

North Reading Council on Aging Meeting Minutes Tuesday, April 18, 2023

Attendees:

Daniel Greenberg, Chairman, Katherine McCabe Scott, Vice Chair, Maxine McPherson, Clerk, Valerie Schiavone, Member, Margie Salt, Member and Kim Manzelli Director, Senior Center, Angela Mauceri, Friends of the COA

Meeting called to order by Dan Greenberg

Minutes from the Last Meeting – the March 2023 minutes were approved by the Board.

Reports from work groups:

- —**Systems and operations** – Maxine, Larry was absent. Maxine met with the director Kim. They discussed a variety of issues at the Senior Center. Maxine put something up on the Martins Landing Facebook site about volunteering and Kim has had some interest from this. Maxine posted info on the Walk MA Challenge on the Facebook page and in her building's newsletter. Dan mentioned that they are looking for drivers for medical appointments.
- — **Programming** – Katherine is looking at what other local Senior Centers are doing. Stoneham has an extensive site and charges \$3 for exercise classes and for grocery shopping transportation. Katherine suggested looking into a more extensive, professional web page and include links to a Friends page for donations. Angela may have someone interested in web page design and will pass the info to Kim. Web pages have to be approved by the Town. Kim has discussed improving the site with the Town Administrator. Town is looking for an IT person for this and not interested in making changes right now.
- —**Grants** – Margie and Valarie are looking into available grants such as Massachusetts and Federal grants, AARP grants etc. Also looking for other grants that might pay for use of space. They will coordinate grant requests with the Town Transportation Committee to avoid duplication.

Friends of the COA/Senior Center: (Angela)

—Town Yard Sale is coming along. The maps for the Sale are going to the printer on April 19. There are about 70 sites including 7 tables at the Town Hall.

—Other projects will be growing giant pumpkins and gardening. There will be a tomato plant give away. A reservation is needed to get one. Additional plants will be available for purchase.

Director's Report : (Kim)

Program Update:

- Meal Program is ongoing 5 days/week with good participation.
- Volunteer base is being increased to support programs.
- Monthly special events and Monday exercise classes are at capacity.
- Aldersgate Church has agreed to use of space every Monday, beginning September 11, 2023. Cost is \$125/week for use. Friends of the COA have agreed to fund a 3 month trial. If trial is successful, plan would be to request Town funding to pay for this alternative space long term.
- Weekly Tuesday Shopping Trips to Market Basket and Walmart supported by second van and driver. Ongoing.
- MA COA Walk Mass Challenge Kick Off hosted at the Senior Center April 25 at 1pm- all are welcome to attend and participate! Please promote this event and program! (Flyers were sent to Council members for posting around NR.)

Communication and Outreach:

- The Newsletter is in the process of revision.
- Weekly email communication sent out to Senior Center email group has had positive feedback and the contact list is growing.
- North Reading Transcript is providing weekly Senior Center Updates. New weekly column named “Our Place on the Hill”
- Meeting with Norcam to increase publicity on their bulletin board

Facilities:

- New tables were delivered on 3/30 and are much easier when transitioning the room.
- Installing a Steam table is in process. Funding from Formula Grant and Capital Budget Request
- Interior paint - by Town in the future is still being considered
- Outside a sustainable garden is being assessed by Garden Club – date TBD to refresh garden bed
- Parking lot areas regraded by Town with dirt/gravel due to safety issues. Paving in future.
- Outdoor and indoor lighting to be replaced with LED fixtures by Town.
- Traffic Pattern reviewed by Town Engineer and Sergeant Derek Howe for safety concerns. Town Engineer to discuss with Town Planner.
- Historic District Commission approved removal of stage to provide more seating area, application in process for approval of outdoor seating area behind building.
- Quotes in process for removal of rug and to install flooring, as well as handicap door buttons.
- Trinity Church volunteers to come out Saturday 5/6/2023 for yard clean up and plantings.
- Review of Intergenerational Community Center Program/ Space Needs Assessment. Kim sent floor plans to Council members.
- Valarie has a contact at the Masonic Lodge and there maybe space available for programs. She will contact Kim.

Budget:

- Asking for an increase in the limit of revolving fund /warrant for Town Meeting
- Determining goals/ financial means to support future programs
- Possible summer intern opportunity using current funds

Old Business: (Dan)

The new Town Transportation Committee has met twice. There are 4 members (still looking for a fifth member). They are looking into identifying what the transportation needs are. There is a need for drivers to take people to

medical appointments, especially into Boston or other south locations. The committee is looking at several mixed solutions, like taking someone going to Boston to a rail station or other location where they can get public transport to Boston. What would the cost be? Is there grant money, etc.

Suggestion made that maybe a volunteer could accompany a patient on public transportation (maybe a liability issue)

New Business:

No new business.

The next COA is set for May 23 at 5:30 via zoom.

Meeting adjourned.

Respectfully submitted,
Maxine MacPherson
Board Member