

COUNCIL ON AGING BOARD MEETING

DATE: Tuesday, September 14, 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), Laura Crosby (Vice-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 (WIDE), Terry Perlmutter and Kathy Ramon.

Staff: Abigail Butt, PhD, COA Director; Amy Gagne, Assistant Director

Welcome and Introductions:

Dilla called the meeting to order. Abigail individually polled members of the board and each affirmed their presence.

Approval of minutes: Dilla asked for a motion that the LCOA minutes of June 9, 2021, be approved, Don said "so moved; Donna seconded this motion, and all board members present voted unanimously to approve these minutes.

Announcements/Director's Report – Abigail Butt

Abigail asked did everyone get the history of the Council on Aging and Friends Boards? Laura Crosby answered "it was great" and Dilla Tingley said "I thought it was wonderful". Abigail replied, "I learned so much. Now, what we need is to have someone volunteer to update it." Abigail added that the other thing that happened coming out of all the work that Rhonda, Doug and Florence Beaudry did cleaning up, is we have stacks of books of pictures. She is going to work with a property tax work off volunteer to get those all scanned into digital format, so we can share them.

Bench in recognition of Dot Taylor, COA past board chair

The bench is currently in production, but it hasn't been shipped.

Summer Intern– Anna Fitzgerald

Abigail praised the expressive arts program that Anna Fitzgerald ran. She expanded our offerings in a way that we have not had before, and it was such a lovely time for so many people that they are still meeting in an open studio format.

New Fall Intern–Kelly Cross

She has a master's in social work at Salem State and she'll be in on every Monday and every Friday. Abigail said, "She is absolutely incredible, she's organized, she's kind and she is just a delight to have". Abigail thanked Jane O'Rourke for providing licensed supervision to Kelly.

SNAP (used to be called Food Stamps)

Abigail said, "To qualify for food stamps you need to be destitute. We have 31 seniors in Lincoln that we know of on SNAP that that qualify, and it is likely double that number."

The cutoff is an income of \$1383 a month to get \$16 a month benefit. The maximum benefit is \$204 for very little income. Natalia is available to help them with the paperwork to determine if they qualify for the maximum benefit based on income. Unless the individuals know that they need to submit all their medical bills within the last calendar year and what those medical bills actually are, their benefit will stay around \$16 a month, instead of going up to a higher benefit that will actually do your household some good.

The holiday gift bag program last year

Abigail said the holiday gift bags are going to these people who qualify for SNAP. SNAP doesn't pay for dish liquid or garbage bags or other necessities that you absolutely must have.

Podiatry Clinics

The podiatry clinics have been going really well. We have scheduled them two times a month and Trisha, our amazing town nurse, has scheduled her wellness visits to coincide with the podiatry clinic happening in the map room. After their appointment with the podiatrist, they see Trish in the living room where they get their blood pressure checked, talk about medications or anything else that's concerning them about their health. Then they go out the door and reschedule for their future podiatry appointment.

Abigail said, "Related to podiatry we need more drivers. Podiatry is one of our biggest services, and it also happens to be a service that ends up being well utilized by our older and frailer populations who no longer drive. So, what we're looking for specifically is people who are willing to volunteer once a month to drive podiatry clients to their appointments on the fourth Tuesday of the month between noon and 2 pm." Sally Kindleberger and Dilla Tingley volunteered for this service and Laura Cosby and Kathy Ramon agreed to backup drivers.

Adolescent mental health clinic

Abigail said some other awesome news is that the adolescent mental health clinic that you probably never even heard about, because it happened very quickly over the summer ran as a pilot program down at the school campus. It went really well. Abigail explained, "The response was not what we had expected in that out of my own naivety, I thought we would have a parent guardian calling, "I have a child who needs counseling" and that's not how it worked. You would have a parent guardian calling and saying "I have a child who's struggling and also all the siblings. Can you sign all four kids up?" And also, my husband and I are struggling, so we need counseling." The right way to handle this situation is to have a separate therapist assigned to each child.

Abigail Butt is now a notary

For complicated applications certain organizations and agencies make the client prove that they do or don't have sources of income. And if they can't prove it, or they don't have a landlord that will give them a lease or proof of something, then they just don't get the benefit unless they have a notarized document so rather than sending these people who are already struggling to out to go find a notary, Abigail can just get her book, and

her stamp and take care of them without them having to go anywhere. For seniors with mobility impairments, she can go to them instead of them having to come to us.

September/October Programming Calendar: Amy Gagne

Pierce House

- Tuesdays and Thursdays, Stretch and Flex and Active Aging, Terri Zaborowski.
- Wednesdays, Line Dancing, Katrina Rotondi

Bemis Hall

- Tuesdays, Knitting (living room)
- Russian Conversation (in person)
- Thursdays, Ukulele Gathering (outside)
- 1st & 3rd Wednesdays, SHINE Office hours in person/virtual on Wednesdays (inside)
- 4th Tuesdays, Podiatry

Traveling

- 2nd & 4th Tuesdays, Men's Coffee virtual & hybrid

Virtual

- Chair Yoga
- Spanish Conversation
- TAI Chi is back on zoom as of September 20 three days a week.
- Fridays, SAIL Balance, Derry Tanner

Drive thru Flu Clinic Wednesday October 6

Drive thru Shredding Event Thursday October 7

Medicare October 20 at 1:30 PM

Liaison Reports:

Report on Housing Commission meetings – Abigail Butt (Substituting for Victoria Benalfew)

Abby reported, “They are excellent at collaborating with the Council on Aging if they feel that there's a resident who needs added support. If they think there's a policy that's going to affect seniors, they invite me on to their meetings and look for input. It's really nice working with them. Most recently we had a client known to the Council on Aging and the emergency assistance fund, who had been struggling financially. Our discussions led to a rent reduction for everyone, through town housing, because they were listening to the impact that cost-of-living increases were having on resident seniors, so that was really encouraging.”

Mission Statement – Abigail Butt

Abigail said, “Thank you all for participating in the joint meeting and for giving your feedback and your insights and helping us come out with a mission statement that was even better than before. The mission statement was low hanging fruit, it was the first and easiest thing to fix because it was the thing that so obviously was lacking in terms

of what we could easily change and make better. As Rhonda and Dilla also mentioned, we have gone through our policies and procedures with a fine tooth comb, we divided client facing policies and employee facing policies into two groups. Then we had people who attended the WIDE trainings go through them line by line looking for opportunities to improve and edit, so that our policies are inclusive, and they strive for Racial Equity of all kinds.”

Status update of new community center– Abigail Butt

Abigail said, “Something that I found really encouraging was people from the schools are starting to think about it. I was at an outreach providers group meeting recently and people were saying how wonderful outdoor classrooms had been.” (during the COVID period) An outdoor classroom structure had been designed for the new Community Center.

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

We have a first trip to the Norman Rockwell museum on Thursday, October 21. I don't have any numbers yet, but I hope to have them very soon. There are two new members of the trip committee, and we are going to meet September 22nd to plan more trips.

Report on Minuteman Senior Services board meeting – Wendy Kusik

The Minuteman Board is addressing racial and social issues by recruiting persons with diverse backgrounds. They are paying their employees between \$250 and \$500 to recruit people with diverse backgrounds. In this way, they have been able to recruit a second Mandarin speaking RN for their clinic. In their strategic planning, they're trying to deal with the changing demographics in their population. They're talking about recruiting employees with a clinical expertise in supporting age related dementia services. They got a score of 96.7 in terms of what they do.

Wendy said, “I'm hoping that we can find someone also to join the minutemen board, because I'm having problems scheduling myself. I have a lot of personal commitments with my husband and my brother and my family. I know we all do.” Dilla recommended that Wendy approach the Friends of the COA, and Abigail invited Wendy to attend the next Friends board meeting.

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

Don announced that after 16 years as a SHINE counselor, he is stepping back. Don will serve in an advisory capacity to Rhonda and Craig.

Elaine Miller will present a Medicare Update on Wednesday October 20th at 1:30 PM. This program will discuss important changes to the Medicare and healthcare options. This program will be given both in-person at Bemis Hall and also remotely on ZOOM. People can register by calling 781 259 8811.

Report on Diversity Initiative – Florence Montgomery

We are very short of time, so I am going to abandon my written notes and cover things as quickly as I can. I still think “familiarity with respect” is something to strive

for. Because the pandemic still goes on and access to Bemis is curtailed, please email or call me and I will do my best to get anything you or your friends want out to you in some way.

A very nice thing happened to me in August and I thought I'd share it because it is very connected to Diversity. I got to know Miriam Rosenberg, a retired psychiatrist now living in Wayland, because she came to LGBT meetings, we had monthly before the pandemic started. She and her wife had gone to Canada to be married and later adopted two Mexican girls. We had talked about The Day of The Dead, a Spanish/English children's book we have in our collection. It is a day of celebration when the dead return to visit; feasting and joy during such a visit are part of many cultures. Often, she had highly recommended The House on Mango Street by Sandra Cisneros. This August, she emailed me to give me a link to an obit of Janice Mirikitani who had been sent to an incarceration camp for Japanese during WWII. When she grew up, she married an Afro- American pastor and together they founded an organization called Glide to take care of poor and homeless people. Her obit is available and is worth reading.

I wanted to go back to On Juneteenth by Annette Gordon- Reed because it is about more than just that day. I read it a second time. It made me think of Earl Warren who was governor of CA when I was growing up. He carried out Pres. Roosevelt's order, 9066, incarcerating Japanese people during WWII. When he died, he was Chief Justice of the Supreme Court and he had signed Brown vs Board of Education, ending segregation in schools, we thought. He is an example of the possibility of change in a person.

However good the intentions might have been, that case did not end segregation. On Juneteenth is worth going back to as it is about more than just that day. Annette writes that she had gone to an all-black school when she was little. Her mother taught there, and, in her book, Annette remembers the solidarity the all black faculty had presented to the children. These black teachers were never allowed to teach again although they were given other jobs in schools. Another big loss to think about.

September brings us the Jewish New Year and Yom Kippur. We have a book in our collection: Celebrate Rosh Hashanah and Yom Kippur. The photos are lovely. Illustrations can bridge absence and distance. September also brings Labor Day. Some individuals who have labored long and hard are Melnea Cass, Elma Lewis, Dr. Anthony Fauci, and Dr. Vivek Murthy, surgeon general of the U.S. Print- outs about them are available.

New Business

There was no new business

Adjournment: Dilla asked for a motion to adjourn, Kathy said "so moved", Don seconded this motion and all board members voted unanimously by raised hands to end the meeting.