

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

**January 20, 2022**

**Present:** Colleen Schaller, Chair; Dan Goldberg, Sue Mullaney, Helen Gregory, Ed Cosgrove, Lianne Relich, Penny Grossman, Sandra Prinn Carol DeLemos, Kathy Whitney at large member, Ted Prorock, Library Trustees representative/member

**COA:** Latanya Steele, Director; Jessica Moss, Social Work, Aicha Kelley, Programming

**Health and Human Services:** Timothy Muir McDonald, Director Health and Human Services

**Friends of Center at the Heights:** Carol Ditmore, Anne Brain

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

### **Ms. Latanya Steele, Director's Report**

Ms. Steele noted that finance committee meeting was quick and at Tim's suggestion the COA did not request additional funding as we do have outside funding sources and need is tight with COVID this year.

She noted there is mandatory online training required of all Board members for LGBTQ+. Annie Toth, the administrative assistant, will send the link and information to everyone on 1/21/2022. Completion is required by end of June 2022. Please email a copy of the certificate when complete.

### **Ms. Moss, Social Work Report**

Ms. Moss introduced the new clinician—Jill McGovern who started this month. Ms. McGovern noted she has her master's from UMass-Boston in gerontology and is a certified geriatric case manager. Ms. Moss noted how excited staff were to have her on board.

Ms. Moss noted an uptick in homelessness—social work collaborates with Police, Youth and Public Health and this will be part of CCIT. Youth Services has set up a Crisis Donation fund which has for example paid the taxi fare to a shelter for a family.

Ms. Moss noted the front desk volunteer staff training had to be postponed due to COVID but is now scheduled for early February. A few volunteers are on hiatus due to COVID numbers increasing.

### **Ms. Steele, Transportation Report**

She noted the new van is coming and the new driver Michael Beard is hired. Mr. Grabley attended a 2-day training sponsored by MassDot in Lowell and he is now certified as a trainer.

The rodent issue of nesting on engines of vans has been solved with peppermint oil.

Meal deliveries are about 65 a day

### **Ms. Kelley, Programming Report**

Shuttle will return in February.

Ms. Kelley noted how great the drivers have been double checking on the seniors on their routes and acting as a second wellness check.

CATH passed the health inspection on 1/19/2022 but the metal door on top of the dumpster was not approved by RTS. A discussion ensued and the Board agreed that Ms. Schaller would approach Matt who she knows at the RTS about reconsidering this decision as the rodents are eating through the plastic cover. Ms. Kelley will get more detail for Ms. Schaller before the latter approaches the RTS.

A lock is still needed on the fencing outside. Passerby's are dumping household trash around the edges without the proper fencing.

Jennifer Garf is finalizing compass to be mailed on 1/24/2022. Ms. Kelley noted she is doing a great job producing the newsletter. A survey will be conducted on what patrons need to feel comfortable returning to the building as the mask mandate has not provided an attendance increase. Remote programs continue to flourish; for example, Sandy's chair yoga class has sixty-five registrants which could not be handled in the building. Fitness center continues to have heavy use at \$25.00 per month with a lower rate available for those with a financial need. The class cost has been reduced from \$8.00 to \$5.00 for the remote classes. The payment remains an honor system but instructors were notified that it is in their best interest to remind clients to pay individually as the payments help fund instructor salaries.

## **SHINE**

Kathy Worhach noted that Michelle Gucciardi started on January 1, 2022 and she is delighted to have her as the new director. The assistant director position closes January 27<sup>th</sup> and Kathy hopes they will have many good candidates. Kathy is officially retired and this is her last meeting once the new hire is on board. The open enrollment closed December 7<sup>th</sup> but preliminary data shows a 20% increase in clients. She noted a hybrid model allows many more clients to be served and the numbers served is much higher use overall than 2019 pre-pandemic.

## **Traveling Meals and Kitchen Upgrade Discussion**

Ann Brain, Treasurer of Friends announced an \$5000.00 donation earmarked to upgrade the kitchen as determined by the COA. Board members were thrilled.

Ms. Steele noted in answer to questions that the current oven is not commercial grade and the current island configuration is too big and not usable -- 2 example of needs for the fund usage.

Mr. McDonald noted that while Traveling Meals preparation remains at BEI Needham with every hospital renovation their allotted space shrinks and he wants to try to move meal preparation to the CATH as eventually the hospital may not be able to support the program and Health and Human Services could receive little notice. Mr. McDonald noted a feasibility study now would best prepare for this eventuality. Mr. McDonald has in mind the following -- provide breakfast and lunch in house, the traveling meals lunches (good nutrition in-house), and an occasional dinner. He is hoping economies of scale could make this feasible.

He noted it has been a challenge to spend Representative Garlick's special funding; he is searching for another consultant through Building Department to perform the kitchen feasibility study. Many consultancies are so busy they cannot take on smaller projects.

**Approval of December Minutes postponed until February meeting. Ms. Schaller mentioned some computer glitches prevented the December minutes being circulated to the Board.**

Helen asked based on her conversation with Selectperson Matthews that she does not necessarily represent the COA board officially. Helen noted they have reordered the timeline with a January 27<sup>th</sup> community listening meeting. Mr. McDonald noted she has been chosen by COA to sit on the Committee but her opinion does not necessarily reflect the Board's opinion as a whole. Ms. Schaller asked her to forward links to the meeting to both the Board members, Annie Toth and Ms. Steele.

**Dan made a motion to adjourn; Ed seconded this motion. The board unanimously adjourned at 5:45 pm**

Respectfully Submitted,

Faith Crisley

Recording Secretary