

## COUNCIL ON AGING BOARD MEETING

DATE: February 9, 2021—1:30 pm

Virtual Meeting via ZOOM Pursuant to Governor Baker's March 12, 2020 Order  
Suspending Certain Provisions of the Open Meeting Law

**Board members present:** Dilla Tingley (Chair), Dan Boynton (Recorder), Donna Rizzo (Trip Committee), Sally Kindleberger (provides humor at the meetings and volunteers for difficult tasks), Don Milan (SHINE services), Florence Montgomery (Diversity Initiative), Jane O'Rourke, Terry Perlmutter, Wendy Kusik (Liaison to Minuteman Senior Services), and Hope White.

**Staff:** Abigail Butt, PhD, COA Director;

### Welcome and Introductions

Abigail individually polled members of the board and each affirmed their presence.

**Approval of minutes:** Dilla made a motion that the LCOA minutes of January 12th, 2021 be approved, and all board members present voted unanimously to approve these minutes.

### Liaison Reports:

**Report on recent trips and trips planned for the future – Donna Rizzo**

Donna reported that there was “no new news”.

**Report on Minuteman Senior Services board meeting – Wendy Kusik**

Wendy said this has been the best year for fundraising for Minute Man, which is kind of surprising, since they have not been able to have in-person fund raising events. All the ASAPs have been appealing to raise the amount of government funding to cover increased staff salaries. Minute Man will be holding a virtual “Spring Forward” fun run from May 1-9. You can register now at their website.

**Report on SHINE counselors meeting and update on SHINE services – Don Milan**

Don reported that he had referred two clients each to Rhonda and Craig and he had received a few calls himself. Dilla added that she was aware that Rhonda was receiving additional training.

**Report on Diversity Initiative – Florence Montgomery**

Florence said that the *Reading for Racial Justice* group at the Lincoln Library is reading Red at the Bone by Jacqueline Woodson. Two additional books by Woodson, Brown Girl Dreaming and The Other Side will be added to the Diversity collection in Bemis.

It's black history month. Ray Shepard who lives in Lincoln, has written a book about Black soldiers in the Civil War for young adults titled Now or Never. Florence also recommended another book by Ray Shepard, Runaway, a poem book about the enslavement of Ona Judge and her self-emancipation from George Washington's household. Florence printed out Amanda Gorman's poem that she composed for the inaugural and made it into a little book that will be in the Bemis Collection. The Chinese New Year will probably be celebrated in Boston, but the activities will be curtailed because of the pandemic. An online printout 'book' from this year will be included with other books about Chinese New Year in our collection when we are open again.

It's Valentine's Day this month and the book, The Case for Loving is about Interracial Marriage. The man's name was “Loving”. He was white and she was black. They got married, had children and were happily living in West Virginia until they were broken into one night by police who said it was against the law to cohabit. They challenged this ruling and eventually worked their way up to the Supreme Court where they won.

Dilla suggested that we think about a sub-committee for Diversity. Sally said she would like to join the Diversity group too. Hope said that Ray Shepard is going to have a series of online talks, geared towards the seventh and eighth graders and their parents at Lincoln school, but it's now open to the public. The talks will be on Wednesdays on February 24, March 3 and March 10 at 7:30. A second event will be a documentary film called "I Am Not A Racist ... Am I?", which is based on the book How to Be an Antiracist by Ibram X. Kendi. The video will be shown online on Saturday February 27 at 9AM, and then again on Monday, March 1 at 12 noon. There will be a Community Panel Conversation on March 3 at 6:30 PM. Hope said she would send the information to Abby so that she could send it out.

### **Announcements/Director's Report – Abigail Butt**

It was snowing heavily, and Abigail was at her home having trouble maintaining a good Internet connection. Her screen would periodically freeze, and the soundtrack would become incomprehensible. Fortunately, Abigail had sent a Director's Report to board members in advance of the meeting and these minutes are partially based on that report. Uninvited guests kept on arriving during Abigail's report. Finally, we heard a series of very loud screeching noises. Our public board meeting had received a "ZOOM BOMB". Abigail will send the recording to Sean Kennedy, Lincoln's Chief of Police, so that he can investigate the situation.

**Box of Happiness Project:** A huge thank you is due to the Friends of Lincoln's COA, Laura from our COA board, and the Lincoln Girl Scouts for what we have titled the "Box of Happiness Project." Their collaboration provided 60 households / 71 homebound and socially isolated individuals with a box of girl scout cookies and a brief visit. Thank you to the FLCOA for sponsoring this event. The positive feedback has been tremendous.

**COVID Clinic Planning:** The Council on Aging is a member of the Lincoln Public Health team. As such, we are actively working with the Town to plan vaccination clinics and register attendees. This is no small undertaking. Countless hours have already been spent in planning and fielding phone calls and emails from Town residents and their caregivers. The COA has also been integral in getting Lincoln Meals on Wheels' drivers vaccinated, which has been no small feat. Staff are putting in hours well above and beyond what is allotted to ensure Lincoln seniors are served. In order to meet the demand, the COA has had to cut way back on programming. We've canceled our Lincoln Academy for the month of February, March and April. We are currently rebooking the rest of our February programming for May, when we believe things may slow down a bit. If the Town is given sufficient vaccine and clinics are able to run, the COA is looking at a long-term time commitment to this cause (the end date could be as late as July).

### **Newsletter**

The February newsletter was sent out later than usual in order to contain what was the latest Lincoln Public Health news on the front cover. Distribution will be late due to this, but all should be receiving it shortly, if not already.

### **Bemis Staffing**

Town staff have been asked to work remotely as much as possible due to a spike in local COVID numbers. The COA has had to cancel in person assistance as well as the podiatry clinic for January. Our podiatry has scheduled a make-up clinic for the beginning of March and clients have already been rescheduled.

### **February Calendar.**

While the COA has had to limit its extra programming, all self-sustaining programming, such as our exercise classes and interest groups (e.g., men's coffee, German conversation, etc.) are running as regularly scheduled. Our special scheduled event sponsored by the FLCOA are also continuing, as are our health and wellness programming, e.g., "Chat with a Nurse," support groups, and mental health clinics.

Noteworthy programming

February 16, 12-2pm, Grandparent Intergenerational Ice Cream Drive-By Party

February 17, Noon, Special Town Wide event with Rev. Liz Walker (generously sponsored by Friends of LCOA, and Friends of Lincoln Public Library)

February 24, 1pm, Zoom with Andy Payne

Terry Perlmutter applauded the excellent communication around the vaccine rollout and Dilla added that the staff is putting their priorities in the right place at this time. Abigail said that the reason why we're not even doing a sign up online is because we knew that a lot of seniors aren't comfortable using Internet technology and the Town is committed to striving for equitable access to the vaccine. Even though it's way more work for us, the COA is running a Call Center. The COA is expanding its mental health services. The situation is getting more acute around the availability of Covid vaccine. Many seniors should be able to get an appointment, but can't, which has caused a great deal of stress and anxiety.

### **Old Business**

**Status update of new bench:** Dilla said that the bench to honor Dot Taylor has not yet been ordered, but arrangements have been made to purchase this bench at a discounted price.

**New Business:** There was no new business to come before the board.

**Adjournment:** Dilla made a motion to adjourn, and all board members voted unanimously by raised hands to end the meeting.

**NEXT MEETING: March 9, 2021**