

MINUTES
COUNCIL ON AGING BOARD OF DIRECTORS MEETING
Wednesday, September 15, 2021

PRESENT:

Nancy Currie, Janice Fletcher, Sheila Gagnon, Maria Maggio, Maureen Saunders, Bill Scott, Barbara Van Houten and Carol Hamilton-Director

GUESTS:

Narice Casper, Town Clerk and Barry Cornwall.

ABSENT: Fred Monaco excused.

QUORUM:

A quorum was present.

CALL TO ORDER:

Meeting was called to order at 2:37 PM.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES:

Bill moved to approve the minutes of August 18, 2021 Nancy seconds the motion. Six members vote in favor. Maureen abstains. Motion passes.

BOARD TRAINING AND OPEN MEETING LAW: Narice Casper, Town Clerk provides a training on the open meeting law. She gives each Board member a handout and goes over the relevant topics and will take questions.

Narice explains that the purpose of the open meeting law is to provide a balance between accountability and government. This is accomplished by requiring open deliberation and allowing access. Open deliberation tells the public what, when where and why something is happening. There is also a provision for executive session for certain matters that are private, confidential or related to employment, but can become public once the matter is resolved. There are 10 reasons for conducting these type of sessions and the rules must be strictly followed as stated in the handout. Boards can also call emergency meetings if necessary if immediate action is required or there is an unexpected occurrence. Old business and new business must be specified on the agenda and agendas should be updated if new business arrives. The open meeting law does not guarantee that the public can necessarily participate and must get permission from the Chairperson.

There are some basic open meeting law requirements such as meeting agendas being posted conspicuously 48 hours in advance, these meetings are open to the public and minutes must be kept. There is a complaint process available through the AG's office. The complaint can be given to the chairman of the committee and the chairman can decide that some complaints are not valid. The chair will distribute the complaint to other members. The chair will follow the complaint process and inform the AG's office. Within 14 days. As an alternative, complaints can be referred to superior court. Members of boards and committees must certify that they have read and understand the open meeting law. The open meeting law applies to public bodies that are board members, committees and commissions that serve a public purpose. There are some exceptions such as a PTO. Narice also went over what a meeting included or does not such as an onsite inspection or attendance at another committees posted meeting as long as the comments are public and listed items on the agenda. You should not indicate on the agenda that there is a vote, unless you vote, so you could list it as a potential vote.

Narice also reviewed deliberating and decision making outside of a meeting. Deliberation is oral or written communication through various mediums and among a quorum of its public body on business within its jurisdiction. Exclusions can include the distribution of a meeting agenda and scheduling information or any other procedural information. However no opinion should be expressed about the materials. You can cancel meetings but you should post a sign saying that the meeting is cancelled.

Remote participation could be tricky for committees and terms of taking votes and a roll call must be taken. You can also move items around on the agenda. Minutes are drafts until they are approved.

NEW BUSINESS:

- 1) The Board discussed going from a 9 member board to a 7 member board. Many good points were brought out about the pros and cons of a smaller board. The current 9 member board is very large compared to other town Boards and it is getting difficult to recruit and retain members. Sometimes a small Board can be more efficient at decision making. A con would be would we have enough members to work on all of our committees? At present the Board has 8 members. How would we go from 9 members to 7? Attrition was suggested and when there is an even # the Chairman could vote to break a tie. The Board voted Sheila makes the motion and Bill seconds to recommend to the Board of Selectmen to reduce the COA Board from 9 members to 7 members. Motion passes unanimously. Carol will write up a letter and send this to the Board of Selectmen.
- 2) Discuss a name change for the Senior Center. The Board took this up as it had been suggested recently by the Capital Campaign Committee. The Board has discussed this in the past and did not make a name change and still feels it is an important decision that deserves time and careful consideration. The Board voted at this time to table this decision for future consideration which will be re-visited and referred to our marketing Committee for a more in-depth review and discussion. Maureen moves and Maria seconds the motion. Vote was unanimous. Carol will inform the capital campaign about the Board's decision.
- 3) The Board discussed increasing the hourly pay rate of Property Tax Relief Workers from the current \$13.75 per hour to \$14.25 per hour for the upcoming Property Tax Relief Program effective January 1, 2022. Bill moves we recommend to the BOS to increase the hourly rate of Property Tax Relief Workers to \$14.25 per hour which would match the upcoming minimum wage rate effective January 1, 2022. Maria seconded the motion. Motion passes unanimously. Carol will inform the Board of Selectmen of this decision in writing to be put on a future Agenda.

LIAISON REPORTS:

COA Boosters –

Old Colony Elder Services – Maureen reports that the first meeting will be in about 2 weeks.

Old Colony Planning Council – No Report

COMMITTEES:

Barbara discussed committee assignments noting that there cannot be more than 4 BOD Members on a committee. She distributed the outdated committee list, for new Board Members to consider what committees they would like to serve on.

ACCREDITATION – No Report

AGE FRIENDLY/DEMENTIA FRIENDLY – No Report

BUDGET, STAFFING AND FISCAL MANAGEMENT – Representatives of COA met with the Finance team on September 2, 2021 to discuss the Fiscal 2023 budget for Salaries and Expenses.

GOVERNANCE – The Governance Committee met on September 10, 2021 to go over the final recommendations of the Building Policy, Rules and Regulations. We passed out a copy of the revised documents to the Board members so that they could have a 30 day review of the changes. A vote will be taken next month. The Governance Committee will review the building application in the spring, in light of the building expansion. Bill votes to defer until the spring on review of the building application. Maureen seconds. Vote is unanimous.

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GROUNDS – No Report

EVALUATION – No Report

MARKETING, OUTREACH AND TECHNOLOGY – No report

NOMINATING COMMITTEE: Barbara Van Houten announces a new nominating committee consisting of Bill Scott, Janice Fletcher and Fred Monaco. This committee will meet on September 20, 2021 @ 10:00 am. (Changed to September 24th at 10:00 am.)

PROJECT DEVELOPMENT:

Senior Center Expansion Committee – The building committee will meet on September 16, at 10:00 am. The Project is still on time and on budget. Both inside and outside work is progressing as scheduled. Installation of the lighted bollards around the entrance means that the exterior work is 99% done with just filler pieces at the entrance left to do. The new stand in generator is on site and work is being done to bring this on line. The sheetrock is complete on the second floor and 85 % complete on the first floor. The next step are finishes such as paint and once primed the ceiling grids will start to go in. HVAC and electrical is being finalized. Offsite the millwork is being completed such as cabinets and trims. The site has approximately 20 workers per day.

STRATEGIC PLANNING – The strategic planning met on September 13, 2021 and worked on another section of the SWOT results. The committee will figure out how to condense and operationalize the various lists and categories. The Committee hopes to complete this process by December in preparation for having a new plan in January.

DIRECTOR'S REPORT:

- 1) The benches have been completed on the Webster's Wilderness Trail as of this week. The Boosters contributed \$3750 which was half the installation cost.
- 2) The Boosters also approved \$15,000 for half the cost of new carpet for the remaining rooms of the Senior Center that are not being covered by the town. I have contacted Michael Maresco to discuss procurement.
- 3) We are also looking into painting the office administration area and the computer lab as the new carpet does not work with the yellow paint in those two rooms. We are also getting a price from Page to replace the expandable accordion wall in the small meeting room with a new wall.
- 4) We are still working on furnishings and equipment with the interior designer.
- 5) The new Fire Chief Jeff Simpson is working with the COA and Veterans to kick off the Fire Dept.'s new program called community EMS. It is a mobile wellness and safety program that will go out to elder's homes and do assessments. They can also provide things like smoke alarms, house numbers and carbon monoxide detectors. They are having the official kick off and barbeque on September 24 from 11-2 which is a free event. Seats are still available 150 people and the event will be held at the VFW hall on Rt. 3A.
- 6) We have hired a new volunteer coordinator, Kristen Noonan who started her duties on September 7th. She comes with previous volunteer coordinator experience.
- 7) Our Lifelong Learning Kick Off will take place on September 20th at 9:30.
- 8) Paving will take place on September 22, 23 and 24 and the Senior Center will be closed to the public.
- 9) At this same time frame, new rug will be laid in the hallway. There will also be new paint in the hallway but that will come later. There two costs will be covered under the capital project.
- 10) When we met with the Financial Team on the Fiscal 2023 budget and discussed staffing particularly in light of the new expansion area we discussed the need for a Food Service Manager. The Financial Team approved the position

for part time and said we can hire the person as soon as possible. We drafted up a job description and have sent it to HR for approval. As soon as we have that in place we will advertise to hire a person who will hopefully get the café set up. The person would be responsible for running the café, working with volunteers and helping with special events and refreshments.

- 11) We will be offering flu shots on September 24, Oct 6 and October 12th.
- 12) We will be offering a gallery showing on September 28th at 10:00 am.
- 13) Masks are only requested at the Senior Center and cannot be required, per the town administrator.
- 14) The Social Day Care is now two days per week effective after Labor Day. Barbie Rugg the coordinator is interviewing more people as we try to get the word out on face book and social media, which seems to be helping.

VOTES TAKEN:

- 1) Bill moved to approve the minutes of August 18, 2021 Nancy seconds the motion. Six members vote in favor. Maureen abstains. Motion passes.
- 2) Sheila makes the motion and Bill seconds to recommend to the Board of Selectmen to reduce the COA Board from 9 members to 7 members. Motion passes unanimously.
- 3) The Board voted at this time to table a "name change for the Senior Center" decision for future consideration which will be re-visited and referred to our marketing Committee for a more in-depth review and discussion. Maureen moves and Maria seconds the motion. Vote was unanimous.
- 4) Bill moves we recommend to the BOS to increase the hourly rate of Property Tax Relief Workers to \$14.25 per hour which would match the upcoming minimum wage rate effective January 1, 2022. Maria seconded the motion. Motion passes unanimously.
- 5) The Governance Committee will review the building application in the spring, in light of the building expansion. Bill votes to defer until the spring on the review of the building application. Maureen seconds. Vote is unanimous.

NEXT MEETING: October 20, 2021 @ 3:30PM

ADJOURNMENT: The meeting was adjourned at 5:05 pm. Bill makes the motion and Sheila seconds the motion. Motion passes unanimously.

Respectfully submitted,

Carol Hamilton, Director COA