



Council on Aging Board Meeting Minutes

Meeting Date: Thursday, October 29, 2020

A meeting of the Council on Aging Board was held on Thursday, October 20, 2020 at 10am via Zoom with the following members present: Richard McCarthy, Josette Burke, Linda Winslow, Janet Fasanello, Jim Pelligrene. Also in attendance was the COA Director Kerri McManama, COA Assistant Director Debbie Fradkin, and COA Outreach Worker Laurel St. Pierre.

10:05 AM: Meeting was called to order by Richard McCarthy.

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

The Presentation covered:

- A review of the September and current statistics demonstrates Outreach is again on the rise as we often see in the fall with Open Enrollment for Medicare Part D. 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, Open Enrollment, and an ongoing COA Survey to re-engage over 1000 Center participants to determine their needs, barriers to service and outreach requests.
 - *Josette indicated she received the call for the survey and noted it was a positive experience with good follow-up questions.*
 - Laurel St. Pierre provided an overview for the SHINE Open Enrollment process and reported it is going smoothly at this time. The efforts undertaken by Outreach and SHINE in 2019 to advance the process have been incredibly useful to the process this year. All seniors are encouraged to seek this free medication review by SHINE and are reminded that the requests to review are due before Thanksgiving on the 11/25. Laurel also reminded the Board that Fuel Assistance begins on November 1.
- The presentation also highlighted an update on recently started Indoor Programming and showcased photos from September during the end of the Patio Programming Outdoors.
 - *Janet asked about the use of other spaces in the building for programming. Kerri responded that given the social distance requirements at this time, program in the*

rooms upstairs would be quite limited as they would require more than 6 feet between participants. The COA team will continue to work to increase in-person programming with safety standards in place as directed by the BOH.

- Debbie Fradkin provided an overview and update on the Senior Tax Work Off Program. She highlighted the application process for 2021, the current status of Tax Work Off, and the creative solutions she is working on to ensure participants can maximize their benefit during the pandemic. She is working on job descriptions that will allow for remote work should that be necessary or desirable for the participant. The COA Survey is a recent innovation that is helping participants complete their hours.
- The Walpole Community Food Pantry has officially relocated to their new location in Walpole Park South. An overview was provided regarding this transition, the current role of the COA, and the steps necessary to transition the service to the Pantry completely; ordering process, volunteers and delivery/pick ups management and coordination.
- The Department also continues at this time to provide coverage for the VSO, which will likely extend until at least December 7th. Phone coverage support through the Veterans Committee, a Senior Tax Work Off Volunteer and Department. Benefits assistance, reporting, and coordination is being provided by the Department.

Discussion followed the presentation:

Richard McCarthy called for a vote of the Board on dates for both November and December relative to holidays.

The Board voted unanimously in favor of November 19th and December 17th for the next two meeting dates. Kerri to update Zoom and resend meeting notifications.

Linda requested information re the exact location of the new Pantry address in Walpole Park South.

The Board discussed the possibility of meeting in-person at future meetings. Per BOS Mark Gallivan, the group discussed utilizing meeting space at Town Hall which would allow for social distancing. Following discussion the group determined this should be revisited in January with the potential for an in-person meeting at the end of that month. The Board requests the Department research the availability of space for the purposes on an in-person meeting in January.

The next Board Meeting is scheduled for November 19th at 10am via Zoom Teleconference.

Richard McCarthy made a motion to adjourn the meeting at 10:55 AM.