

Council on Aging Board Meeting Minutes

Meeting Dat: Thursday, December 17th, 2020

A meeting of the Council on Aging Board was held on Thursday, December 17, 2020 at 10am via Zoom with the following members present: Richard McCarthy, Josette Burke, Linda Winslow, Janet Fasanello, Jim Pelligrene, Mary Jones, and Rosanne Rockwell. Also in attendance was the COA Director Kerri McManama, COA Assistant Director Debbie Fradkin, and COA Outreach Worker Laurel St. Pierre.

10:03 AM: Meeting was called to order by Board Chair, Richard McCarthy.

Board Chair Richard McCarthy called for a review of the previous month's minutes and seeing none, made a motion to accept the minutes. Josette moved and Linda seconded. It was a unanimous vote.

COA Director Kerri McManama provided a slide presentation on statistics and programming at the Center. Presentation attached.

The Presentation covered:

- A review of the November and current statistics for outreach and programming. The Outreach numbers continue at high levels, in November totaling 920. The statistics continue to follow a similar curve to the prior year, however the numbers are far greater indicating the Department is providing more services than last year at this time.
 - Reasons cited for the increase include; continued support of the Pantry programs, Medicare Part D Open Enrollment, and an ongoing COA Survey to re-engage over 1000 Center participants to determine their needs, barriers to service and outreach requests.
 - Many survey contacts have resulted in Outreach contacts for specific issues or well being checks.
 - Laurel shared that while Medicare Part D Open Enrollment has ended, Fuel Assistance though Self Help is now open and busy. This program does have some challenges with COVID relative to paperwork and signature.
- Holidays Stroll plans were updated as the event is postponed today due to the Winter Storm which has also closed all Town Buildings. The Department is looking ahead to the weather forecast for next week and seeking the best

weather day to host the event, likely Monday the 21st. The postponement has been communicated to the 120 registrants, the community partners and Select Board.

- The Department also continues at this time to provide coverage for the VSO, which will extend now until a new VSO is hired. The current VSO will not be returning to his position and it has been posted with the Town. Phone coverage support continues through the Veterans Committee, a Senior Tax Work Off Volunteer and Department. Benefits assistance, reporting, and coordination is being provided by the Department. COA is working to begin the process with Chapter 115 beneficiaries to determine payments for first half of 2021. This will be a large effort as so much paperwork is required.
- *Linda Winslow shared with the group the savings she was personally able to find utilizing the SHINE program for Medicare Part D Open Enrollment and encouraged all to share the benefits of a med review. Kerri referenced figures received from the SHINE Counselor to share that these reviews saved a total annualized savings of \$91,640 after the review of 112 community members. SHINE made new recommendations for 75 of the participants (67%) and saved these 75 participants an average of \$1,222.*
- *Josette discussed the possibility of meeting in-person at a future meeting in January. Kerri shared that the Department frequently checks in with the Board of Health around operations at the Senior Center, especially in light of the increase in cases in Walpole and the new designation of "red" by the State metrics. Given these numbers and the additional strain that Christmas holiday celebrations may provide on the number of cases, it is unlikely the Board of Health would recommend an in person meeting in January. Josette suggested that perhaps the Board can aim for Spring.*

The next Board Meeting is scheduled for January at 28am via Zoom Teleconference.

Richard McCarthy made a motion to adjourn the meeting at 10:27 AM.