

Council on Aging Board of Directors Meeting

Remote Meeting

March 18, 2021

Present: Director Jim Leyden, Chair George Shea, Marybeth Bergeron, John Bowen, Saul Finestone, Rose Morace, Marge Morgan, Julia Moulton, Eleanor Stolar, Judy Yaffe, Theresa Yesu, Select Board liaison Tomas Lachiusa.

Absent: Jan Komaiszko, Phil Hallahan, Fran Miffitt, Secretary Ellie Tyson

Guest: Robin Frechette

- I. **Welcome:** George opened the meeting at 9:31 a.m.
- II. **Approval of Minutes:** The February 18th minutes were approved except for the following change. Under reports LACCF- Marybeth noted that 7 pieces of art were named and 31 available.
- III. **Reports:**
 - a. **Select Board:** Tom Lachiusa was excited about the development of the new center with funding donations and town tax issuance. Sewage fee will be based on water usage. Sewer bill would be lowered if a separate meter is installed. Town residents are requesting a solution to sewage issues. The Colvest group which owns the former Christian Scientist church are looking for a zoning change. The zoning board will have an open meeting and a recommendation will follow. George added that the revenue would be good for the town.
 - b. **State Representative:** Robin noted that 6,400 bills had been filed. The house budget was coming in April. Legislatures would be meeting with Council on Aging concerning funding. The climate bill will be coming up and amendments made and voted on. The issue is about the cost to tax payers. Also, let her know if you are having difficulty getting your vaccine. We are maybe getting mobile units to the homebound. Vaccine issuance is the key. Theresa wondered if we had identified the homebound. Tom said we had.
 - c. **Directors:** George noted that in the March 9th email there was no discussion concerning hiring of a full time administration instead of 2 part time assistants. Jim noted that the Town Manager acted on the hiring and he immediately sent emails to the COA board. Marge was concerned about available staff at the new center. Julie noted that the staff we have is highly qualified, but we do need more information concerning funding, staffing, etc. Jim stated that his staff is experienced and has the skills to manage a new building. There is no need for concern. Many of our programs have been continued such as the lunch programs, virtual programs and reaching out to seniors during the pandemic. Marge noted a great job has been done, but feels the large building will need more attention. Saul said if the COA can provide assistance, we will. Marybeth stated that a full time person will be fully invested and it would be a positive step. Many

volunteers are seeking positions at the new building. George noted there are points being made that should have been addressed before now. The staff is very competent but the COA is an advisement board and would appreciate being consulted. We need to be on the same team. Jim said that decisions needed to be made according to directives given by authorities.

- d. **Treasurers:** Jim noted that the budget looks good for the 21-22 years. He stated the full time person will receive full benefits.
- e. **FOLOCA:** Eleanor said that they have not held any meetings.
- f. **LACCF:** Marybeth noted that some people have been interested in purchasing a piece of art for the center. A postcard will be mailed to residents shortly.
- g. **GSSSI:** Fran was not available.
- h. **Building Committee:** Marybeth said the building was "fabulous". There will be issues that will need to be corrected, however, things are moving along.
- i. **Advocacy:** Nothing to report.

IV. **New Business:**

- a. **COA FY22 Budget/ COA Clerk:** Jim stated there was an increase in the town budget which needs to be approved at the town meeting. He is pleased with the budget and the new full time position.
- b. **MCOA Dementia Friendly Certification:** Dementia friendly has been certified at the local level. The state level is recognizing Longmeadow as a dementia friendly community and this group can help us expand our services.

The COA board is in agreement that Jim and Lindsay did an outstanding job of meeting the needs of the seniors with the food pantry, Meals on Wheels, Virtual programs, dispensing information and so many other tasks. We thank them for all that they do. Saul noted that a meeting of officers of the COA will take place at the first meeting in September. Anyone interested in being an officer let Saul, Eleanor or Ellie know. Saul will have a report ready in May or June. There are absentee members on the board with three missed meetings without notice and the by-laws state they should resign. George and Jim will discuss this further.

V. **Old Business:**

- a. **Town of Longmeadow Vaccinations:** Information on page 5 under Virtual programs.
- b. **AARP Tax Service:** Page 7 under Director's Update.
- c. **Meals on Wheels Update:** Volunteers are being asked to sign up online. Days and routes will be indicated. It is a more efficient method. Can be found on page 6.
- d. **Food Pantry Update:** Pages 6-7
- e. **Virtual Programming:** Page 5

VI. **Adjournment:** The meeting was adjourned at 11:08am.

Respectfully Submitted,

Elizabeth Tyson

I would like to thank both Judy and Rose for taking the minutes when I have been unable to do so. I truly appreciate their help.