

Town of Boxborough

Council on Aging

Meeting Minutes

Meeting Date: March 12, 2020
Time: 3:00 PM
Place: Morse/Hilberg Room, Town Hall, 29 Middle Road, Boxborough
Members Present: Karen Whitcomb, Chair; Barbara Birt, Taryn Light, Bill Litant
Members Absent: Tina Bhatia, Anne Canfield, Barbara Wheeler
Others Attendees: Lauren Abraham, COA Director; Susan Bak, Select Board Liaison; John Fallon, FCOA Liaison

Minutes:

- The meeting was called to order at 3:00 PM by Chair Karen Whitcomb.
- Barbara Birt volunteered to take minutes in the absence of the Secretary, Barbara Wheeler.
- **January minutes:** The minutes for February 13, 2020, were amended. They were unanimously approved as amended.
- **Town Meeting Articles of concern to the COA:** The Board voted to authorize the Chair to recommend the following articles for the upcoming Town Meeting: 1. Senior Tax Work Off Proxy Worker; 2. Renewal of Community Center lease. Karen will email Ryan Ferrara, Town Administrator and Jennifer Barrett, Town Accountant, with these recommendations.
- **Social Services Update:** Lauren reported on the activity of the Social Services intern during the month of February versus last February, along with charts of the activity of the last 12 months versus the similar time frame last year, and ages of clients under and over 60. The needs most common in February were Long Term Care Planning, Financial Assistance, and Housing Assistance.
- **Buzz Update:** The April Buzz is in a fluid state at this time. Many of the featured events are being cancelled. We may have a very short issue for April.
- **Lauren reported on the status of the FCOA Middlesex Savings Bank Grant and the COA Budget:** No further Bank grant money has been spent during the month but \$7800 has been earmarked for the Memory Café planning and program expenses. The COA budget is in good shape with money coming in for classes and from the Elder Affairs grant.
- **Representation at Small/Rural Conference being held on April 30 in Sturbridge:** Karen has agreed to attend representing our board.
- **Building Committee Liaison Update:** Bill Litant reported that the recommendations for a Senior Center that he compiled from his suggestions and those of the other members of the Board were submitted to the Building Committee. They included:
 - Large meeting room.
 - Smaller room (20 - 25-person capacity), perhaps in a living room format
 - A coffee and tea station
 - Kitchen
 - Offices – including smaller ones for personal conferencing such as Wellness Clinic, Foot Clinic, etc.
 - Storage Space
 - Book shelves for donated book exchange
 - Exercise room
 - PA and acoustic considerations
 - Three square feet per person (which comes to some 4000 sq. ft.)
 - He also mentioned the on-going concerns of our seniors about the rise in taxes.
 - Lauren suggested that the committee be in contact with the state regarding ADA compliance updates.

The Board voted to nominate Bill as the COA representative to the new Building Committee.

- **Update on Plan to clean out the Durable Medical Equipment in the Community Center basement:** Karen reported that Acton would only accept wheelchairs and metal canes. Ken Whitcomb has offered his truck for transporting items to Acton. Karen and Taryn will coordinate contacting surrounding communities to see what of the remaining items they might have use for. All other items will be taken to the Transfer Station for disposal.
- **Other Business:**
 - John announced that renewal of Charlie Cards can be done by telephone at the Department of Transportation, rather than having to go into Boston.
 - Bill Litant reported that Officer Tyler's new video is coming up. It will feature the Fire Chief regarding smoke and carbon monoxide detectors, and battery replacement.
 - John reported that Town Meeting may have to be postponed.
 - Lauren reported on the van ridership. There are a small number of seniors requiring most rides. July 2019 - 62 trips; February 2020 – 86 trips. Other van information: The Town pays some \$36K to the state as a transportation assessment. In FY19 we received \$11K reimbursement; FY20 through March we have received \$17.5K reimbursement. We have two regular drivers and one backup driver.
- **Date of next meeting:** Thursday, April 9, 2020, 3:00 PM
- The meeting was adjourned at approximately 4:20 PM

Respectfully submitted,
Barbara Birt, Secretary, Pro Tem

List of Exhibits: Agenda; Minutes of February 13, 2020 meeting; Articles to be entered into the Town Meeting Warrant of interest to the COA; Social Services Contacts Report; Budget and FCOA Middlesex Bank Grant Report