



Regular meeting minutes of the
Council on Aging Board

Date: 7/11/2018

Place: Senior Center

Room: B07

75 Groton Road, No. Chelmsford, MA 01824

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TOWN OF CHELMSFORD PATRICIA E. DZURIS TOWN CLERK

Opening: Chair Len Olenchak called the meeting to order at 9:00 a.m.

Members present: Nickie Bischoff, Fred Brusseau, Paul Der Ananian, Steve Flynn, Ruth l'Anson, Louise Myers, Len Olenchak, Debra Siriani, Annie Smith, and Dianne Sperry.

Members absent: Jerelyn Serra, Bob Hamilton, Alan Fidler

Pledge of Allegiance was recited.

Minutes: Minutes of the June meeting were approved.

OLD BUSINESS

- Debi Siriani reported that Paul Cohen, Town Manager, indicated that he wanted the COA Board to take the lead on the Age-Friendly Community program. Members of the board opposed that approach, stating the need for a higher-level person to direct the process, with the COA participating as a part of the team. Debi will set up a meeting with Paul Cohen, Len Olenchak, Fred Brusseau, Glen Diggs and George Dixon, and herself to discuss getting the wheels moving in the right direction.
- Fred distributed the Prospectives document for signatures. He will submit signed copies to Debi, Paul Cohen, Michael McCall, George Dixon, Glen Diggs, and members of the COA Board.

LEGISLATIVE UPDATE

- Louise Myers reported there is little activity on Capitol Hill right now, although she is keeping an eye on discussions there about Medicare and Social Security.
- Governor Baker met with Louise and other members of the AARP at a round table discussion about a bill AARP is pushing. Governor Baker spoke to them about House Bill 4290, which is part of his effort to promote housing choices in Massachusetts. This bill is designed to give local communities the ability to change zoning laws with a simple majority vote rather than the currently required supermajority.

DIRECTOR'S REPORT

- **Staffing Update.**
 - Ann Bertos, the newly appointed Food Manager, has been out due to health issues. Tracy O'Neil, current food service worker, is filling in as the Manager. A new kitchen worker has been hired, and volunteers are filling in.
 - Natalie Dussault is now officially the Assistant Director of the Senior Center.
 - Debi has hired a college student as a temporary fill-in for Richard Maguire, part-time custodian, who continues to be out on medical leave.
 - Debi is developing a job description for a part-time (6-10 hours/week) assistant for Betty Chaput, Companion Care Coordination. This is a step toward planning for Betty Chaput's retirement.
- **Budget**
 - Fiscal year ended OK. Looking ahead, we may be able to hire another part-time driver for the next year.
 - One encumbrance (money from last year's budget) has been set aside to pay for a water boiler.
 - Quote for fence around the dumpsters: \$6,000.
- **Walkability Audit.** College student using the AARP Tool Kit to conduct a walkability audit of the area around the Center. Debi, Len, and Dianne are all interested in meeting with the student to provide input and learn the findings.
- **Suggestion Box.** Dianne and Debi are working on updating the method for tracking suggestions/comments/complaints submitted verbally or in the suggestion box.
- **Roof.** People have been around measuring the roof. No date scheduled yet.
- **Bathrooms.** Hiring an engineering firm to plan the bathroom is very expensive. Needs further research.
- **Expansion.** Debi is trying to identify ways to reconfigure the existing space rather than expanding without a clearly thought-out plan that includes staffing needs consideration. There are different views on the topic and Debi suggested deferring the subject to a Building Committee meeting and urged Board members to think about specific needs rather than generalities.
- **Short-term Goals.**
 - Better general upkeep of building.
 - Expanded staffing of the Companion Program.
 - Improved transportation program.

NEW BUSINESS

- **Social Day Program.** Paul Der Ananian asked for info about the Social Day Program. Maximum of 26 clients at one time. Currently five on the waiting list. Cost is \$32/day for clients paid for by Elder Services; private pay is \$35/day. The cost of transportation is extra, as in the donation for lunch. Sometimes the transportation is a bigger issue than space in the program. Currently talking about designating someone in Colleen's staff to pick up a couple of clients using the Center's car (Toyota Echo).

- **Friends Annual Meeting.** Scheduled for July 26.
- **Chelmsford Farmer's Market.** Friends and Center will both have a presence at the market on August 4.
- **Community Preservation Act.** Paul Der Ananian will investigate this program and report at next meeting what specifics of this act are as they affect Seniors.

NEXT MEETING: WED., AUGUST 8, 9:00 a.m.

Minutes submitted by Ruth I'Anson, Recording Secretary