

Needham Council on Aging Board Meeting

February 10, 2022

Present: Colleen Schaller, Chair; Helen Gregory, Lianne Relich, Penny Grossman, Sandra Prinn, Carol DeLemos, Kathy Whitney, Ted Prorok, Library Trustees representative/VFW representative

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

Meeting called to order by Ms. Schaller, Board Chair at 5:15 pm combination of in person and on Zoom

SHINE REPORT, Ms. Michelle Gucciardi, Director

The December open enrollment was successful. Contacts and enrollments increased from 2020. Ms. Gucciardi noted this is her second month in the position.

The Assistant SHINE position (her old position) closed and she is awaiting resumes.

For winter and spring 2022 Annie Toth, the new administrative assistant for COA, will be scheduling phone and in person appointments.

Ms. Gucciardi collaborated on a February presentation with the social security administration at the CATH. Attendance was low but she will offer again sometime in the spring.

The next SHINE counselor training is in April. There are 10-12 I trainees for next year.

Social Work Report, Ms. Jessica Moss

Ms. Moss noted that so far social work numbers match January.

Home visits were stopped due to COVID in January but restarted in February for those with higher needs.

She noted the collaboration with Youth and Family Services on MetroWest Foundation funding. The grant has provided a clinical consultant who will be assessing high risk needs with the Center's social work staff.

She noted the two interns are doing an excellent job.

Ms. Moss noted that Ms. McGovern the new social worker introduced last month is also now working her cases.

Other details are in the social work board report.

Programming and Transportation Report, Ms. Aicha Kelley

Ms. Kelley noted February 9 was the busiest day so far since fall reopening.

The meeting with Dr. Cattigan the cardiologist was a tremendous success filling Room 104.

Also, the Meet and Greet with the Police and many seniors from the Housing Department was a success. Hearth pizza provided food through the Needham/Newton Chamber of Commerce grant. The program repeats in April and June hopefully with a larger audience of seniors.

An upcoming grant will fund a wish list. So far, the list includes lighter plastic tables for event use, a washer/dryer, linens, and a laptop assigned to each room for meetings and other functions.

The fitness room has been busy (8 registered just from Dr. Cattigan talk).

Ms. Kelley will organize a May and June special day to attract seniors back to the CATH.

Ms. Kelley is still accepting surveys. She will email the Board results late winter or early spring. So far, the results show that many over sixty's are not comfortable coming back into the building due to COVID. The icy winter has also contributed to hesitation. Ms. Kelley noted Board of Health is meeting later tonight to discuss the mask mandate and her feeling is if this lifts more people will come back and make individual choices about their own masking.

Ms. Kelley commented again on what an excellent job Jennifer Garf is performing organizing and producing the Compass. Labeling day for the next issue is Tuesday February 15.

Ms. Kelley also noted that some of the regulars miss the comfort of others with losses in their own families. She noted she prefers not to serve as the "mask police." Ms. Steele noted she will continue to wear hers but misses everyone in the building.

Ms. Grossman inquired if there was any information on a fourth shot/booster. Ms. Steele noted she will check with Mr. McDonald, Director of Health and Human Services to see if he has heard anything new but at last inquiry nothing had changed.

Ms. Kelley noted the new van driver Michael Beard is on board. Ms. Kelley is trying to find another substitute driver as the ½ capacity rule makes it difficult to run as many shuttles as requested. For example, a substitute driver would allow the trip to Trader Joe's to be reinstated. Right now, the COA can only operate a weekly trip to Sudbury Farms.

The van rodent problem was solved with use of with peppermint oil.

Board Chair Report, Ms. Colleen Schaller

Ms. Schaller noted she has no new business.

VFW Representative, Ted Prorok,

Mr. Prorok noted VFW post in Needham had their regular general meeting as well as the separate Board of Directors meeting. Mr. Jay Kravetz is the new coordinator for graves/ceremonies in Needham replacing a person who retired from the position. He will be organizing the Memorial and Veteran's Day events. He is also the coordinator for the Vietnam Veterans Day ceremony at Cefalo Circle on March 29th. The ceremony is at 9 am followed by breakfast at the VFW Post. Ms. Kelley noted she will change the date for the Center at the Heights event to March 30th.

He noted that there has always been an appropriate disposal barrel for retired American flags. Recently the Post has been finding trash in the barrel so new bins have been ordered. There will be one at the transfer station and a new one at the Post to avoid this unfortunate incident. The new barrel design has a narrow slot at the top so only a flag can be inserted like the new US Post office boxes. He noted that during COVID the usual Logan Airport incinerator burn has not been possible. So the plan is to have an appropriate burning ceremony at the transfer station that may involve local Boy Scout troops.

Mr. Prorok will bring a photo of new bin design to the next Board meeting.

Update on Housing Initiative, Helen Gregory

Ms. Gregory noted that a Listening Forum was held on Zoom on Thursday, January 20th. Ms. Gregory noted that Carol, Dan, and Ed attended. The follow up on that meeting is later tonight February 10th. Ms. Gregory will update the Board at the March meeting.

Ms. Schaller asked for a motion to approve the December 9, 2021, minutes. Ms. Kelley noted that the Compass administrator's name was wrong. It was corrected to Jennifer. Sandra made a motion to approve the Minute as amended. Ted seconded the Motion. The December 2021 minutes were unanimously approved.

Ms. Schaller then asked for a motion to approve the January 20, 2022, minutes. Carol made a motion to approve the minutes; Sandra seconded. The January 2022 minutes were unanimously approved.

Sandra made a motion to adjourn; Carol seconded this motion. The board unanimously adjourned at 5:45 pm

Respectfully Submitted,

Faith Crisley

Recording Secretary