

Council on Aging Board Meeting Minutes

Meeting Date: Thursday, March 24, 2022

A meeting of the Council on Aging Board was held on Thursday, March 24, 2022, at 10:00am at the Walpole Council of Aging with the following members present; Josette Burke, Linda Winslow, Jim Pellegrine, Mary Jones, Meagan Priest, Sandhya Malur, Marcia St. Louis and Joanne DiPietro. Also in attendance was COA Director Kerri McManama, COA Assistant Director Debbie Fradkin, COA Outreach Coordinator Laurel St. Pierre and Nancy Aicardi. Three guests were also present.

Absent: Richard McCarthy, Janet Fasanello, Roseanne Rockwell

10:03 AM: The Meeting was called to order by Josette Burke

1. Introduction of Sandy Pellegrine, RN, Certified Dementia Practitioner

- Dementia is a system of diseases, usually progressive and normally irreversible. It is a loss of mental function that can affect language, memory, visual and spatial abilities, or judgement
 - a. Symptoms include forgetfulness, agitation, remembrance of things from the past rather than current, they may not remember your name, but will remember emotions associated with you (I like you.)
 - b. Types of Irreversible Dementia
 - Doctors will usually classify the type of dementia
 - CT Scans will help show any damage/progression
 - **Alzheimer's disease**: most common, is a progressive brain disease that damages brain cells
 - **Vascular dementia**: brain damage from impaired blood flow such as stroke
 - **Frontotemporal dementia**: progressive condition which predominantly affects language issues, behavior and personality
 - **Lewy body dementia**: progressive decline in mental abilities, visual hallucination and Parkinson's disease-like symptoms are common
 - c. **Parkinson's disease**: 50-80 percent of people with Parkinson's develops dementia as their disease progresses
 - d. Their perception is their reality – we need to meet them where they are
 - e. Progression
 - They may have problems bathing, brushing teeth, verbalizing, dressing, toileting, and eating and drinking
 - It's very important to maintain their routine, we need to adjust our approach when we see them getting frustrated
 - Take their keys away – now a doctor or the Registry can conduct an assessment test and take the keys away based on results
 - Sundowning – a state of confusion occurring in the late afternoon and spanning into the night
 - i. Reduce background noise
 - ii. Be careful what's on the TV so they don't assume it's reality
 - f. Ways to help: reminisce, play music that they will remember, touch helps, talk with a smile and watch your non-verbal communication, perhaps "little fibs" then change topic, don't point out their mistakes
 - g. It's very important to take care of yourself

2. Review of February 24th Meeting Minutes

- No corrections or admissions - Jim Pellegrine made a motion to accept, and Linda Winslow seconded. The vote to accept the Minutes was unanimous

3. Outreach Review – Laurel St. Pierre
 - Slides were provided
 - Total for month was 430, a decrease from February
 - Numbers seeing an increase were fuel assistance, housing, memory café and medical rides
 - Tax assistance, foot care and well-being check numbers were down
 - Laurel mentioned that many people are not aware of the Circuit Breaker tax break
 - a. Must be 65, own own home, live in MA for 10 years, and meet income restrictions
4. Center Statistics – Kerri McManama
 - There has been a surge in younger seniors
 - Attendance most days is over 125
 - The Select Board has set up a By-law Review Committee
 - a. There is not a lot to change in our By-Laws to comply as we updated them last year
 - b. We need to make changes in gender neutral language
 - There were 190 phone calls for April/May registration as it was for two months
 - The on-line registration system is going well – many people will register for regular classes and then call for special events – this saves much time for staff
 - Update re Ford Transit Connect – paperwork is now in order and lettering should take place within the next few days – this will be a big help with medical appointments as members will no longer have to climb stairs
5. Finance Update – Jim Pellegrine
 - Total expenses were 1,222.31
 - A total of \$3,160.33 of the Formula Grant was spent in February
6. Old Business
 - Walpole Housing Authority Meeting Update
 - a. Linda and Janet attended the last meeting
 - b. Linda is glad that the COA Board has built a bridge with the Housing Authority
 - c. The Housing Authority is doing some updating at both Neponset View and Diamond Terrace
 - d. The Housing's accountant mentioned that Walpole is doing a better job than other towns
 - e. Housing continues to be a big issue country-wide – it's under both State and Federal Regulations, so in many ways, Denise's hands are tied
 - Select Board Update
 - a. Recreation Update - Walpole Day will be June 11th, Concerts on the Common as well as other Recreation-sponsored events will return
 - b. Contract Awards – Downtown Traffic Planning Study, Programming & Feasibility Study of the Rec Dept, and bathroom facility to be built at South Walpole Sports Complex
 - c. WPD Update – Rob Kilroy appointed as Deputy Chief of Police
 - d. Norfolk Proposed Solar Project – Board voted unanimously to not act on the County's offer to lease land at the Agricultural School, and once again reiterated its opposition to this project in its current form
 - e. Old Town Hall – even with updates to heating system and exterior of building, it is clear that the Town will need to put additional funds into the building prior to entertaining future bids
 - f. JMS Building – a review of the building is underway to consider uses for the building upon completion of the new school
 - Friends of Walpole Update – representative unable to attend

- Topics/Speakers for Upcoming Meetings
 - a. April – will be a regular meeting as Josette and Jim will both be on vacation – Linda & Sandhya will conduct the meeting
 - b. May – Meagan will discuss ways to talk to and assist people with a new diagnosis of dementia
 - c. June – Jim Johnson, Town Administrator will be here
- 7. New Business
 - a. Formation of Election Committee at May's Meeting
 - b. Please think of Topics/Questions for Jim Johnson
 - c. Kerri will post the Select Board Update going forward
- 8. Open Forum
 - a. Natalie McComb, guest, had previously spoken to Kerri regarding a concern she has
 - Since there is no longer a Town newspaper, she would like to see a regularly scheduled event on what is going on in Town followed by a Q & A period
 - Kerri had previously forwarded Natalie's concern to Jim Johnson – it is hoped he will address this when he is here for the June Board Meeting

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

After a unanimous vote, the Meeting was adjourned at 11:03 AM