

COA Board Meeting Minutes

September 17, 2020

Attendees: Marge Ackerman, Betsey Boyd, Susan Ruskin Friend, Bob Froh, Linda Johnson, Wayne Johnson, Jean MacQuiddy, Mignonne Murray, Tom Nicholson, Carol Ott, Prather Palmer, Gerri Scoll, Vida Goldstein (associate member).

Absent: Alice Benson, Leslye Fligor, Melissa Galton (associate member), Teresa Young (associate member).

Due to the suspension of the public meetings during the Covid-19 Emergency, this meeting was held via zoom and recorded.

Meeting was called to order at 8:35 a.m.

No resident concerns or comments were expressed.

Marge Ackerman announced that Betsey Boyd will become the new COA board secretary.

Minutes of the July 16, 2020 meeting were approved.

Mignonne introduced Joyce McSweeney, the new COA Social Worker replacing Ireta Metchik who's retiring at the end of September.

Treasurer's Report: The town budget for FY 2021 was approved on September 12th at the recent town meeting, therefore there was no Treasurers report to be approved at this time.

Chair Reports

Community Connections: (Vida) A meeting will take place with John McCann on Zoom to discuss the role of Community Connections during the pandemic. They hope to continue their programming remotely going forward.

Governance: (Susan) The next meeting will take place on Friday, September 25th.

One goal is to develop or update existing materials for new board members, such as each committee's goals.

Vida recalled many of these documents already exist and were posted by Melissa Galton on COA Google drive, but will likely be in need of updating.

Housing: The Housing committee did not meet in August, however the town requested a representative from the COA to be on the Housing Production Plan Committee. Alice Benson volunteered to represent the COA on this committee. The Housing Production Plan is a comprehensive assessment of Weston's housing needs submitted to the state every five years.

Transportation: (Gerri) reported that the MBTA is still under pressure to reduce their operating expenditures and wonders how this will affect The Ride program.

Jean reported the MWRTA (MetroWest Regional Transit Authority) hasn't met recently but is scheduled to meet two weeks from now.

Mignonne procured a \$5,000 grant from MAPC (Metropolitan Area Planning Council) for the COA taxi program to provide rides to medical appointments free of charge, including to Boston appointments

Springwell: (Wayne) No board meeting in August, therefore nothing to report.

Needs Assessment: (Tom) In an effort to emphasize the case for the need, Tom drafted a list of "Top Ten" key needs which could be used as an "elevator" speech. An age discrepancy was noted in some of the facts listed, in some cases citing age 60, and other cases citing age 65. Mignonne stated that age 60 is used by the COA and the state, and age 65 is used by the federal government when identifying older cohorts.

Carol asked what percentage of the town budget is allocated to older adults, and how that compares to other neighboring towns. Mignonne will research that.

Awareness: Betsey announced that the COA will partner with the Recreation Department to host a multigenerational T'ai Chi class on Saturday, October 17 at 2:00 pm on the Field School Athletic Field (rain date Sunday, October 18). Registration will be limited to 25 people due to COVID rules, socially distancing and masks will be required.

FCOA: (Betsey) Nothing new to report this month, the next FCOA meeting will be Friday, September 25th.

Technology: We need to find someone to be our technology guru.

Director's Report: (Mignonne)

Helen Zola Bequest

Mignonne informed us that Helen Zola, a former town employee passed away last spring leaving a bequest to be shared by the Weston COA and the Weston schools equally.

Mignonne suggested that some of the Helen Zola funds might be put toward a COA Branding/Awareness/Social Media study. Mignonne also floated an idea for consideration of rebranding the COA into two separate entities; one entity would continue to be known as the Council On Aging, focusing on social service programming and assistance, and the second entity could be rebranded as a lifetime learning center for continuing education programs and events.

The MAPC Grant secured for JFK taxi use was mentioned earlier in the minutes.

There have been recent changes to the EOEA Formula Grant funding. The state no longer requires a budget to be submitted and will process grants to towns when the money is allocated and contracts have been signed. In addition, the Formula Grant funds can now be rolled over from one year to the next. Both are positive changes for the COA, requiring less paperwork and more discretion

As of this month the COA has started limited onsite programming, and visits by appointment. There is a newly created Zoom room for those who would like to participate in COA Zoom classes onsite at the Community Center.

Meeting was adjourned at 9:20am.

Next meeting is October 15 at 8:30am.

Governor