

# Council on Aging Board Meeting Minutes

Meeting Date: Thursday, February 22, 2024

The regular meeting of the Council on Aging Board was held on Thursday, February 22, 2024, at 10:00am at the Walpole Council of Aging with the following members present; Josette Burke, Janet Fasanello, Mary Jones, Sandhya Malur, Jerry Reicher, Marcia St Louis, Jim Pellegrine, JoAnne Mulligan, and Linda Winslow. Also in attendance was COA Director Kerri McManama, Jillian Nauman, and Nancy Aicardi. Four (4) guests were in attendance.

Absent: Joanne DiPietro, Meaghan Priest

10:05 AM: The Monthly Meeting was called to order by Josette Burke

1. Attendance was taken, and then the Pledge of Allegiance was recited.
2. Review of January Meeting Minutes
  - No corrections were noted. Janet motioned to approve, and Jerry seconded
  - The vote to accept the minutes was unanimous
3. Outreach Update – Jillian Nauman (slides were provided)
  - The total outreach for January was 514 to 267 unique individuals
  - Now that the holidays are over, the numbers are going up again
  - The bulk of the number is still by telephone, although staff referrals are increasing all the time
  - AARP Taxes had the largest number at 98
  - Crisis Intervention – involves “anything you drop everything for”
    - a. It involves an individual with an urgent issue and requiring a lot of case management and multiple agencies
    - b. It can be medical, financial, food insecurity, and sometimes involves a home visit
    - c. Each instance usually involves a dozen phone calls
    - d. Often the family is not local
  - Grandparent Group is the “Good News” story this month - Jillian received the \$500 grant for an intergenerational activity
    - a. It's scheduled for May 17th and will be paint your own pottery and pizza
    - b. The difficulty in planning is the wide range in age of the children and the grandparents
2. Jim Johnson, Town Administrator
  - Prison – closed since June
    - a. State wants to keep it in the event the need arises for another prison
    - b. Would need a lot of updating/renovations - \$30M in electrical updates alone
    - c. Will not be used for migrants as it's not appropriate in current condition
    - d. Said that it was a possibility that Home2Suites hotel location on Route 1 might build a second tower, but there is no indication that the owner is interested in contracting with the State at this time
  - High school renovation
    - a. Will be on the Fall Town Meeting Agenda
    - b. Will be asking for up to \$40M to be paid over 30, possibly over 40 years
    - c. Town shouldn't have to do an override
  - Tri County
    - a. Tri County going for a 35-year term
    - b. Walpole hopes to phase the cost into the budget to hopefully have \$1.1M to \$1.2M in 5 years

- MBTA zoning
    - a. The Town needs a 50% vote to approve – the town of Milton was brought up as they just voted no and already have lost over \$100,000 in grant money
    - b. The plan needs to be in place by 2024, but Jim doesn't feel it will have a big impact
  - Senior Tax relief
    - a. Nothing on the Spring Town Meeting, possibly the Fall Town Meeting
    - b. He referenced the Municipal Empowerment Act, and watching the outcome of another town attempting to pass a senior means tax with the potential for something similar in the future here in Walpole
  - Senior housing
    - a. Senior housing is no longer under Town control, it's all State run now
    - b. There are no State resources to build additional units
  - Update on multi-unit buildings
    - a. Walpole is in safe harbor, but must follow through with projects in the pipeline
    - b. Pinnacle Point, Darwin, and Pleasant Street near the Norwood line are grandfathered in
    - c. Gilmore's – a friendly 40B – will be coming online soon
    - d. Over 100 units of over 55 housing to be built up by Renmar Road
    - e. East Walpole clock tower land had been permitted, but developer backed off
    - f. Walpole needs to change zoning to "inclusionary zoning" – anything over six units (condos, apartments) must have 10% affordable housing
    - g. Pinnacle Point – one of the owners has blocked public access on the Pinnacle Trail, so people are no longer able to walk the trail from beginning to end
  - Biggest budget concern
    - a. The schools – schools want \$450,000 more than what is currently in the budget
    - b. On a positive note, the Town has rented out the old Johnson Middle School for a ten-year period
3. Center Update – Kerri McManama (slides were provided)
- Check-ins
    - a. There was a total of 3,666 check-ins for the month of January
    - b. The 70 - 79 age group remains the largest participant age group, but the 60 – 69 age group is now over 20% of total participants, a big change from the past
    - c. The average daily attendance for January was 167, down a little due to holidays and weather closings
  - January Events in Review
    - a. Floral Design (always a sellout) they will help with the flowers for the 300 Gala
    - b. Beginner iPhone/iPad class is in the process of scheduling future classes
    - c. Center Birthday Party – 5 years at South Street was celebrated
    - d. Movie Matinee – Barbie, 70 people signed up – due to so many attendees, the smoke alarm was set off making popcorn for everyone
    - e. Boston Post Cane – oldest man is Arthur Landfors. He started doing Nantucket basket weaving in his later life, and has had some of his works on display at the Smithsonian
  - Staffing Update
    - a. The Center welcomed Mimi Connell, the new Program Coordinator
      - 1. She will work 24 hours/week and will be flexible during the summer
      - 2. Mimi has many years' experience in Project Management. Also time with Cultural Council and Community Treasures
  - Notable
    - a. AARP Taxes continuing in April – reserving April for weather reschedules currently
    - b. Priority Registration – 73 walk-ins for Priority and 122 calls (caught up around noon)
    - c. Out of Town registrations – held the next day – 9 walk-ins and 35 calls (caught up by 11)
4. Finance Update – Sandhya (slides were provided)
- Total spent in January was \$2,571.45 (Operating Budget)
    - a. FY spending is right on target
    - b. Two safety steps to get onto the bus (one for each) were purchased

- A total of \$1,269.30 of the Formula Grant was spent in January (does not include funds spent on salaries)
  - a. Steve's exercises classes remain the biggest piece
  - b. The cost averages \$12 per person
- Gifts
  - a. The Center received \$350.00 in gifts in January
  - b. A total of \$1,132.04 was spent in January for the Roche Bros Holiday Open House catering
  - c. The Gift Account balance is \$12,317.64

#### 5. Old Business

- Front Door Decal
  - a. There will be as much emphasis on COA as Senior Center on the decal
  - b. Jerry provided three samples for Board review
  - c. The decal will be 15" to 20" in width, and white works best
  - d. Jerry needs consensus prior to going forward, and a vote was taken on the three images
    - 1. The first sample received three votes, the second sample received no votes and the third sample received six votes
    - 2. Jerry will provide a finished sample of the third mockup for the March meeting

#### 6. New Business

- Walpole Housing Update
  - a. Monique Bergeron, the new Executive Director, has appointed a new Resident Services Director
- Master Plan Update
  - a. There is nothing new to report
- Friends of Walpole Elders
  - a. Rich McCarthy provided a report via email to Linda as he was unable to attend
  - b. Nothing new to report
- Select Board Update
  - a. RTM Apportionment and Elections: Town Clerk Liz Gaffey updated the Board on preparation for upcoming elections as well as the apportionment of Representatives to Town Meeting
    - 1. This year Precincts 2 & 3 will increase by one RTM, while Precincts 4 & 5 will decrease by one RTM
    - 2. The Board also took this time to acknowledge the exceptional work of Liz and her team in preparing for and holding elections in Town
  - b. Johnson Middle School Usage
    - 1. The Board voted unanimously to approve the agreements with The Education Collaborative (TEC) and the Bi-County Collaborative (BICO) to lease the JMS building on completion of the new school
    - 2. A huge Thank You to the Town Administrator's office and School Superintendent's office for their work in reaching this agreement
  - c. S & W Pump Station
    - 1. Town Administrator Jim Johnson updated the Board on the Sewer and Water Commission's investigations and planning for a pump station near the Norwood line
    - 2. More to come as locations are considered and the details of the plan are worked out
  - d. Multi-Family Zoning Changes
    - 1. Director of Community and Economic Development Patrick Deschenes briefed the Board on these proposed zoning changes that will be before Spring Town Meeting
    - 2. This revision would create a commonsense overlay district downtown that would allow Walpole to meet the State mandate without making radical changes to the current interface between the Central Business District and adjacent General Residential zoning
- Looking ahead
  - a. March 2024 – Monique Bergeron, Executive Director Walpole Housing
  - b. April 2024 – Business Meeting
  - c. May 2024 – Jillian Nauman to speak on the Grandparents Group
- Board Terms
  - a. Janet, Linda, JoAnne M and Jerry's terms end March 31<sup>st</sup>
  - b. Need to respond to inquiry from Town whether they wish to continue on the Board

#### 7. Open Forum

- a. No questions from the guests

**Next Meeting scheduled for March 28th, 10:00 AM at the Center**

Janet motioned, and Sandhya seconded

After a unanimous vote, the Meeting was adjourned at 11:30 AM