

COUNCIL ON AGING BOARD MEETING
Minutes of the Council on Aging Board Meeting held on
December 14, 2023

at the Community Center and via Zoom

Members Present: Jeanne Genereux, William Byron, Ruth Delmonico, Charlie Aaronson, Al Arthur, George Nisotel, Kathy O'Brien

Associate Members Present: Brian Burke and June Thall

The Director of the COA, Alyson Toole, was present.

Brian O'Sullivan and Kathleen Surdan will give their reports in person.

Chair, Jeanne Genereux, opened the meeting at 1:10 P.M.

The Minutes of the November 9th Meeting were accepted after several corrections. Charlie Aaronson and George Nisotel were present, but were not listed. On page 2, under Housing, item #1, the word, **been**, was omitted. In the Director's Report, regarding the Formula Grant, the money received is based on the number of people in town 60 years and older.

Community Preservation Committee, Charlie Aaronson

- The current application is to restore the portrait in the library.
- Red Acre affordable housing is requesting more funds.

Minuteman Senior Services, Charlie

- The meeting consisted of mostly administrative stuff. There is a great need for volunteers.
- Minuteman will train volunteers. Money Management is an area where many seniors have difficulty.
- Minuteman has a monthly newsletter which he'll email to COA Board members.

Community Services Coordinator, Brian O'Sullivan

- It's been another busy month. Housing and mental health challenges have been the focus.
- One person is homeless and was living in his/her car, now is staying at a shelter.
- One person is working full time, but doesn't earn enough to find an affordable apartment.
- There is affordable housing in the state, but nothing is available.
- A groundbreaking for the new Elizabeth Brook Apartments occurred on December 7th. There will be 37 affordable units for seniors. They will be ready in 2025.
- Mention was made of the article in the Independent about Brian's work and the needs in the town.

- The Friends gave Outreach \$500 in gift cards for Shaws and Market Basket in \$25 increments.

Outreach, Kathleen Surdan

- Margaret Decker, the outreach worker resigned.
- November, even though it was short month, had 10% more requests for help with finances and the need for caregivers.
- The Shine councilor is resigning at the end of the month. Minuteman will have to assign a new volunteer.
- Some of the adult children of seniors have called the COA about changes in the homes of their parents and concern about their behavior.
- Each town in the Nashoba School region received \$150.
- More people are qualifying for abatements.
- The Boxwood Tree workshop was a success. Discussion about increasing the number of participants. There was a wait list this year.
- Finally, the first person who applied for fuel received it. Also, the Friends have about five grants for fuel assistance.
- Lieutenant Kellie Barhight is hosting a Pizza Party for seniors. It's an opportunity to meet the new officer and have some fun.
- On December 27, there will be a concert featuring pianist Matteo Faso.
- The January newsletter will be in the Action Unlimited on 12/22. It's Elvis month.
- On the evening of January 31, the Library and Recreation department will an informational evening.

Chair's Report, Jeanne Genereux

- Not everyone has returned the "Code of Conduct" to Denise.
- The need for a new CPC representative was discussed. Charlie will stay on until a new representative is appointed. Al Arthur would like to attend several meetings with Charlie to see if it's a good fit.
- The death of Jim Sauta was mentioned. He was a strong advocate of the COA and was very involved through the years.

Director's Report, Alyson Toole

- Bridges, the intergenerational program with the 4th graders, was a huge success. The teachers want to continue the relationship with the volunteers as a monthly mystery reader.

- The Recreation Department is extending its after school program to five days a week from 3 - 6 PM. This will give the COA more opportunities for intergenerational activities.
- The van structure is hopefully going to be installed next week.
- The Formula Grant based on the town's population of seniors, sixty and older, will be \$27,118. Half of that has already been received.
- The **Stow Only** requirement brought up a great deal of discussion. Alyson defended her position and is backed by Denise.
- The HR director resigned.
- The Budget is due in January.
- There's been an up tick of Covid in Stow.
- Statistics for November
 1. Total people served -2306 duplicated, 421 unduplicated
 2. % Female - 68.2 %Male - 31.8
 3. Average # of people signing in daily - 63
 4. Phone calls - 664
 5. Most popular activities - Food, exercise
 6. Interactions/services provided by COA Staff - 286 duplicated.
 7. Most provided service: transportation, general help, donations, and fitness.
 8. Transportation: Rides - 295 Riders - 44
 9. Volunteers and Tax Work-off hours - 245

Other business-

The secretary asked the Board to submit items for the agenda at least a week before the next Board Meeting.

There was no other business. The meeting adjourned at 3:20 P.M.

Respectfully submitted,

Ruth A. Delmonico, secretary