Board was not
asked to participate in the selection process.
She stated that during a conversation Mr.
Matthews did ask her for some qualities that
the Board was looking for in candidates. S.
Hughes did feel Mr. Matthews selected two good
candidates. She was just disappointed in the
new process. The Board discussed its differing
role under the Town Manager form of
government.

B. S. Hughes reported that she presented the budget for FY2010 to the Finance Committee and there were relatively few questions. She stated that the Finance Committee asked how much the COA spends on contracting with outside counselors and she informed them that no funding is used for outside counseling. J. Brenner Gutner felt that questions were probably limited because the COA budget had no additional funding requests for the fiscal year in question. S. Hughes reported that the COA's Finance Committee liaison showed a great interest in the SHINE program.

C. S. Hughes reported that she had received a thank you note for the Board from Betsy Tedoldi. She stated that she sent a letter on behalf of the Board to Jeanne Blakeney and Marjorie Hybles to acknowledge the death of their husbands.

D. Donations:
Motion by A. Rae that the Council on Aging Board accept the following donations:

Transportation Donations

Roche Bros.
Leszcynski & DiCarlo
\$18,000.00

General Donation Account

Aronson
SHINE
Bane Trust
Danglad
North Hill Bridge Group
Friends
Standard Care
\$1,767.60

In Memory of Frank Farrar

**Allen
Karch
Jaynes**

\$275.00

Second by C. Schaller. Approved unanimously.

- E. S. Hughes requested that the Board consider moving the date of the Board's March meeting because J. Brenner Gutner will be out of town and the Town is holding the "Needham Unplugged" event that day. The Board agreed to move the meeting to March 19, 2009.
- F. N. Silverstein asked for an update on the departure of Michael Festa as Secretary of Elder Affairs and any updates on the impacts of the State budget cuts. S. Hughes stated that she had no definitive information on why Mr. Festa resigned but many have speculated that there were disagreements over the budget as well as philosophical issues. J. Brenner Gutner had heard this as well.
- G. S. Hughes raised the issue of Wellesley's pursuit of a new senior center. A possible collaboration was raised by D. Goldberg. For many reasons, most of the Board did not think this type of collaboration would work. J. Brenner Gutner highlighted some complications.

IV. Executive Director - J. Brenner Gutner

- A. J. Brenner Gutner confirmed that the SHINE program received an additional \$15,000 from the Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services for outstanding service. She stated that the staff has done an incredible job with the program.

- B. S. Jackson reported on the "Sages & Seekers" pilot program. The program is designed to bring together youth and seniors to share their unique gifts and insights. A group of four students from Nobel and Greenough are now grouped with four seniors. The goal is for the student to write about a particular life experience of the senior shared through a number of one-on-one meetings. The Board discussed trying to get the local papers interested in the project. R. Greendlinger volunteered to work on developing relationships with the local media. The Board discussed the difficulty it has had in getting the media to report on its work.
- C. The Board briefly discussed the anticipated conversion to Digital TV. D. Goldberg stated that many stations are now working hard to notify customers of the coming change.
- D. M.E. Weadock asked what "Green Needham" was. J. Brenner Gutner explained that one area that the organization is working on is a transportation survey with an overall mission of promoting green initiatives.
- E. M.E. Weadock asked why people over 65 were not included in the postcard inviting residents to attend a volunteer fair. J. Brenner Gutner was not certain why but would find out.
- F. J. Brenner Gutner thanked the Board and COA staff for supporting her and her family during the past month.
- G. The Board discussed the possibility of distributing J. Brenner Gutner's monthly report to groups like the Finance Committee. They feel it would help educate others as to what the department's overall mission and role are.

V. Friends of the Needham Elderly, Inc. Report - J. Brenner Gutner

J. Brenner Gutner stated that the Friends Board met this week. Responses to the inquiry placed in the Compass soliciting subscribers to have the newsletter distributed solely through e-mail are coming in. She also stated that the Friends are getting a much better handle on the Compass distribution list.

VI. Committee Updates:

1. Senior Center Exploratory Committee - C. Schaller

C. Schaller reviewed the proposed timeline for the work of the committee and moving forward on construction of a new senior center. She stated that the Committee plans on reporting to the Board of Selectmen in the Fall with the intent of seeking funding for a feasibility study at the November 2009 Town Meeting. The feasibility study would likely look at more than one site. C. Schaller said funding for design would be sought at the 2010 Town Meeting and construction funding at the 2011 Town Meeting. If this schedule is met, the Town could have a new senior center in 2012. C. Schaller said the Committee is going to hold a public meeting in March 2009 to get input.

C. deLemos stated that the committee is developing a survey to go to all residents through the Exchange Club's telephone directory. M.E. Weadock stated that the survey is also meant to educate residents on the issue.

C. Schaller stated that some committee members have spoken openly about discussions that have taken place within the committee. People have interpreted their comments as though decisions have been made and this is not the case.

2. Springwell - M.E. Weadock

M.E. Weadock reported on the Springwell Board Meeting. She stated that there are no

additional cuts to the budget for FY2009. Springwell has developed an intake process for providing services which prioritizes clients. S. Hughes reported on how Springwell is managing services under a tighter budget.

3. Reaccreditation - J Brenner Gutner

J. Brenner Gutner stated that she will provide a briefing package for the Board prior to next meeting in order to facilitate a discussion on whether to pursue reaccreditation at this time. She stated that her biggest concern is the time commitment required for reaccreditation in relation to other work the Board and staff are involved in currently. The Board agreed to have the discussion at the Board's next meeting.

4. Visibility Committee - A. Rae

A. Rae stated that she priced out the display boards and found they are very expensive. The Board discussed some ideas on how to either get a used one or rent one when needed. A. Rae was going to check with a local display company to see what they might be able to offer.

VII. Board Meeting Updates:

C. deLemos: Reported on her recent visit to St. John.

N. Silverstein: Stated that UMass now has a gerontology certificate on-line. She said she will be going to San Antonio for a Gerontology and Higher Education conference.

R. Greendlinger: Stated her daughter recently entered an art competition and was selected as one of the artists to be displayed by the Boston Globe.

C. Schaller: Reported that she recently moved her mother in with her.

D. Goldberg: Reported that demand for senior services at his work are up.

J. Dolan: Stated that he will be attending the Henley Regatta in England this July.

M.E. Weadock: Stated that she will be attending the NCOA/ASA conference in March and will report back to the Board.

S. Hughes: Reported that Springwell's Protective Services Manager is leaving and she has to assume those responsibilities for some period of time until a replacement can be found.

VIII

Adjourn (8:45 p.m.):

Motion by A. Rae that the Board vote to adjourn the February 12, 2009 Council on Aging Board Meeting.

Second by M.E. Weadock. Unanimously approved.