

COUNCIL ON AGING BOARD MEETING

Minutes of the Council on Aging Board Meeting held on April 12, 2018

Members Present: William Byron, Ruth Banfield, Peter Cirioni, Ruth Delmonico, Steve Dungan, Susan Pauley

Associate member present: Brian Burke

Absent: Members, Susan Matatia and Associate members, Kate Hogan and Kathy O'Brien

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

Outreach Worker, Sharon Funkhouser was in attendance.

Liaison to the Finance Committee, Paul McLaughlin was also present.

A quorum being present, the meeting began at 10:08 a.m.

Secretary's Report was accepted with one correction. The name of the committee in Brian's report is **The Complete Streets Committee**.

Liaison Reports:

Paul McLaughlin- Alyson was complimented on her responses to Finance Committee questions. Alyson is working on a comparison of local C. O. A.'s services and activities.

Brian Burke- He reported that the tax rate is coming down, \$20 per \$1000.

Lauren Abraham, the Community Services Coordinator, sent a written report for the Month of March in which she outlined all the clients with whom she had contact. The total was 36. She assisted in a variety of ways giving family assistance, financial management, general information, legal assistance, case management, Shine, and disability services.

Outreach Reports:

Sharon Funkhouser presented Suzanne Howley's Report. She summarized the reports for February, March, and April.

- **Trips & Events:** There's a cemetery talk today at 1 p.m. A consumer talk on fraud and scams is scheduled for April 19 at 1 p.m. A trip to the Museum of Fine Arts will be on April 25. Upcoming: The Attorney General's Office will present a consumer talk in May; the benefits of using a home care agency will be in June; and a cruise on the Annisquam River is scheduled for July. Collette will present information on trips to Tuscany and Alaska in the fall.
- **Client Work:** Suzanne continues to assist clients in a variety of ways. If a household has all members over 65, they are protected from having utilities turned off; but if there are younger members of the household, the protection doesn't apply. The Community Services Coordinator, Veterans' Agent, and the COA outreach are involved with a client with a number of difficulties. Many participants of COA activities either don't sign-in or don't complete the sign-in process. She's been visiting classes checking to see if all have signed in.
- **Fuel Assistance:** The amount of assistance has increased from \$300-\$400 to about \$800-\$1000. The application process has gone smoothly. We don't know if the season will be extended to May.
- **Trainings:** Suzanne completed the Citizens' Police Academy in Framingham. Many topics were covered including patrol, detective work, veteran's court and the jail diversion program. She also attended trainings for the Framingham MRC and has volunteered for District 4A which includes Stow.

JUN 11 2018

Sharon's Report:

- Statistics for the past 3 months: 346 Outreach clients were served. Our average daily attendance rose from 69 to 78. One thing that contributes to the increase is the free AARP Tax Preparation Program (77% Stow residents and 23% out of towners.)
- Inclement weather resulted in several falls and fractures. One of our drivers dislocated her shoulder and another client had a fracture and was isolated on the second floor of the home. With the help of an attorney and Protective Services, she agreed to go to a rehab facility.
- A dispute between two individuals was mediated, but the issue could not be resolved. It may be settled in small claims court.
- Had extensive work with two residents with disabilities and difficulty managing their lives. The VA, Protective Services, and the COA have been involved.
- An interdisciplinary meeting was held with agencies in town. Gifts of Hope presented information about their services to support those affected by relationship violence. They assist with clothing, household goods, information, referrals as well as advocacy in court. We also met with a representative of new Memory Care Assisted Living being built in Sudbury. They will provide support and education to the families.
- Events/Volunteers: We had our Red Sox home opener with the help of the Rotary Club. 23 attended this 12 inning win for the Sox. Attended the Housing Fair which included assistance programs, affordable housing options, and over 55 communities. A State House tour was arranged and participants viewed the Images of Stow on display. The Friends have agreed to purchase many for the COA area. We had a trip to the Boston Symphony. Bob Cooke provided our first armchair travel to the South Pole. We had an Irish bread baking class with Jody Newman. Coming up: breakfast, which is now being held quarterly, on 4/20, lunch & a movie is now on Thursday with the Mealsite providing lunch for those who attend. **The Shape of Water** will be shown on 4/26. The annual Senior Conference will be held on 4/19 at the Assabet Valley Technical School. Our repair cafe with the assistance of the Rotary Club will be on 4/21 from 9 to 1 P. M. We have 14 volunteer experts who will be able to fix a variety of broken household items. Our Bridges Together is scheduled. We need about 40 volunteers. This intergenerational program empowers seniors to influence young minds and dispel myths. Volunteers will meet with 4th grades once a week for seven weeks beginning on Tuesday, 4/24.

Director's Report-

- We're reviewing policies. There are lots of demands on Transportation and sometimes behavioral issues. Need for clear rules.
- **Vans**-We have four aging vans, 2 - 2005 and 2 - 2008. All have been purchased through grants or from the Friends. The SFCOA is planning to purchase a new van for 10 to 12 passengers with a lift. They are requesting \$3500 from the Community Chest toward the cost. A motion was made to support this purchase; it carried. Brian suggested this would be a good news article.
- **Allen Wheeler** is stepping down as president, but will remain on the Board.

- All **Medicare** recipients will be receiving new cards and membership numbers. For the remainder of the year, the monthly newsletter will contain a brief write-up and warnings of possible scams.
- **Food Pantry**- Met with the staff of the Food Pantry regarding a few issues which have since been resolved. Steve Dungan noted that it's running well.
- Due to the increased activity, volunteer receptionists have felt somewhat overwhelmed at times. A training review was held recently to ease concerns and review tasks.
- A **grant** was received to train trainers for a new program, "**Buried in Treasures**," is a hoarding support group. The course that last 15 weeks will be offered in the spring and fall to help people parts with their possessions. Alyson has completed the training process and will now train others.
- The Bridges Together Program is starting and volunteers are being recruited.
- **Clothing/Fundraising Drive**-Between April 18 - May22, articles may be brought to the COA. They will be donated to Savers who will offer a price per pound. The money will go to the SFCOA.
- **March Power Outages**- Brian asked how they were handled. Outreach visits took place, phone calls were made to specific individuals, the Community Center acted as a warming center with the Medical Reserve Team also assisting, and food and bathing options were available. This is not specifically the responsibility of the COA and needs some clarification to the public.

Johnson Way Crossing- The group in charge of the walkways is called the Complete Streets Committee. The configurations are not finalized and concerns should be brought to Jesse Steadman's attention.

Other Business: The following are considerations brought up by the group that attended the COA conference in March:

1. Currently we meet the needs of seniors Monday through Friday. Some agencies are looking at how to address seniors' needs during off hours. Something to address in the future.
2. Consider how to meet the food needs on the week-end, perhaps food kits for week-ends and holidays.

As we listened to the 20+ COA's represented and heard the various structures and governing priorities, we THANK our COA staff again for the highly professional, efficient, and exciting structure we have in Stow.

Future agenda items:

December 2018: Discuss how to inform and meet the needs of the public of an event such as a power outage: where to go, how to contact town agencies, what is the role of the COA staff, etc.

The meeting adjourned at 11:45A. M.

Respectfully submitted, Ruth Delmonico, Secretary

Ruth A. Delmonico
June 11, 2018