

Minutes

Millbury Council on Aging Board of Directors

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MILLBURY, MASS.

Date: February 16th at 7:30am

Present: Stephen Walinsky, Stuart Mulhane, Kevin Higginbottom, Sarahbeth Persiani, Kendra Faldetta (Acting Director), Julieanne Fitzgerald (Outreach Worker) and Sean Hendricks (Town Manager) ; Absent :Richard Townsend

Vouchers:

Nine vouchers were signed at this meeting. One for Ray's True Value, one for WB Mason, 5 for Amazon, one for IBA Print Shop and one for Aquarion Water Company.

Minutes:

The minutes from last month's meeting will be signed at the March meeting, Ms.Persiani would like all minutes to refer to participants with a proper salutation (Mr./Ms.) as a professional courtesy. After discussion, a motion was made by Ms.Persiani and seconded by Mr.

Higginbottom to incorporate those identifiers in future minutes and correspondences. Vote: Unanimous

Correspondence:

Cards from the Assumption school were reviewed. As well as a note and new paper article about Pauline O'Loughlin, the oldest resident in town. A letter was received by Ms.Faldetta from Elder Services requesting \$2040.00 from the town to supplement its Meals on Wheels program, Mr.Hendricks reminded the board that legally the town cannot make donations; the board and Ms.Faldetta and Mr.Hendricks will continue to work on a resolution.

Standing Reports:

- A. Budget and Finance: The board questioned the gift account once again, Ms.Faldetta explained that the gift account is money donated to the Town of Millbury, with stipulations that it be used for current activities operating out of the Senior Center, such as Food Pantry etc. There continues some confusion as to the use of the Senior Center revolving account, versus the gift account. This needs to be resolved with the finance Director. Mr. Mulhane expressed some concern about the Town buying food for Food Pantry distribution but Ms. Faldetta said that those funds came from the gift account and not from budgeted Town funds.

The budget for the next fiscal year was discussed in a January 21st meeting with the Town Manager, Finance Director, Mr. Townsend, Mr. Walinsky and Ms. Faldetta. In that budget meeting, the Manager affirmed that the \$18,000 support for the Transportation program provided by the Friends of the Millbury Seniors (The Friends) would be continued, although, at this time, The Friends would have to pay the Town for gasoline. He agreed that other legitimate expenses submitted for reimbursement would be honored.

The status of expenses under the current budget was discussed. The monthly update of expenses provided by the Finance Director has seven categories. At this point, the category of COA supplies is almost 105% of the budgeted limit. Discussion occurred and Mr. Higginbottom expressed concern that the Board could not condone any excess spending. After discussion, it was thought that The Friends had regularly provided supplies for Senior Center use. The Manager asked what the dollar amount might have been so that the Town might adjust the budget for next fiscal year. The chairman agreed to make an inquiry to obtain an answer to his question. Ms. Persiani also expressed discomfort with signing vouchers that are knowingly in excess of the finance directors budgeted classifications. The question of why the board needs to sign vouchers was discussed and it was agreed that the Board has a fiduciary responsibility to assure that the monies in the budget are being spent judiciously. The Manager affirmed that he still had ultimate authority to make budget adjustments.

The question of what the Friends does with their money was raised, and it was decided that since it is a separate legal entity from the Town, the COA board has no authority to address that issue. It was acknowledged that The Friends provide a significant service to the Town in maintaining and operating the Transportation program for Seniors and ADA clients who are residents. The senior work off program was discussed, and remains another valuable asset to the town.

- B. Personnel: Mr. Walinsky questioned the status of Ms. Fitzgerald as being a Town Employee and Ms. Faldetta affirmed her position as such.
- C. Nominating: Ms. Persiani offered to assist with any recruiting needed for additional members to the COA Board and to be active in the nominating process..
- D. Legislative: A letter was received from the MCOA board and state of Massachusetts recommended people in senior centers are vaccinated and continue to wear masks.
- E. Senior Center Usage: No requests received. Ms. Persiani suggested that the elderly population should be reminded that the Senior Center is available as a heating and/or cooling station during seasonal weather extremes.
- F. Building Maintenance/ Equipment: The Manager reported that the camera security system is still in the design and quotation stage.
Increased insulation in the building using ARPA funds was discussed and appears to be on track for completion this summer.

Directors Report: Ms. Faldetta provided a written report which included an activity summary for January, February and proposed for March. A copy of this document has been attached to these minutes.

Chairman's Report: Aside from issues previously addressed, Mr. Walinsky stated he had nothing further to report.

New Business: Mr. Walinsky mentioned that the Town has approximately 3,000 residents that could be classified as seniors. Rather than reducing the number of newsletters being printed, it might be a better solution to expand the number of seniors getting the newsletter. The Town Clerk can easily provide the names and addresses of eligible recipients. Ms. Faldetta informed

the board that as part of the next fiscal year budget, she requested money for a technological program that she thought would make this easier.

Mr. Walinsky also noted that this is the time of the year that the Friends usually incorporate a request for annual dues in its newsletter. Ms. Faldetta replied that she had not received any request for that inclusion to date, and that the March issue has already gone to print. The book listing the Friends membership roster remains in the Senior Center and the Friends has requested that it be given to them. Ms. Faldetta agreed if it could be identified.

The question of continuing the “in kind” Town support for the transportation program provided by the Friends was raised. The Senior Center clerical staff used to maintain records and forms that allowed the Friends to make its monthly reports of van usage and numbers of passengers transported to the WRTA and the Mass Dept. of Transportation. That issue needs to be re-visited with the Town Manager.


Other Business: The issue of confidentiality with respect to applications for Fuel assistance, Food Stamps, (SNAP) and Elder Community Service applicants was discussed, and Ms. Faldetta acknowledged the importance.

A question had been previously presented to the Chairman about errors in the computation of hours for Senior work off participants. Ms. Faldetta affirmed that the problem was resolved.


A newer player piano has been offered to the Senior Center to replace the one originally donated. The Manager is waiting for the DPW to end its busy season to see what assistance they might be able to give to dispose of the old piano, and to assist in acquiring the replacement. Several months ago, Mr. Walinsky met with the willing donor and a piano technician to confirm that it was in good condition, However, the expected cost of disposing the old, and acquiring the new was going to be over \$1,000. The pandemic and lack of funds put the issue in limbo.

No further business, adjournment occurred at 8:44.

Next Board Meeting: March 16th 2022, at 7:30am.




Stephen Walinsky




Richard Townsend



Sarahbeth Persiani



Kevin Higginbottom



Stuart Mulhane

Acting Director's Correspondence

January:

We had a Fraud Prevention class taught by the Millbury Police Department on January 6th. Eleven people attended it.

The January Memory Café was a lesson on bee keeping and pollination from Dianna Proventure of Little Bit Farm. It was very well attended.

Senator Moore's representative came in on January 12th. This will be a monthly occurrence.

The Senior Center hosted a birthday party for Pauline O'Loughlin, the oldest person in town at 101. We had representatives from the police department, the town manager and Pauline's former meals on wheels drivers. The president of Millbury Credit Union came with a gift as well; Pauline worked there for many years. We kept the celebration small, at her age there was a COVID concern. She sent a wonderful thank you card, and was featured in the Millbury Sutton Chronicle. We found Pauline via facebook post by her niece asking for birthday wishes.

On January 24th the staff was taught AED, CPR and Adult first aid by Webster EMS. As was suggested we also put a shelf and identifying marker in the kitchen where the AED was placed.

We continue to make booster appointments for COVID 19 vaccinations.

February + Future:

We had about 30 people come to our Valentines Day party on February 8th. We played Valentines Day Bingo and pin the tail on cupid.

I have met with one Millbury High School student and she and a friend will be getting back to me about when they can start instructing a computer and phone literacy class here at the senior center. I have also been discussing a National Honor Society group project where the students will come and weed/mulch the garden in the spring.

We have also briefly discussed the possibility of an intergenerational program with the library. We continue to work on this idea.

I have cosigned a grant application with a teacher from the Shaw school who was applying for funds to purchase supplies to make blankets. She would then bring her students here or teach the class via zoom (depending on COVID) to senior citizens and the blankets would then be donated.

Julie and I continue to do Bank Hometown Fuel assistance interviews.

After COVID concerns subsided the Tai Chi class started on February 1st and will continue once weekly.

The February Memory Café will be Valentines Day Bingo and root beer floats with Julie on February 22nd. The March Memory Café will be vision board creation and a make your own ice cream bar.

Starting in March, local florist Berg Florals will be teaching a flower/plant arranging class. The fee will range from \$12.50-15.00 per student depending on what the project is. The students will be allowed to take their project home. All projects will be “themed” to the time of year. We have already seen a lot of interest in this class. This class will not cost the senior center any money as the students will pay their own fee. We need a minimum of 15 people to run the class, and the March class already has 13 people signed up after being posted for two days (at the time of this writing).

In March the senior center will be offering a St. Paddy’s Day fabric wreath making class for \$3.00 with coffee and light refreshments. This class will be taught by myself and Julie Fitzgerald.

On Tuesday, March 2nd at 12:00pm we are having a small Mardi Gras celebration with coffee and King Cake.

I have been working with a representative from Eddy Pond who would like to sponsor an event in the spring, we are thinking about some type of field day activity with lawn games and refreshments.

Cindy Johnson has been working with Fox Tours and we are happy to offer our first trip since COVID. The trip is to Narragansett for a Lighthouse Cruise on June 28th. It is \$111.00 per person and covers transportation, the cruise and lunch.

SHINE meetings will occur once monthly and people in need of assistance will be able to make appointments with us and use the Smart TV to have a Zoom meeting with the SHINE counsellor.

The Smart TV has also been used for scheduled meetings for senior citizens that do not have computers in their homes. This has been a growing and successful service.

Respectfully,

Kendra Faldetta