

**Council on Aging  
Minutes  
April 1,2019**

2019 JUL 16 AM 9:58

In attendance:

Chair, Chao-Qiang Lai, M. Cahalane, T. Dukas, E. Hamann, T. Hammerle, T. Olson, M. Scali, J. Semuels, J. Singler P. Solomon, E. Sullivan  
Ex-officios N. Niv-Vogel, Director, D. Leavitt, Assistant Director

**Senior Citizens concerns**

Maryann reported that Dana's planned activities have been a great success, including the great planned Beach Party.

She also reported that moderate income seniors would like to lower their income taxes and that Waltham has a program that does just that. Maryann will call the Waltham Mayor's Office for the details.

There is a Belmont High School history program where H S Seniors will interview Seniors. Seniors are encouraged to signup at the desk.

A group of seniors would like a computer class. COA staff is presently seeking an instructor for a several week class.

Maryann reported that the Beech Street usage numbers are not accurate since many are not signing in.

Chao informed the Board that many Chinese seniors are using Beech Street Center.

Tomi reported that the Belmont Housing Authority has aging structures, including serious plumbing issues, and that there will be a meeting tomorrow to discuss what to do. There are 3 housing sites. 2 Senior locations: Sherman Gardens and Waverly Oaks with approximately 150 units. The final location is Belmont Village which is family housing, with 100 units.

Dave Lynde. Senior Property/AARP Tax Volunteer addressed the Board. He made it clear that he was not an accountant or attorney.

The question to be discussed is: For senior Volunteers to the Town, should an abatement to their taxes be issued or should a W2 be issued?

After a full discussion the Board voted to approve the following motion:

“The COA Board respectfully requests that the Town Treasurer, the Town Assessing Office, representatives from the COA Board, and if necessary, Town Counsel, meet to resolve the implementation of senior property tax work off abatement program by December 31, 2019” .

The March Minutes were accepted as amended.

Directors Report: Beech Street Center needs to have its Guidelines translated into Chinese. There was an incident at Beech Street Center where a copy of those translated guidelines would have been helpful. Chao agreed to translate the Guidelines.

Assistant Director Report: Dana has planned many interesting and unique programs including:  
Beach Party 70, Yoga and Gentle stretch, Parkinson Dance Soiree, Interactive Drumming, 4 Speakers : Food for the Brain Nutrition, The Eye, Bone Health, Pill Depression , Passover Education, Spring Flower, Positive Rock affirmative, Kentucky Derby, Mothers Day Tea, Nosh with Nava, PickleBall It's a Big Dill, Karaoke Pizza Night, Police/Fire Bocce, Barbershop Quartet, LGBTQ programming.

**Nava. Participated in Dancing with the Stars**

**Joel reported on the Friends:**

Jim Bramante is scheduled for the September 12, 2019 concert from 7-9pm

The Friends Newsletter comes out once a year and should be available by beginning of May.

Next meeting of The Friends is scheduled for June 13 at 7pm.

Judy Singler reported that Springwell has a Search Committee for its CEO.

The Inclusionary Zoning, Planning Board is putting off discussion of the McLean property to the Fall

The COA needs to come up with substitute transportation for the Springwell transportation, which has now been eliminated. Those rides were mostly for out of Town medical appointments. Transportation needs to be door to door.

One possibility is the funds received by Community Development, \$19000 in 2018. These funds derive from 5 cents per ride from Uber, etc.

A Transportation Group has been assembled and is looking into volunteer drivers and a program called North Essex Elder Transportation. Wellesley also has a program where there are 30 volunteers available. The profile of those interested includes young mothers and recently retired. Senior passengers pay for tolls and parking.

Nava will bring this issue as whether this is permissible to the Town Administrator, Ms. Garvin, who will bring this to Town Counsel.

### **New Business:**

The Police Search Committee. A letter is coming from the Board of Selectmen's office which will spell out time commitment, qualifications required. COA will have a representative.

**Fitness Room usage rules:**

Because of a request from a Watertown resident, the Board agreed to the following changes in the Fitness Room usage policy. A maximum of 10 people would be eligible for this policy. The policy will read:

*"That the Fitness Room program policy be modified to allow the COA to waive the 4 month waiting period required for out of town users already enrolled in a program at the Center provided that that they produce a note from their primary care provider indicating that it is medically beneficial"*

The next meeting will be held on May 7.

Respectfully submitted,

Tommasina Olson