

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

**April 14, 2022**

**Present:** Colleen Schaller, Chair; Helen Gregory, Penny Grossman, Sandra Prinn, Carol DeLemos, Ed Cosgrove, Dan Goldberg, Sue Mullaney, Kathy Whitney, Ted Prorok, VFW representative, Michelle Gucciardi SHINE Director

**COA:** Jessica Moss, Social Work

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

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

Ms. Moss noted it has been another busy month. The numbers are up. In person bereavement group is meeting. Ms. Kerrie Cusack has her first in person mindfulness yoga class today. Unfortunately, Ms. Moss noted she did not receive the grant for the sensory input room. The good news is we will use part of the formula grant to purchase equipment towards an eventual room. Trauma therapy sessions use sensory rooms. We are at capacity for volunteer positions. She noted that the volunteer lunch was held for the first time in two years with Roche Brothers catering. Ms. Schaller noted she attended. The volunteers appreciated the recognition.

Ms. Moss noted that the new fitness equipment is now in place. Board members agreed that the fact that the fitness room has trainers whenever the room is open distinguishes the Center at the Heights from many other senior centers in Massachusetts.

Ms. Moss also noted that many of the Zoom courses continue to serve more people than would be able to attend in person.

In answer to questions, she noted that a new van driver position remains open. Ms. Schaller noted that another van will allow seniors to remain in the building beyond 1 pm which will fuel afternoon in person events as well as informal socializing. Currently the last van leaves at 1 pm. The van driver position is posted. Board noted a general van driver shortage and the fact that the school bus drivers have a higher pay scale.

### **SHINE Report, Ms. Michelle Gucciardi, Director**

The April 14 appreciation lunch was a success with thirty people attending half of whom were our counselors and the other half affiliated with the State to honor Kathy Worhach, the recently retired director. Ms. Worhach received a citation from the Office of Elder Affairs. The Secretary of Elder Affairs conferred the honor. Ms. Gucciardi thanked Ms. Moss and the team at the CATH for organizing the in-person and Zoom attendees.

An abbreviated version of the full SHINE training for about sixty local professionals took place on Zoom. This helps spread the word about SHINE throughout the MetroWest area.

The new counselor training will begin in a week with thirteen registrants.

SHINE is grant funded and we are in the process of reprocurement (RFR) through the State Office of Elder Affairs. Our sponsoring agency is the Council on Aging in Needham, and this is the first time in nine

years that reprourement needs to happen. Needham will meet the May 4 deadline to sponsor the SHINE program for the MetroWest region. This is great news and Ms. Gucciardi will update the Board once she knows more about the final decision.

Ms. Gucciardi will invite the new assistant director to the May Board meeting as she starts the week of April 18.

### **Transportation Report**

Ms. Moss noted lunch deliveries continue (seventy this month) and in house. The new van is operational but the website on the side is incorrect and will be repainted soon. The town loop has started again on Wednesdays.

### **Minutes**

**Ms. Schaller requested a motion to approve minutes of March 10.** Mr. Cosgrove made a motion to approve the minutes and Ms. Gregory seconded. The Board approved with one abstention (Ms. Mullaney who was not at the last meeting).

### **Update on Housing Initiative, Helen Gregory**

Ms. Gregory noted there was another meeting on March 10.

Community Housing meeting last month included facilitated working groups. Tonight, we will meet about feedback and results from the March working groups. Ms. Gregory noted she and Mr. Cosgrove are on the housing development taskforce. Her personal task is reviewing models for people with disabilities as well as seniors. Ms. Gregory thanked the Board for suggestions so far and requested other input from the Board. The whole group can bring great ideas, zoning updated or changed but if there is not a developer who jumps on it nothing happens. Ms. Gregory will speak with developers. Mr. Goldberg asked about the Avery building's redevelopment status. Ms. Schaller noted a developer went to the planning board and the requested changes were denied. However, Mr. Cosgrove noted Town Meeting approved another floor, but the current interested developer is having trouble locating financing. Ms. Gregory will ask another member of subgroup who is looking at public and private property to provide an update on the Avery site. Ms. Gregory also noted a town survey will be forthcoming.

Mr. Cosgrove noted that the Needham Housing Authority is looking at expanding and revamping the Chambers/Linden housing from single floor bungalows to duplexes as it is too small and antiquated. But the issue becomes where people live while the revamp occurs.

Ms. Schaller noted the plan for the Muzi site just came out. Lab and commercial space will occupy the site.

Ms. Gregory noted that the Community Housing Workshop is on March 24.

### **VFW Representative, Ted Prorok**

The Flag box is in the works. Not sure when it will be at the Transfer station. Mr. Prorok raised the issue of senior parking program—discounted coupons at neighboring towns. Ms. Schaller mentioned that she would have a conversation with Ms. Steele and see if the Board wants to take this up as a project. A

couple of Board members noted that unlike other towns and cities nearby Needham does not have paid parking lots. Needham has metered street parking.

**New Business**

Ms. Schaller noted Ms. Steele's surgery was successful and she is recovering at home working remotely.

Two Board members noted what a great job Annie Toth the new administrative assistant is doing, and they noted the COA, and the Board was lucky to have her.

**Ms. Gregory made a motion to adjourn; Mr. Cosgrove seconded this motion. The board unanimously adjourned at 5:50 pm**

Respectfully Submitted,

Faith Crisley

Recording Secretary