

**COUNCIL ON AGING BOARD MEETING**  
**Minutes of the Council on Aging Board Meeting held on**  
**December 14, 2023**

**at the Community Center and via Zoom**

**Members Present:** Jeanne Genereux, William Byron, Ruth Delmonico, Charlie Aaronson, Al Arthur, George Nisotel, Kathy O'Brien

**Associate Members Present:** Brian Burke and June Thall

**The Director of the COA,** Alyson Toole, was present.

Brian O'Sullivan and Kathleen Surdan will give their reports in person.

**Chair,** Jeanne Genereux, opened the meeting at 1:10 P.M.

The Minutes of the November 9th Meeting were accepted after several corrections. Charlie Aaronson and George Nisotel were present, but were not listed. On page 2, under Housing, item #1, the word, **been**, was omitted. In the Director's Report, regarding the Formula Grant, the money received is based on the number of people in town 60 years and older.

**Community Preservation Committee,** Charlie Aaronson

- The current application is to restore the portrait in the library.
- Red Acre affordable housing is requesting more funds.

**Minuteman Senior Services,** Charlie

- The meeting consisted of mostly administrative stuff. There is a great need for volunteers.
- Minuteman will train volunteers. Money Management is an area where many seniors have difficulty.
- Minuteman has a monthly newsletter which he'll email to COA Board members.

**Community Services Coordinator,** Brian O'Sullivan

- It's been another busy month. Housing and mental health challenges have been the focus.
- One person is homeless and was living in his/her car, now is staying at a shelter.
- One person is working full time, but doesn't earn enough to find an affordable apartment.
- There is affordable housing in the state, but nothing is available.
- A groundbreaking for the new Elizabeth Brook Apartments occurred on December 7th. There will be 37 affordable units for seniors. They will be ready in 2025.
- Mention was made of the article in the Independent about Brian's work and the needs in the town.

- The Friends gave Outreach \$500 in gift cards for Shaws and Market Basket in \$25 increments.

#### **Outreach, Kathleen Surdan**

- Margaret Decker, the outreach worker resigned.
- November, even though it was short month, had 10% more requests for help with finances and the need for caregivers.
- The Shine councilor is resigning at the end of the month. Minuteman will have to assign a new volunteer.
- Some of the adult children of seniors have called the COA about changes in the homes of their parents and concern about their behavior.
- Each town in the Nashoba School region received \$150.
- More people are qualifying for abatements.
- The Boxwood Tree workshop was a success. Discussion about increasing the number of participants. There was a wait list this year.
- Finally, the first person who applied for fuel received it. Also, the Friends have about five grants for fuel assistance.
- Lieutenant Kellie Barhight is hosting a Pizza Party for seniors. It's an opportunity to meet the new officer and have some fun.
- On December 27, there will be a concert featuring pianist Matteo Faso.
- The January newsletter will be in the Action Unlimited on 12/22. It's Elvis month.
- On the evening of January 31, the Library and Recreation department will an informational evening.

#### **Chair's Report, Jeanne Genereux**

- Not everyone has returned the "Code of Conduct" to Denise.
- The need for a new CPC representative was discussed. Charlie will stay on until a new representative is appointed. Al Arthur would like to attend several meetings with Charlie to see if it's a good fit.
- The death of Jim Sauta was mentioned. He was a strong advocate of the COA and was very involved through the years.

#### **Director's Report, Alyson Toole**

- Bridges, the intergenerational program with the 4th graders, was a huge success. The teachers want to continue the relationship with the volunteers as a monthly mystery reader.

- The Recreation Department is extending its after school program to five days a week from 3 - 6 PM. This will give the COA more opportunities for intergenerational activities.
- The van structure is hopefully going to be installed next week.
- The Formula Grant based on the town's population of seniors, sixty and older, will be \$27,118. Half of that has already been received.
- The **Stow Only** requirement brought up a great deal of discussion. Alyson defended her position and is backed by Denise.
- The HR director resigned.
- The Budget is due in January.
- There's been an up tick of Covid in Stow.
- Statistics for November
  1. Total people served -2306 duplicated, 421 unduplicated
  2. % Female - 68.2                      %Male - 31.8
  3. Average # of people signing in daily - 63
  4. Phone calls - 664
  5. Most popular activities - Food, exercise
  6. Interactions/services provided by COA Staff - 286 duplicated.
  7. Most provided service: transportation, general help, donations, and fitness.
  8. Transportation: Rides - 295              Riders - 44
  9. Volunteers and Tax Work-off hours - 245

**Other business-**

The secretary asked the Board to submit items for the agenda at least a week before the next Board Meeting.

There was no other business. The meeting adjourned at 3:20 P.M.

Respectfully submitted,

Ruth A. Delmonico, secretary