

MAY - 7 2018

COUNCIL ON AGING BOARD MEETING

Minutes of the Council on Aging Board Meeting held on January 11, 2018

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

Associate members present: Brian Burke and Kathy O'Brien

Absent: Members, Steve Dungan, Susan Matatia and Associate member, Kate Hogan

The Director of the COA, Alyson Toole was present.

Outreach Worker, Sharon Funkhouser was in attendance, and Suzanne Howley was absent.

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

A quorum being present, the meeting began at 10:07 a.m.

Secretary's Report was accepted as written.

Liaison Reports:

Paul McLaughlin is still looking into our transportation system. Alyson volunteered to send a report of the number of rides as compared to adjacent towns.

Brian Burke- The Complete Streets Committee is meeting tonight at 7 P. M. in the Community Center. He encourages citizens to come and express their thoughts.

Lauren Abraham, the Community Services Coordinator, sent a written report for the Month of December in which she outlined all the clients with whom she had contact. The total was 38.

Chair's Report:

- Since the bylaws do not require, by consensus, the Board decided not to fill the position of vice chair.
- Bill Byron discussed the importance of the Community Preservation Committee. He is the representative until the end of the fiscal year. He encouraged Board members to come to a meeting. Peter Cirioni volunteered to attend the next meeting.

Outreach Reports:

Sharon Funkhouser presented Suzanne Howley's Report:

Trips and Events:

- The Home Seller's Presentation will take place at 1 P. M. today.
- A trip to the Boston Flower Show is scheduled for March 14.
- The Commonwealth of Massachusetts Office of Consumer Affairs and Business Regulation will hopefully present a talk on consumer issues in the coming months.
- We will schedule a talk by the presenter of the self-publishing workshop on how to publish a book and have it listed on Amazon.

Client Work: Work with clients and their families continue. One family wanted to send their mother here for care, but they were told she must be accompanied by a caregiver. Options for day programs were discussed.

Fuel Assistance:

- Some clients do not qualify, but insist they do. SMOC and Salvation Army only consider gross income and not living expenses.
- One client is over income for any kind of help. Many agencies were contacted but this client doesn't qualify for any of them. The Community Services Coordinator has been consulted on this case.
- Citizens Energy is not accepting any applications according to their website.
- A recent e-mail from SMOC stated benefits have increased for households who heat with oil; they will receive at least one additional hundred gallon delivery.

- There was a no-heat situation yesterday, but the family member with the needed documents was out of the country. The son of the client was referred to a local repair vendor.

Sharon's Report:

- Twenty-one seniors, living alone, were contacted on the snow days to check on whether they needed anything in the way of food, medications, etc. Two requested sand and another requested to be plowed out; we were able to help them out. Everyone else had either family members or neighbors checking on them.
- One client reported no heat; his landlord offered to put him up in a motel, but he declined. The client came into the office to copy documents the Department of Transitional Assistance had lost.
- Even though the office was officially closed during a recent snowstorm, there were a number of inquiries and people came by.
- A meeting was scheduled with the food program volunteers to get feedback on the increase of food and the recent changes.
- A meeting was held with a new non-profit organization, **Gifts of Hope**, which supports families affected by domestic violence, with household goods and financial assistance. Lauren Abraham is scheduling an interdisciplinary group of local agencies to introduce them. Gifts of Hope collaborate with social workers and others to identify families in crisis. Services are free and confidential.
- A trip is being planned to the Worcester Art Museum and the BSO.

Director's Report-

- Our vans are getting older, needing major repairs. The budget has already been depleted. Looking for financial support from the Community Chest.
- We haven't surveyed other local councils about their services yet; working on a checklist that can be used for comparisons. A suggestion was made to look online to check the newsletters of other COA's.
- It's Tax Work Off time. Reviewing the program. Placement of workers is often challenging. We try to match interests and skills to the jobs.
- When schools are closed during inclement weather, all programs and activities are cancelled. The staff comes in if possible, and a phone message states the COA is closed.
- The budget went to Bill Wrigley; it was prepared as he directed, 2% increase in salaries and all other items were level funded.
- We're in the process of trying to streamline the transportation policies. Hope to have a revised policy by next month. Trips to Concord and Marlboro are going to be medical appointments only.
- The Annual Report is being prepared and will be sent to the Selectmen's Office.
- Paul McLaughlin would like to know how many people are using the services of the COA. Some people who come for activities or food forget to sign-in or don't complete the sign-in process. We need to remind everyone to check-in to get accurate numbers.
- Some people claimed they didn't receive a newsletter for January. The Action Unlimited was delivered on a different day this month. The February newsletter will be delivered on January 27th.
- The COA training will be in February at the new Acton COA.
- There have been heating issues in the building.

- A roof rake was purchased for the vans.

Other Business:

Brian is still waiting to be notified that he's certified as a notary.

The meeting adjourned at 11:30 A. M.

Respectfully submitted, Ruth Delmonico, Secretary