

COUNCIL ON AGING BOARD MEETING
Minutes of the Council on Aging Board Meeting held on
January 12, 2023

at the Community Center and via Zoom

Members Present: William Byron, Ruth Delmonico, Charlie Aaronson, Kathy O'Brien, and Jeanne Genereux

Associate members present: Brian Burke and Al Arthur

Absent: Associate members, Kate Hogan, Jessica Moriarty, and June Thall

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

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

Guest: George Nisotel

The meeting was called to order at 10:07 A.M. The Minutes of December 8th were reviewed and accepted as written.

Liaison Reports:

Minuteman Senior Services- Presented by Charlie Aaronson.

- The Holiday Online Auction raised \$21,000.
- The vendor for the Communal and Meals on Wheels programs has moved its kitchen from Everett to Woburn. It is believed that with the shorter distance the quality of vegetables will improve.

Community Preservation Committee: by Representative Charlie Aaronson- Nothing new to report since the next meeting isn't until January 23rd.

Community Services Coordinator, Brian O'Sullivan:

- It has been a busy month with 32 households receiving services.
- Housing is the most difficult issue. Many under 60 are facing financial hardship and evictions.
- Plantation is changing its name to Elizabeth Brook Apartments. The new property manager, Joe, used to manage over 700 apartments but is now responsible for about sixty. He is planning to hire a Resident Services Coordinator who will bring the concerns of the residents to the management.
- The phase 2 addition of Elizabeth Brook will get underway in 2024.
- Warm Hearts and St. Vincent de Paul having been helping with emergencies. Brian is assisting the residents of a multi-resident building that was damaged by a car.
- **Chair's Report:**

- Bill mentioned that the Select Board just approved the "Municipal Citizen Academy." Twelve to fifteen people will learn about the about the town departments that make up the local government. Jeanne suggested Alyson get in touch with Stow TV to record each session. It will begin on Thursday, Mar16th with a tour and a talk at the Community Center.
- Bill came to an open session with Denise to discuss the van shelter, and stress the importance of it being on the warrant for Town Meeting. JP Benoit told Bill he knows someone who can do the surveying.

Director's Report:

- There have been some recent issues with the "Friends of COA" and some resignations.
- The 20 passenger van is now fixed. The electrical problem was very difficult to diagnose. The company that fixed it charged thousands. Alyson is trying to negotiate with them over the bill.
- We have a new "on call" van driver who is in training with Dave.
- The budget was submitted to Denise. Alyson followed the Town Administrator's guidelines. There were questions about the increase of some of the salaries; the big increases were due to the step increase and the cost of living adjustment.
- **Statistics for December** are:
 Total People Served - 1947 duplicated 324 -unduplicated
 % Female -71.9 Male - 28.1
 Average # People signing in daily - 46
 Telephone calls - 586
 Most Popular Activities - Food, exercise
 Interactions/Services provided by COA Staff - 254 duplicated
 Most provided service - transportation, general help, donations, fitness.
 Transportation - Rides - 265 Riders - 44
 Volunteers and Tax Work-Off - 177

Outreach

- At end of the meeting both Kathleen and newly hired, Susan McNulty, came in. Susan briefly shared her background working with seniors in a number of organizations. The "Meet and Greet" on the previous Tuesday was well attended.
- One concern Kathleen mentioned was the number of people coming in with issues without an appointment.

- About 80% of the concerns that are brought to Outreach are from seniors; the rest are from family members.
- The COA is busy. Gigi gets many transportation calls daily.

There was no other business. The meeting adjourned at 12:10 PM

Respectfully submitted,
Ruth Delmonico, Secretary

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