

Council on Aging Board Meeting Minutes

Meeting Date: Thursday, November 17, 2022

The regular meeting of the Council on Aging Board was held on Thursday, November 17, 2022, at 10:00am at the Walpole Council of Aging with the following members present; Josette Burke, Mary Jones, Sandhya Malur, Janet Fasanello, Linda Winslow, Joanne DiPrieto, and Meaghan Priest. Also in attendance was COA Director Kerri McManama, COA Assistant Director Debbie Fradkin, COA Outreach Coordinator Jillian Newman and Nancy Aicardi. Two (2) guests were in attendance.

Absent: Jim Pellegrine, Marcia St. Louis

The Pledge of Allegiance was recited by all in attendance

Attendance was taken

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

1. Review of October Meeting Minutes

- Linda Winslow indicated two minor corrections under #2 "Review of September Meeting Minutes". Under "Discussion of Gifts", in lines "a" and "b", the word "unanimous" should be changed to "anonymous".
- Janet motioned and Sandhya seconded the motion to accept the October Minutes with the two changes
- The October Minutes with changes were accepted by a unanimous vote

2. Outreach Update – Jillian Newman (see slides)

- The total Outreach number for October was 415 with 235 unique individuals
 - a. The most common method was by phone
 - b. The most common referral method was self, but the Center is increasingly seeing more families coming in with concerns about their family member
 - c. Jillian provided slides including a Pie Chart with the breakdown of categories of Outreach
 - 1. Categories showing increased numbers are:
 - Crisis Intervention
 - Medicare/MassHealth due especially to Open Enrollment period
 - Medical Rides
 - 2. The Center is more than ever seeing 90-year-olds applying for Fuel Assistance for the first time
 - The Center's goal is to have the most complete documentation for the most complete application to prevent complications with the client receiving Fuel Assistance
 - d. The Board commended Laurel and Jillian for the fact that people trust them enough to come forward and seek their assistance

3. State of the Center – Kerri McManama (slides were provided)

- Growth
 - a. Numbers are still increasing across multiple categories: check ins, daily attendance, rides
 - b. The Board encouraged the Center to prioritize Walpole residents for program registration to ensure Walpole residents can participate in their desired activities as many surrounding Centers do this. Currently, In Town participation is 71% and Out of Town is 29%

- c. Year to Date, the Total Participation is 30,000. This number includes check ins, rides, and Outreach
- d. There have been increases across most categories – Fitness/Exercise, Recreation, Social Events, Community Education and HESSCO
- e. Breakfast officially launched in October - the Center is seeing a high number of men coming in
- f. The collaboration with the BOH for the Flu Clinic and Health Fair had the highest participation to date. All appointments were filled and there was a wait list
- Upcoming Events in November
 - a. Fire Safety Luncheon
 - b. “Until Help Arrives” (rescheduled)
 - c. Holiday Lights Tour
 - d. Holiday Open House – December 16th
 - e. Holiday Songs and Trivia with Blessed Sacrament School students
 - 1. Blessed Sacrament wants to get their students more involved with the COA
 - f. SHINE Update
 - 1. Total Beneficiaries – 117
 - 2. Number of recommendations to change plans – 52 (44%)
 - 3. Average projection cost savings per beneficiary with recommendation to change plans - \$751 in 2023
 - 4. Deadline to request a Part D Review is the week of November 21st, any requests after then are referred to HESSCO
 - 5. Marcia St. Louis wants to share that she completed her inquiry with Marv and will save \$338.40 next year. She would be happy to speak with anyone about her positive experience
 - g. The hope is that the Program Coordinator position will be filled after the first of the year
 - 1. Interviews have been completed
 - 2. An Offer has been sent out
 - h. Mark Bryson, The Veterans Services Agent has resigned – The Center will have to assist in the interim until a new Agent is hired
- 4. Finance Update – (Sandhya Malur provided slides)
 - Total spent in September was \$2,697.92 (Operating Budget)
 - a. On track for FY spending (approximately 18% has been used FYTD)
 - A total of \$871.52 of the Formula Grant was spent in October (does not include funds spent on salaries)
 - a. The number of seniors jumped to over 7,000
 - b. The Center received \$85,392.00 for FY23 (\$12/senior)
 - c. The FY24 amount may change as the Federal Census numbers are not in yet
 - Gifts
 - a. The Center received a total of \$300 in gifts in September
- 5. Old Business
 - Outside Use Policy (see slides)
 - a. Joanne DiPietro brought up two changes for the Application
 - 1. Need to take out “if required” in the line about insurance – an Insurance Binder should be required
 - 2. Need to add a line stating Application is subject to approval and may be denied. This information is in the Policy, but to avoid any issues, it should also be on the Application
 - b. A decision was made to put off the vote at this time
 - 1. The changes need to be made to the Application
 - 2. The COA needs to go back through the applicable Town Departments with the changes

6. New Business

- Walpole Housing Update
 - a. The Board has not replaced the empty seat at this time
 - b. It is now required that the Board have a Tenant Representative
- Master Plan Update
 - a. The process is still on hold as they have not received the Red Line copy from the Consultant
 - b. The Committee is hoping to receive the Red Line version of the Plan in December
- Select Board Update (see sheet provided by Ben)
 - a. The Board vote to open the warrant for Spring Town Meeting and anticipate closing it on January 10, 2023
 - b. Summer Street 40B
 1. The Town was notified by the developer that it intends to begin preliminary work in the coming weeks
 2. Developer anticipates pulling permits in the Spring of 2023
 - c. Gilmore Site Development
 1. The Board voted unanimously to approve the Local Initiative Program (LIP) application and agreement with the developer for this site
 2. The project will now go before the ZBA and follow the standard process of project review for permitting
 3. The developer has revised the building to be more inviting to the public as well as purchasing two adjacent multi-family properties to expand and allow for a preferable site layout and additional green space
 - d. Route 1A construction
 1. The State has committed to milling and re-paving the section of 1A near the Aggie to the railroad bridge overpass. The Town had requested this for the winter months.
 2. The bridge over the Neponset River at North Street is also nearing completion
 3. Updates and other project information can be found at: <https://www.walpole-ma.gov/1AProject>
 - e. Pool Replacement Study
 1. The Board voted unanimously to sign a contract with Vertex to study the two Town pools and make recommendations
 - f. OPEB Audit (Other Post-Employment Benefits)
 1. This is a major liability for the Town over the long term
 2. The auditors were generally supportive of the Town's plan for funding and made additional recommendations
 - g. Tax Rate Classification Hearing
 1. The Board voted 4-1-0 to keep the residential-commercial shift at 1.275
 2. This calculation shifts a portion of the tax burden from residential properties to commercial properties
 3. The Board of Assessors had recommended to slightly increase the shift to 1.30
 4. The Select Board then voted 5-0-0 to increase the maximum amount that a qualified volunteer can earn in property tax relief
- Friends of Walpole Update
 - a. Josette said that Thank Yous were sent via email to 3 members for the funds to send 3 Board members to go to MCOA Fall Conference in Falmouth
- Topics for Future Meetings:
 - a. December: Bill Abbott on the AARP Circuit Breaker
 - b. January: Jim Johnson (rescheduled)
 - c. February: Sandy Pellegrine
 - d. March: open currently
 - e. April: Brendan Croak of the Recreation Department
 - f. Josette and Linda met with Senator Michael Rush and his assistant after his presentation at the Center

1. They asked that he provide an update such as Select Board Update on a regular basis
 2. Senator Rush and his assistant agreed to not only provide a written update, but want to come on a regular basis to the COA
 - g. Meaghan suggested that either the Board or the Center bring in someone from the PACE program (this is an Elder Service Plan for people who are nursing home eligible but choose to stay at home)
7. Open Forum
- One Guest mentioned that she had been a victim of Circuit Breaker Fraud
 - a. She only found out after receiving a letter saying she had applied for too high an amount
 - b. Cautioned that this is one more way that seniors are vulnerable

Next Meeting scheduled for December 15th, 10:00 AM at the Center

Josette asked for a Motion to Adjourn – Joanne motioned, and Sandhya seconded

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