



TOWN of LINCOLN

Council on Aging & Human Services

c/o Town Offices
16 Lincoln Road
Lincoln, Massachusetts 01773
Phone (781) 259-8811

Board Minutes May 9, 2023

Virtual Meeting Pursuant to Governor Baker's March 12, 2020 Order, as extended on July 16, 2022, with the Governor's signing of Senate Bill #2475, Suspending Certain Provisions of the Open Meeting Law.

Board Members Present: Tom Casey, Laura Crosby, Sally Kindleberger, Wendy Kusik, Donald Milan, Donna Rizzo, Jane O'Rourke, Terry Perlmutter, Kathy Ramon, Dilla Tingley, Peter Von Mertens.

Staff: Abigail Butt (COA&HS Director) Amy Rettig (COA&HS Assistant Director).

Other Attendees: Collette Sizer (Minute-taker), Kim Bodnar (Select Board Liaison)

Welcome

Dilla Tingley called the meeting to order at 1:02 p.m. Dilla asked for any changes or additions to the April 11, 2023 minutes. There were none. Don moved that the minutes be approved. Donna seconded the motion. The minutes were unanimously approved.

Dilla introduced Kim Bodnar the new Select Board liaison to COA&HS. Coffee with Kim will be held the 4th Tuesday of every month. This coincides with the Podiatry Clinic and will offer those waiting an opportunity to speak with Kim and ask questions.

Liaison Reports

Housing Commission Meetings (Terry Perlmutter)

- The Housing Commission will be making renovations to heating systems and other repairs in the units they manage. They want to make the units more sustainable and will be converting to electric heat and cooling. The new systems will be installed this summer. There is concern with rising energy costs. Abigail informed the Board that the Fuel Assistance Program is more than fuel. For those approved, it not only provides a benefit for heating but also reduces electric bills by 1/3 for one year. Residents cannot apply between May and October, but the electric discount applies all year. A reminder was sent to residents in town owned affordable house to apply before May 15 if they had not already done so.
- The Housing Choice Working Group has consultants looking at the options for affordable housing. The State would like 600+ units total present on 42 acres of land near public transportation. The consultants have found two scenarios that meet these requirements. The next step is to bring these options back to the community for their input. Three open meetings are scheduled to discuss the options. This topic will also be included as part of the Town's Charette scheduled for September 30.

Trip Committee (Donna Rizzo)

- The first trip planned, June 8, will be a lobster bake on a cruise around Gloucester Harbor and a walk around Rockport. Reservations are going well. The cost to participants is \$89.00.
- The second trip on July 30 will be to Tanglewood. The cost is \$120 and it includes lunch.
- Scholarships (sponsored the Friends of COA&HS) are available for those who can't afford the expense.

Minuteman Senior Services (MMSS) (Abigail Butt/Wendy Kusik)



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- Several points were mentioned. MMSS moved into their new space under budget. They are making changes to the by-laws. Tom Casey was voted in as a new board member.
- MMSS is looking to add two positions.
 - Benefits Support Specialist: There were two provisions people could qualify for during COVID that just expired. The Specialist will work to streamline (close the SNAP gap for) these two benefits by arranging for those who qualify for Mass Health benefits to automatically receive SNAP benefits and vice versa.
 - Community Transitions Liaison: This position helps people in nursing care to transition to home.
- They continue to look for volunteer drivers for Meals on Wheels.
- MMSS is also looking for ways to better advertise who they are and what their services are.
 - They will be tabling at an event in Concord on May 21.
 - They will be at Bemis for the COA&HS Health Fair on June 9.

Diversity Initiative (Hope White)

Hope was not present. DEI initiatives covered in director's report.

Report on Community Center Building Committee (Peter Von Mertens)

- Several meetings have offered good communication sessions.
 - The people who are opposed are willing to agree that the consultants can resolve some of the problems identified.
 - There has been a change in tone. Tom Casey maintains that the dialog needs to change. He addressed the fact that this is a Community Center for all and should not turn into a discussion of COA.
 - Peter noted that he and others have contacted other organizations that would like to be involved, e.g., the Girl Scouts. There are 10-12 organizations that would like to use space at the Community Center.
- Several meetings are coming up.
 - May 14 - The consultants will present information on the site.
 - A follow up meeting will present how the design accommodates the programming.
- Dilla mentioned the schedule for the Community Charette on September 30. Four different groups will present at the same time. There will not be time for everyone to be in the same room at the same time. Kim commented that the schedule is intended to accommodate people that cannot sit through all four sessions. The Charette is intended to be a listening session to get feedback. A memo will be sent out next week and the Select Board is open to comments.
- Peter, Abigail and Laura encouraged continued outreach through LincolnTalk and at the meetings. Comments can be short, should be succinct, and need to address the concerns of those who oppose the Community Center. Recent posts by Krystal Wood and Christopher Elliot were noted.

Announcements/Director's Report (*Abigail Butt*)



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Social Services Update

Abigail thanked everyone for attending the recent CCBC Meetings and speaking up. May 17 and May 24th are other sessions where people can share feedback. Comments can also be sent ahead of the meeting to be read.

- Diversity equity, and inclusion
 - The Consultants are well underway with their work. The staff and board member survey has been completed. The results will be released when the second survey is completed. There are green surveys at the front desk of Bemis for those who do not want to fill it in online.
- Social Services
 - Social Service needs are increasing and intensifying. There has been a higher demand than usual for the Emergency Assistance Fund.
 - There has also been a noticeable increase in seniors falling prey to scams and fraud. There are plans to get information out.
- Abigail provided a short explanation of the Lincoln Rental Assistance Program.
 - The goal is to get people into truly affordable housing. Many are already in what is called affordable housing, but it's still not affordable because it is based off of 40% instead of 33% of the household's income. To qualify a person must be a Lincoln resident or moving into Lincoln with a signed lease. Their annual income must be at or below 80% of the area median income. The program is funded via CPA monies and starting July 1, can provide a maximum annual benefit to participant households of \$5,830. Lincoln's program has been extended to 10 years for those who are fully disabled or fully retired to give people time to qualify for a Mobile Section 8 voucher. The wait time is approximately 10 years to get a voucher. Those who are not fully retired or disabled may stay on the program for 3 years.
- The first Wellness Clinic/Outreach event at the Ryan Estate was a success. New fliers for next month's event with gift certificates for COA&HS exercise classes are being generated to bring more people in. A door prize will also be offered. The goal is to increase engagement.

Noteworthy Programming

- Katrina, the Line Dance instructor, has offered to do a Zumba Gold program. She will do a Zumba program twice a week, one for seniors.
- COA&HS is working on bringing water aerobics for the summer.
- COA&HS is partnering with Sudbury COA to offer chair yoga, taught by Rebecca Reber. It will be on Zoom.
- The volunteer luncheon is coming up on May 24.
- Thursday, May 18, Joe Wallace is presenting Portraits of Dementia.
- A special lunch will be offered this Friday [May 12].

Other Business

Kim Bodnar informed the group that the 250th anniversary of the historic battles at Lexington and Concord is coming up. A planning committee will be formed. Dilla suggested that creating a quilt might be a good idea.



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Next month's meeting will be joint with the Friends of Lincoln COA&HS. The FLCOA meeting will be at 11:00, pizza at noon, and a 1:00 p.m. COA&HS regular board meeting. Zoom will be available.

Adjournment

Dilla called for a motion to adjourn. Kathy so moved, and Laura seconded. The motion passed unanimously.

The meeting adjourned at 2:23 p.m.

NEXT MEETING:

June 13, 2023, at 1:00 PM

Respectfully Submitted,
Collette Sizer, Minute-taker
May 10, 2023