



TOWN OF WAKEFIELD

COUNCIL ON AGING

Council on Aging Board Meeting Minutes

Via Zoom
Date: February 14, 2024

Call to order: 6:34 p.m.

Present: Julie Brown, Jim Morin, Christina Della Croce, Susan Jepson, Karen Burke, Maureen Hickey

Absent: Joanna Scouler, Bob Vincent

Director

Karen Burke

Board Members

Julie Brown

Christine Della Croce

Maureen Hickey

Susan Jepson

Jim Morin

Sherri Oken

Joanne Scouler

Town Council Liaison

Bob Vincent

- I. Approval of Minutes of January 10, 2024 Board meeting
 - A. Amend: We will discuss but not approve by law revisions at the February meeting.
 - B. Jim Morin made a motion to accept the minutes as amended. Christina Della Croce seconded and all voted in favor.
- II. Financial
 - A. Status

There is nothing significant to report. Spending is on track.
 - B. Maureen Hickey made a motion to accept the report, Susan Jepson seconded, and all voted in favor.
- III. Programs
 - A. We have started to offer the programs funded through the grant.

In relation to the programs, we have ordered a new dishwasher and new room dividers for the dining room that should be arriving in the next week or two.
 - B. Feb 21st - first chef lead program from 9:30 – 11:30 a.m.
 - C. March: Home Instead
 1. This service will be offered twice a month (if within our budget)
 2. 4 hours of care, 9:30 -1:30
 - D. St. Patrick's Day Friday, March 15
 1. 11:30 a.m. -1 p.m. with a lunch catered by BrightView (\$5 participant fee)
 2. Entertainment provided and directed by Maureen Howlett, our Activities Director
 - TO DO: Some assistance is needed serving and greeting starting at 11 a.m. Contact Karen if you are available.**
 - E. Senior Property Tax Work Off program
 1. We were able to match 20 seniors to the program which is the max allowed.
 2. They were matched across multiple departments.
 3. Our goal is to continue to max out the program yearly going forward.
 - F. February 28th - heart failure lecture
 1. Presented by Melrose Wakefield Hospital
 2. Lunch served at 12:30, Presentation at 1PM
 - G. March 20th MBTA Communities
 1. We will offer an informational meeting for seniors in advance of the Town Meeting.
 2. Erin Kokinda will present from 11:30 - 1 p.m.
 3. Complimentary lunch should encourage participation.
 - H. Bereavement Support Group
 1. Starting April 23, the 4th Tuesday of the month, once a month for six months



2. Program assistance provided by Lahey Health
 - I. Caregiver Support Group
10:00 -11:30 a.m., first and third Tuesday of the Month
 - J. Senior Center Unused Space
 1. At the last Town Council meeting, they discussed utilizing unused space such as the Senior Center's 2nd and 3rd floors.
 2. We currently use one room for storage
 3. We would benefit if the space was rehabbed to use for additional senior programming but also made available to other Town groups.
 4. Concern was expressed about the availability of parking with increased use of the Center's space.
 - K. Congregate Meals
A second congregate meal, in addition to Mondays, will be offered each week starting on Thurs. March 21st.
 - IV. By Laws Revision
 - A. COA Board Seat for Housing Authority Representative
 1. We discussed the value of having a position on the Board reserved for a Housing Authority representative.
 2. The Housing Authority reacted positively to this suggestion and supports Maureen Hickey's continued participation without having to be reappointed by the Town.
 3. Who would make the decision who fills that position? We agreed that it should be a Housing Authority decision.
 4. We agreed the representative should be an available and willing staff member of the Housing Authority, rather than a volunteer, to provide continuity.
 - B. Absenteeism
 1. We agreed to delete the three absence rule and leave this type of action to the discretion of the COA Chair.
 2. Add the 5 consecutive absences rule from the Town by laws.
 - C. Language
 1. The terms elder or elderly have negative connotations.
 - a. Elder, which connotes capability, is different than senior which references age.
 - b. We agreed that we should find different wording unless "elderly" or "elder" is part of the name of an official body.
 - c. Replace elder with senior or residents 60 years of age or older.
 2. Eliminate masculine connotation by using chair or chairperson instead of chairman.
 - D. Article 5 staff
Strike: The COA Board does not have employees or hiring authority.
- TO DO Sherri will make revisions and send to Susan and Karen who will submit to Tom Mullen for review.
A vote will be taken at March meeting.
- V. Orientation
TO DO Susan will distribute a draft of a new member orientation manual.
It will be a fluid document not a voting item
 - VI. Housing Issues
 - A. Seniors bring their problems and challenges to senior center to learn about their options
What are they told or advised?
 - B. Maureen Hickey made a motion to postpone the discussion on above until the next meeting; Jim Morin seconded; all voted in favor

7:04 p.m. Maureen Hicky made a motion to adjourn, Jim Morin seconded and all voted in favor.
Minutes respectfully submitted by Sherri Oken