

**RECEIVED
TOWN CLERK
BELMONT, MA**

DATE: July 12, 2022
TIME: 2:39 PM

Belmont Council on Aging
June 7, 2022

Meeting held via Zoom.

Attending: Nava Niv-Vogel (ex-officio), Chao Qiang-Lai, Margie Wayne, Ted Dukas, Tomi Olson (Chair), Maryann Scali, Joel Semuels, Ellen Sullivan (Vice-Chair), Judy Morrison, Andrea Paschal & Jane Shapiro.

Not attending: Karen Donelan, Dana Bickelman (ex-officio) & Mark Paolillo (Select Board liaison)

Ellen Sullivan, Vice Chair started the meeting with Senior Citizens concerns and then Tomi took over.

The meeting was called to order at 7:02 pm.

1. Senior Citizens' Concerns

Mary Ann Scali stated that many seniors had raised the question as to the process of getting a new Director (Nava retires at the end of June 2022) and wanting to provide their input on the search. Discussion ensued among the Board and it was voted on supporting Tomi with the help of Joel to write a letter to be sent via email to the Town Administrator (Patrice Garvin) asking her to attend the next CoA Board meeting to discuss the process, who will be chosen to be on the Search Committee and to answer other questions from the Board. Mark Paolillo, Select Board Liaison will be copied on the email).

Nava said that Patrice will be more involved in the Council on Aging supervising Dana Bickelman (Acting Director) during the interim. The Board is concerned that it may be a long process before getting a new Director and that it would be a lot for one person to handle given the fact that the Volunteer Coordinator recently retired in May 2022. The job description for the Volunteer Coordinator position (25 hours a week) has been posted on the Town website and it is hopeful that this position can be filled quickly.

2. Approval of May 3, 2022, meeting minutes

Margie Wayne asked if there were any edits to the minutes and having none, the minutes were approved as written.

3. Updates and Correspondence

Tomi thanked Nava for everything she has done for the Council on Aging.

The Board decided to have a meeting in August 2022 either on Zoom or in person.

A. Director's Report

Nava sent out the Director's report ahead of the meeting and there were no questions related to the report.

Since this is Nava's last CoA board meeting, Judy asked Nava based on her twenty+ years of experience, what should the Board think about over next five-10 years. Nava stated:

- hiring good people,
- advocate for budget- performance measurement is important- program participation rates/transportation/services are key, if big drop-off the budget could be challenged by the Warrant Committee. Offer programs that Seniors want to increase participation. Currently,

The Fitness Room has limitations due to COVID and that is one area that Seniors want to use so re-evaluating this would help,

--be the gate keeper in helping to retain the Beech St Center/COA building solely for Seniors Monday- Friday 8am-4pm. Town departments are always looking for space.

The Board asked if there could be someone appointed as Acting Assistant Director to help when Nava retires since Dana will be Acting Director and there is limited staffing. Nava stated that Janet will have a Masters Social Worker Intern from Lesley University and there is a Social Worker position to be filled to help in that area. Nava will talk to Patrice Garvin (Town Administrator) offering to provide social worker supervision for COA and Police Dept on a part time basis.

B. Assistant Directors Report- no report available yet for this meeting.

C. Friends

Joel Semuels stated that the next Friends meeting is in July-no August meeting. Tom Nutile's Band will be performing at Beech St on Sept 29, 2022. The November Craft Fair is up in the air because no one has volunteered to coordinate this event with Karen.

D. Springwell

Jane Shapiro stated that Springwell found the staging lunch site. The merger is scheduled for July 1st and they will communicate with seniors about the merger.

From a meeting that Nava, Tomi & Jane attended at Springwell, Nava stated that Springwell won't tell us their budget and the Office of Elder Affairs do not require the reporting of funds to the COA's. Joel suggested we inform our State Senator Will Brownsberger and State Representative Dave Rogers about this because public funds are used and the COA's should be able to get the information.

E. Transportation Working Group

Ellen Sullivan said that the waivers for the Volunteer Driver Program are still pending. The Volunteer Driver Program we hope will resume in the Fall. We would like to do a big publicity recruitment for all volunteer programs early in October. To continue the Medical Taxi rides we will need to look at long range funding opportunities. Currently, we allow up to 3 rides through June 30, 2022. We need to revisit this policy for the rest of the year based on remaining available funds for this program.

F. Age Friendly Action Committee-AFAC

Judy Morrison said the AFAC has started. The committee still needs a representative from Recreation and School Committee. Judy stated there are 4 parts to the action plan and updated us on some of the subcommittees. The Transportation/Walkability subcommittee (Judy, Margie & Ellen) will work with the new CoA Volunteer Coordinator when hired, on the Snow Removal Program. The Housing subcommittee applied for an AARP grant but was not approved. Nava will provide the group with tips for applying next year. The Open Spaces subcommittee (Andrea & Tim) gathered a list of open spaces in Belmont and will investigate those locations.

4. Old Business:

A. Creating Inclusiveness and Making the COA Welcome to All

Nava stated that the May 11th event went well and there was a lot of participation. Some seniors want to start a Diversity Committee at the CoA. Nava spoke with Kim Haley Jackson and she wants to be part of the new Diversity Committee Group and Dana will follow up with this.

5. New Business: Discussion of Diversity Task Force & Report & Recommendation, Planning for Improvements in Lunch Offers on Site and Discussion of History and Future Request of Town's Ridesharing Revenue for CoA Transportation was tabled to the next Board Meeting.

Nava invited all to the volunteer luncheon on Wednesday June 15th to honor the volunteers and to share goodbyes.

Nava took a few minutes to walk down memory lane. Nava providing us with her story from day one as the new Director to the controversial new Community or Senior Center, Belmont Senior Organization/Belmont Elderly Citizen group, creation of the Friends of the CoA and all the people she met and worked with along the way.

Next meeting set for July 11, 2022 at 7:00 pm on Zoom.

Meeting adjourned at 8:48 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Margie Wayne, Board Member