

Town of Boxborough
Council on Aging Board Meeting Minutes
August 20, 2020

The Council on Aging Board and the Well-Being Committee held a joint meeting via Zoom due to the COVID-19 emergency.

COA members attending: Anne Canfield, Tina Bhatia, Taryn Light, Barbara Birt, Karen Whitcomb, Bill Litant

Well-Being Committee members attending: Pam Follett, Al Murphy, Mary Pavlik, Channing Wagg, Liz Markiewicz, Reverend Cindy Worthington-Berry, Chief Warren Ryder, Wes Fowlks, Becky Neville

Others: John Fallon, Francie Nolde, Maria Neyland

Liz Markiewicz of the Well-Being Committee called the meeting to order at about 5:10pm:

Chief Ryder commented in support of the Community Services Coordinator position. Lauren Abraham was of tremendous help to the police in terms of critical outreach to residents. He spoke of the need for 40-hr./wk. Community Services Coordinator.

Bill Litant, Chair of the COA Board, said that the COA was in favor of having two positions. He said they feel strongly that COA position should be full-time. Anne Canfield concurred. Bill recommended some added language to the letter that gave greater emphasis to the need to create two distinct positions. Specifically, he would like the last paragraph to read:

We have been extraordinarily lucky to have someone of Lauren's talent and character working for the citizens of Boxborough these past six years. Her leaving highlights the importance of both the position of Community Services Coordinator and Council on Aging Director, and that the responsibilities of the two positions, formerly part-time and full-time, respectively, cannot be combined as a single position. We need to recognize that the Town requires both a Community Services Coordinator and a Council on Aging Director as our elder population continues to grow, the economy continues to deteriorate (Boxborough's unemployment rate is over 10% as of June) and the COVID-19 pandemic continues to wreak havoc.

A motion for Well-Being Committee members to make the recommended changes carried unanimously: Pam-aye; Al-aye; Mary-aye; Channing-aye; Liz-aye.

Bill polled the COA members and the vote was unanimous in favor of the amendment. Anne Canfield – aye, Sonali Bhatia – aye, Barbara Birt – aye, Taryn Light – aye, Karen Whitcomb – aye, Bill Litant – aye.

Al Murphy said that the Housing Board had met earlier and voted on a job description for a Boxborough Rental Assistance Program Coordinator position. In her role as Community Services Coordinator, Lauren had managed BRAP for the Housing Board. Al said that the Housing Board was sending the proposed job description to the Select Board and the Town Administrator.

Pam Follett said that adding back the CSC position shouldn't take away from the Council on Aging position. She pointed out that there is a lot of potential grant money that a CSC can access to fund extra hours.

Becky Neville, FinCom liaison, said that there is \$73,000 left in the COA Director/CSC which could potentially fund two positions, if the COA Director went back to being a coordinator at a lower paygrade.

Chief Ryder questioned how much time Lauren spent on each portion of the job. Liz and Mary said that Lauren had developed a chart that would show that information.

Liz asked for a motion for the Well-Being Committee to vote to send the amended letter in support of a separate CSC position to the Select Board and the Town Administrator. It was so moved. The motion carried unanimously: Pam-aye; Al-aye; Mary-aye; Channing-aye; Liz-aye.

Bill asked for a motion for the COA Board to vote to send the amended letter in support of a separate CSC position to the Select Board and the Town Administrator. Again, the vote was unanimous: Anne Canfield – aye, Sonali Bhatia – aye, Barbara Birt – aye, Taryn Light – aye, Karen Whitcomb – aye, Bill Litant – aye.

Meeting adjourned at 5:45pm

Respectfully submitted,

Bill Litant