

## MINUTES

### COUNCIL ON AGING BOARD MEETING -

DATE February 11, 2020

**Present:** Carolyn Bottum, Dan Boynton, Laura Crosby, Ben Horne, Sally Kindleberger, Wendy Kusik, Don Milan, Florence Montgomery, Kathy Ramon, Dot Taylor, Dilla Tingley

**Minutes:** The Minutes for the January 14, 2020 meeting were approved.

**Calendar:** Carolyn reviewed the highlights for the March calendar.

#### **Director's Report:**

**COA Team Effectiveness** – Carolyn used a real example of our team of social service providers responding to an actual emergency situation to help the Selectman and others in town to see that a real need exists and that we have a team that is ready and able to respond.

The lottery for the **Rental Assistance Program** was held on January 15. COA is working with the five people on the top of the list to help them with the paper work they are required to present to Metrowest Collaborative Development. We hope the first checks will be issued in March.

A \$1000 grant was received from Community Health Network Area (CHNA) that we will use to present the Minuteman Senior Services program **A MATTER OF BALANCE**. Peg Mikkola will educate participants about falls, falls prevention, and exercises to enhance balance and strength. It will be coordinated with our existing "Stretch and Flex" class. Space is limited to 18 and 8 have already signed up.

Abby attended the First Parish program "**Food for Thought**" on caregiving. It was a very successful program and Abby found many people who were familiar with the breadth and scope of COA programs and some have begun using them for the first time.

Results are available from the **Community Survey** conducted by the COA and Parks and Recreation in the fall. Most respondents do read our newsletter, but Carolyn is hoping to set up e-mail blasts to further publicize our activities. She was puzzled by the large number of respondents who found cost a barrier and others who found time of day programs were scheduled to be a barrier. We seem to be providing the programs that people want and some that we do not can only be provided when we have a Community Center. See the February Director's Report for a further breakdown of responses.

**The Winter Preparedness Panel** done with Public Health Nurse, Fire Department and Parks and Rec was a success and we should plan to do it every year.

**Top of the Town** was tops with over 200 attendees many of whom were new to COA activities.

**The Property Tax Study Committee** has submitted its report to the Selectmen. It recommends that Lincoln consider establishing a local version of the state Circuit Breaker which would enable us to help low income seniors pay only 10% of their income as property taxes. The complicated process to achieve would require a vote to ask State Legislature for permission, a vote by State Legislature and then Town Meeting again. Apparently there is state legislation stalled in the pipeline to allow any Town to do it. Sudbury, Wayland and Concord have done it. The committee has also suggested the possibility of creating a Town Task Force to consider Social Services – the need and how they might be supported. The Selectman do seem to understand what a burden the COA is carrying.

## **Liaison Reports**

**Trips** – no report

**Minuteman Senior Services:** Legislative representatives from the 16 member towns have been invited to attend the April Board Meeting, April 1, at 9am, 22 Crosby Drive, Bedford Wendy says that any member of our Board who would like to attend would be welcome.

**Housing Commission:** no report

**SHINE:** Open enrollment has ended but Don is still meeting with and assisting clients.

**Diversity Initiative:** Florence continues to bring exciting materials to our diversity table. Some books you might want to investigate – For interracial relationships, *Saying Goodbye* by Florence’s husband M. R. Montgomery, for Black History Month - *Pathfinders* by Bolden and *Days of Grace* by Arthur Ashe, on disability, *I Am Enough* by Grace Byers, for President’s Day *Dream Big Dreams* by Peter Souza (Obama’s photographer). She also recommends a short film that was mentioned at the Academy Awards about “hair”.

### **New Business:**

**Board Vacancies:** Board Members submitted recommendations for filling the two pending vacancies. Carolyn will approach candidates until she has two who have accepted.

**Summer Gift Bags:** Laura presented an elegant proposal to see if the Board would be willing to supplement what Abby has done with December gift bags to very needy residents who are on SNAP. Many non-food essentials are not covered. She outlined the timeframe and the tasks required. The Girl Scouts might be willing to contribute their time again – it was such a valuable asset in December. Laura is willing to oversee it all. COA tote bags may be available for the purpose and Wendy will ask MMSS about providing tote bags. Someone suggested that the Friends should be approached because of their responsibilities in fund raising. This was not seen to interfere with the December drive and Abby is very much in favor. There is definitely a need – Don tells us that many Lincoln residents are on Medicaid. The **Board voted unanimously** to undertake this project - a great way of showing that the community cares. We might be allowed to advertise it at the March Town Meeting.

**Revised Transportation Policy.** The Board reviewed the revised policy. It is intended to clarify the rules for riders. One important goal is to point out to riders that calling drivers directly is a violation of their privacy. All communication about rides should go through the COA. **The Board voted unanimously** to adopt the revised policy. The new policy as well as the COA Behavior Policy will be distributed to current riders as well as new ones as they sign up.

Submitted by Dilla