

NEEDHAM COUNCIL ON AGING

June 8, 2017

MINUTES

Present: Colleen Schaller, Penny Grossman, Dan Goldberg, Carol deLemos, Monica Graham, Gary Crossen, Ed Cosgrove, Tom Keating

Staff: LaTanya Steele, Timothy Muir McDonald

Convene: 5:00 pm- The Center at the Heights

Call to Order: 5:04 pm Colleen Schaller called the meeting to order.

Chairperson report: Ms. Schaller reviewed a series of letters and Thank You notes that the Council on Aging has received, including a note from former Director Ms. Jamie Gutner, a letter complimenting the hiring of Ms. Steele, and a thank you in response to a Friends Donation.

Ms. Schaller then asked for a review and approval of the meeting minutes from the Council's last meeting on May 11, 2017. Edits were made to the attendance list to include Mr. Tom Keating, and a minor spelling error was also revised. With no other edits, Ms. Schaller asked for a motion to approve the May meeting minutes.

Motion made to by Mr. Cosgrove to approve the May meeting minutes, with the edits and revisions discussed. This motion was seconded by Mr. Crossen. The vote to approve was unanimous.

The discussion turned to the hiring needs for the Aging Services Division. The Division has one position vacant (Assistant Director) and one position that will soon be vacant (Program Coordinator) with the retirement of Ms. Joan DeFinis. Mr. McDonald interviewed Ms. Steele's preferred candidate two days prior, and submitted a Hiring Recommendation Memo for Ms. Aicha Kelley of Walpole. Ms. Kelley has extensive experience developing programs and learning opportunities and managing event logistics in a municipal context, most recently in Park & Recreation roles in Westwood and Walpole. Ms. Kelley will begin her role on July 3rd and will receive two weeks of on-the-job training from Ms. DeFinis.

The members of the Council on Aging voiced their strong desire that the search for an Assistant Director to support Ms. Steele should begin soon. They indicated that it was their top priority. Mr. McDonald committed to a posting before the end of the month, and a summer search.

Ms. Schaller initiated a new discussion topic, the fact that the Council on Aging will soon have three vacancies when Ms. Penny Grossman leaves in September. Ms.

Schaller indicated that she would speak to Mr. Matthews, the Vice Chair of the Board of Selectmen, about the vacancies and encouraged COA members to consider colleagues or neighbors who may be interested in serving on the Council on Aging.

The COA members voiced concerns that they have heard from Needham residents about the challenges of parking at the Center at the Heights (CATH) during peak periods. Ms. Schaller asked Ms. Steele to begin researching options for alleviating the parking challenges, including the possibility of returning to a sticker permit for parking.

As the Aging Services Division looks to expand its programs, the COA members indicated an interest in developing a better understanding of the policies that are in place regarding the Library's Community Room. The Council on Aging Board members expressed particular interest about how the Library prioritizes programs and how it works to emphasize/prioritize reading and learning related programs. Ms. Schaller said she would speak with the Trustees about their policies.

The COA then turned to a discussion of meeting times, and reviewed different options with members indicating a preference for moving from the standard meeting time to a late afternoon meeting on the second Wednesday of the month. The members were supportive of this change, and suggested that it be adopted in Fall 2017 after discussions with Ms. Steele.

Mr. McDonald indicated that he hoped to brief the COA in September or October about a joint initiative on affordable housing (Aging, Planning, and Public Health).

Ms. Steele told attendees that the brand new, handicap accessible van (replacing the non-accessible van) with a chair lift should be delivered sometime in August, depending upon the time required for detailing for the van.

Additionally, Ms. Steele mentioned that the summer healthy cooking series has been a great success and she hopes to engage more of the long-term care facilities in Needham and have their chefs present to additional classes. For this month's cooking demonstration, the participants prepared take home dinner boxes for the participants of a cancer survivors' support group which ran simultaneous with the cooking class.

Adjournment: A motion to adjourn was made by Mr. Goldberg and seconded by Mr. Crossen. The motion to adjourn was unanimously approved. Meeting adjourned at 5:53p.m.